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The Good Listener's Daily Prayer

When everyone tells you their troubles, to whom will you tell yours?

by **Genie Dickerson** From **Guideposts** - Posted on Apr 1, 2008

When folks look at me, it seems that all they see are my ears! I guess I'm just one of those people. Strangers come up to me and pour their hearts out. "I used to write [books](#) and teach college," a homeless man told me wistfully one day, as I was walking to an ATM, "but that part of my life is gone."

I listened and nodded. That's me—always a shoulder to cry on. Once, a checker at the supermarket stopped in the middle of bagging my groceries to tell me her family wanted their own home, but couldn't afford it. "Prices are too high here," I agreed.

Another clerk grumbled to me about her aching feet. Then one day she stepped out from behind the register to show me her new therapeutic shoes and get my opinion of them.

Sometimes, after hearing everyone else's problems, I feel exhausted. Drained. I want to cry out: "Let me tell you about my family problems, my health worries, my money troubles for a change!"

Not long ago the owner of a local café took me aside. She told me her waitress's husband had recently died. I could see she was devastated and needed to talk. We did, for a long while.

When I got home, I decided to pray. I always take my troubles straight to God. (He's the Great Listener.) I mentioned the café owner, the waitress and her family. And all the people I'd met.

That's when it hit me: Maybe my job is to listen. Not to take on others' troubles, but to pass them on to the Lord, relay them up the line. I know that God will comfort those people as only he can. So now I look at myself in the mirror, and I don't notice my wrinkles, just my two big ears! Listening doesn't feel like a burden at all anymore. It feels like a privilege—even a blessing.