



Silence or Speaking?

“Speaking is silver, silence is gold” – this saying tries to answer the question asked in the title. I also heard the reverse: “Silence is silver, speaking is gold”, together with good reasons and stories. What is true?

Before you continue reading, I invite you to find your personal reasons and stories for both those statements. Why and when could the first sentence be true for you, when and why the second one?

If you had a similar experience to how it was for me, you could find valid reasons for both declarations. Because this is exactly the point/matter: These are declarations, artificial constructs, which glue two different things that “in nature” don't have anything to do with each other together using words like “is” (may, can, must, should, have etc. in all their forms). In doing so we create stories and meaning, permanently – that is our power as humans (also this is a declaration as well as this consideration ...).

In this text I will drop the question “What is true?” and replace it with the question “What gives more power and possibility?”. It quickly shows that it completely depends on the situation and intention.

For this purpose two examples:

1. Your partner opens her heart to you. In your mind you formulate already solutions that you can present as soon as she pauses. Invitation: Put these (inner) voices to silence and really listen. Be a “yes” for her sharing. Stay centered, grounded, hold your space (your personal bubble) filled with your own energy and at the same time stay in contact and hold space for the both of you. (What does this mean? Start with the intention to be a space for her and don't try how it works. Hold your attention on this intention.)
2. At work you realize that the communication doesn't work out, e.g. because it is about being right. Maybe you notice that you draw back internally, stay quiet, let the others do. Invitation: Speak out what you perceive. Use the possibility of meta-communication and start with sentences, which describe the current situation and your intentions and then open a new space, might be like: “I noticed that 'being right' is in the space. I would like to come back to the level where it is about finding creative solutions for our challenges. Do you agree?”

The original (same as the reversed) saying imply judgment. What is the intention behind? I heard these sentences before or used them before in situations that were about justification (of the own speaking or silence) or manipulation (of the behavior of others).

Do spaces, where “judgment”, “justification” and “manipulation” are at work give you more possibility and power or spaces full of “appreciation”, “being with” and “creative collaboration”?



How about letting go of the idle question whether silence or speaking is better and depending on the actual situation choose one or the other with conscious and clear intention? Thereto a few suggestions or experiments:

- Create spaces for you to become quiet and be in silence for a while. One possible form is morning sitting, e.g. 35 minutes. The (only) commitment in this practice is to sit and be silent during the time frame.
- Practice sitting in relationship: Be in eye contact together, silent and sitting for 20 minutes. Observe what is going on inside you. It might make sense to have some personal time after in order to integrate the potentially arising intensity.
- Practice possibility listening: Be the space in which the other can speak (you can find some further considerations in the example above).
- Try out also possibility speaking: Become the space through which “it” can speak (without thinking: Commit to the necessity of your partner, who can start the exercise by saying “Please, give me possibility for...”).
- Give a spontaneous 1 minute presentation about a question or topic of somebody in the room. Don't think about it, don't speak from knowing, but give yourself into service to what wants to be said.
- Ask for what you want. Don't expect others to guess it right.
- Set boundaries by saying what is not right, what is not okay.
- Before speaking take a breath and check your intention.
- Communicate your feelings: I feel mad/sad/glad/scared because...
- If needed, speak with passion, full risk, from the heart, authentically, imperturbable, engaging, truthfully and directly (dragon speaking).

Have high-level fun experimenting!
Georg