

I have been considering how I 'listen'. I am amazed sometimes, when I look at what a typical day is in my life now. Luckily, I still have much opportunity for face to face interactions with people. When I work with my students, it is always face-to-face. That is one of the blessings of my job; I can be with numerous children and interact directly with them. I am one of the main proponents to limit the amount of technology children use for their leisure. The benefits of children moving their bodies is irreplaceable as is the opportunity to enhance their development by talking with them. **Listening** to them!



When I think about the time I am interacting with adults, it is often different. Frequently, technology enters in. Sometimes, it is a blessing. Sometimes, it is very frustrating. Blessings do come from the technology that is available today. Some blessings include: I get to 'see' my daughter, Rachel, every day through our Snapchat streak (she get's to see our dog, our yard, etc. since I don't like to take selfies), I get to interact frequently with different 'family groups' through text groups that have been set up, I have be re-connected friends from the past through FaceBook, I am able to receive and send emails for various reasons. Even though John and I have opposite work schedules and seldom see each other during the week, we are able to keep in frequent contact through texting and calling.

Some of the frustrations with technology lay in my limited ability to understand and use it. I use the phrase, "If you are under 30, I will ask you." The Internet goes down at times, so that communication is cut off. People are excluded from some communication if the tool used requires individuals to be invited and added to that particular group. Some people are very focused with using social media that they aren't 'present'. I see this when parents are going for a walk with their baby in a stroller and the parent is on their phone or when families are together for mealtime and instead of having conversations with those at the table some are communicating through social media. There are numerous other examples I can share. I admit, I have done some of those things that frustrate me when I see others doing them.

Shandra Newcom shared the Listening Lens at the Discover and Live your Future Day on Oct. 13. This was an enlightening way to **LISTEN** and connect with people. In the Doctrine and Covenants 162: 4a and 4b:

*4a. **Listen** carefully to the many testimonies of those around the world who have been led into the fellowship of the Community of Christ. The richness of cultures, the poetry of language, and the breadth of human experience permit the gospel to be seen with new eyes and grasped with freshness of spirit. That gift has been given to you. Do not fail to understand its power.*

b. It is for divine purpose that you have been given the struggles as well as the joys of diversity. So must it always be in the peaceable kingdom.

Barb