

## 2009 CONNIE AWARD SPEECH: "LET SILENCE SPEAK" by JESUS NEBOT

"Don't speak unless you can improve silence."

That's how my father shut me up while I was arguing with him at the age of 12. At first, my mind ran wild trying to figure out the smartest comeback to make him wrong. Do you relate to that? But then, as I remained silent, I had this life transforming realization that I'm not my mind, but simply the One listening to it. The One that can actually choose to be in silence no matter how loud my mind speaks. This awakening allowed me to tap into the essential quality all great COMMUNICATORS possess.

I did not say "great speakers". Great speakers can be eloquent, charismatic, persuasive, but they can also be self-centered.

On the other hand, great communicators genuinely care about others. They know communication is not just about speaking well, but also about that which occurs in the space of silence: Listening

Great speakers speak. Great communicators listen first. Then they speak.

True listening is only complete in the absence of words and thoughts. It is a silent awareness that quiets our voice and our mind. That chattering mind that can so easily get out of control, especially if we are speaking in public. That's when it can scream at us "wonderful" thoughts such as: "you have no talent" or "you're so boring" or simply "you suck".

We need to get out of the chatter of our minds and into the silence of our hearts where we can listen to our authentic voice and be fully present when we present. That's how we can connect with our audiences and be humorous if need be, repeat an important point or simply pause and let the silence speak for itself.

My father thinks that I joined NSA to recover emotionally from his "don't speak unless you can improve silence" statement. But in truth, I joined because I was deeply inspired by the greatest communicators of all time: Budha, Jesus, Mohamed, Moses, Krishna. They were all out of their minds and into their hearts where they were able to be fully present to people's real needs and use their compelling storytelling skills to enrich their lives.

Through their example I realize that my purpose as a communicator is not to GET any validation from you, my audience, but to GIVE of myself to you with love.

By releasing our inner chatter and surrendering to our inner silence we can all become, not only great communicators, but also great healers to ourselves, our audiences and our planet. Let silence speak.

