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- **A KEY PURPOSE** of meditation is to know what is **really going on** in experience **as it happens** so can **guide 'mind stream' towards freedom**, based on **awareness and kindness**
- Need to come close to **direct experience** as opposed to **narrative about** experience
- Learn to **connect creatively** with **primary experience** rather than being lost in elaborations and papancha (**secondary experience**)

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- **One way** (of many) when mentoring others to engage with their meditation experience is **enquiry**
- Not a technique but **mutual exploration** of what meditators have noticed in **their direct experience** through **open questioning** and **deep listening** after a meditation session

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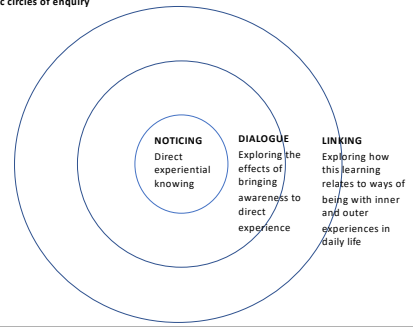
- **Hold it lightly**
- Most important skill is to be **interested in another person's experience** and to **genuinely listen & enquire** to help them reach **deeper understanding**
- **Listen with love – metta practice**
- Keep **dialogue open** rather than closing down

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- **Collective experiential learning**
- Meditation usually private and **very helpful to hear others' experience**
- **Encouraging**
- **Organic and living**

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The three concentric circles of enquiry



(Mark Williams 2006)

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- Helps meditators to
 - Become **aware of and connect** with their **direct experience** through **awareness, curiosity and kindness**
 - Become aware of their **relationship to that experience**
 - Make **meaning** of their experience **in relation to life**

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Four Levels of Listening

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Distracted
Self-referential
Fix-it
Transformative

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- **Distracted** - unable to listen because of **external** or **internal** distractions
- **Self-referential** - listening with a 'me' filter, so that everything we hear we **interpret from our own vantage point**
- **Fix-it** - a **closing down, solution-oriented listening**, rather than an opening out, exploratory listening
- **Transformative** - **engaged, deep listening from the heart**, taking in what is being said (and *not* said), felt, and communicated through the body and energy of a person. It allows for the unknown to reveal itself, for themes to be openly explored without needing to come to any resolution

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During enquiry, the role of the teacher is to be aware of these levels of listening:

- within **oneself**
- as demonstrated through the **responses of others**
- **exemplifying and supporting** the group to keep the focus on a **transformative level of listening**
- we won't always get it right, **enquiry is also a practice!**
- Let go of 'right' and 'wrong' and **stay open and curious**

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