

## **Listening A New World into Being**



*Illustration: Yvonne Hollandy*

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Tuesday, September 22, 2015 -- Michelle Strutzenberger

Listening in on a call last week, I had two of those belly-shiver moments where suddenly the future flashes open and one glimpses what could be. It truly is a flash, a second, maybe two, as if a bare wire zapped some intuition alive. And then things go dark. But the sense of having “seen” a possibility lingers on, like a scent after someone’s left the room.

Both flashes came as someone on the call made some remark about what he’d like

to see in the world. What exactly those comments were isn't important for this context.

New worlds  
become possible  
through the act of  
listening.

As a person with a deep-running bent to taking the stance of listener (a trait I alternately see as a gift and sometimes a bit of a bane), I've become increasingly aware of the electrifying capacity in that position. The power, not so much for me or the people to whom I listen, as for bringing to life what is not yet.

New worlds become possible through the act of listening. Peter Block has said listening may be the most radical act of all. Like all radical acts, I'm guessing, I've found it can also be scary and often uncomfortable.

Over the years we (meaning I and the good people I work with at Axiom News) have seen how the notion of Generative Journalism sparks something in people. Often, eyes light up at just hearing the term. Even before they know a lot about it, they have this sense "there's something in this."

Hungry for more, people have gone on to talk about and extend invitations for teaching and training, creating courses, writing books and building institutions.

It's all seemed good and worthy to me, so I've watched in some puzzlement as Peter Pula (the thought leader of Generative Journalism) hasn't really rushed to comply.

So I just keep listening, trying to sense, trying to stay open.

After the call mentioned above the understanding that's been slowly dawning in the back corners of my mind took a clearer shape than it has yet.

To position as experts, as traditional teachers and trainers, can be an isolating act. You come sit at my feet, download my insight and then go off to make your own world. We may never cross paths again.

We need to  
become co-  
discoverers with  
others, take a  
journey together,  
learn from each  
other.

But what Peter is pushing towards (and what was the central theme of the call) is bringing alive the possibilities that Generative Journalism represents AS A COMMUNITY. And in the process we can actually build and deepen community — both the community of narrators and the communities from which each of us hail.

People are saying things like they believe Generative Journalism is pivotal to transformational change.

We have a sense that people in many different communities are wrestling with how they do narrative in their communities on things that are important to them.

Author and consultant Peter Block has said he wants to see a generative media channel for the world.

But the fullest possibilities in all of this aren't going to be realized in us (meaning our tiny team here) doing more of it or teaching others. That's the epiphany I had.

We need to become co-discoverers with others, take a journey together, learn from

each other, work on projects together, reflect on why we're working together, connect with our deepest intentions and each other. In that way, the process itself can be transformative, and the narrative that comes out of it can do the best possible good.

It's brilliant. After all, we all know change doesn't come from knowledge alone.

And that's the world that listening has opened up for me this time.

Learn about the intentions for a cross-community alliance for a local, living, new narrative. Visit [AxiomNewsDialogues.com](https://AxiomNewsDialogues.com).

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