

“It seems rather incongruous,” Erma Bombeck writes, “that in a society of super sophisticated communication, we often suffer from a shortage of listeners.”

JANUARY 13 Unhappiness comes with feeling abandoned, alone, unaccompanied through life. Happiness comes if one other person really cares whether we come home at night or not. “People who are unhappy have no need for anything in this world,” Simone Weil wrote, “but people capable of giving them their attention.”

JANUARY 14 Electronic contact is no guarantee of love and listening. It's just a means of finding love and care if, of course, it's really there to be had. It's important not to confuse the two. “Listening,” Krista Tippett reminds us, “is about being present, not just about being quiet.”

JANUARY 15 Everyone needs someone who cares enough to hear them through, to support them as they take their next moves through life.