5. I find myself talking about it a lot.

Matthew 12:34: "Out of the overflow of the heart, the mouth speaks".
Proverbs 16:24: "Pleasant words are a honey comb, sweet to the soul and healing for the bones".

After all that's happened *we need to talk,* really talk. Jesus said that it's, "Out of the overflow of the heart that the mouth speaks". The tongue is like the overflow pipe in the bathroom sink: what's inside the heart drains out through it.

When there is confusion and fear in out hearts, that's when we have special need to let the overflow pipe work. It's only when the confusion and fear is verbalised that it can be dealt with.

That's why when I'm in an internal pickle, I don't just try to speak my thoughts and feelings, I write them down too.

Words have healing power. How do we unlock that power, making West Cumbria a place where our conversations lead us to healing?

We're all different. When it comes to words, we are all on the spectrum somewhere between verbal diarrhoea at one extreme and grunting at the other. Some would make a cheap gender reference here; I won't comment!

Both extremes are unhelpful. On a football pitch you don't want to be on a team with someone who feels so uncomfortable with the ball they are desperate to get rid of it. Neither do you want to be along side a ball-hog who never passes.

Words have healing power, provided we are *both* speakers and listeners; *both* comfortable on the ball, but also able to pass.

Suppose we only speak, but never listen. Our conversation partner gets exasperated. Meanwhile, we simply splurge out our confusions but give no space for our friend to sharpen our thoughts.

Suppose we only listen, but never speak. We give others space; but their words evaporate into the air, without receiving the feedback they demand. Meanwhile the knot in our stomach remains.

Words are very powerful, for good or for ill. By giving us twice the number of ears than mouths, it may be that God wants us to consider listening or refusing to listen more powerful still.

You don't need a black leather sofa and a diploma to use words in this healing process. What we do need is to pray for a willing tongue and loving ears.