

forests. In a remote and quiet place, Vikman says, she discovers thoughts and feelings that aren't audible in her busy daily life. "If you want to know yourself you have to be with yourself, and discuss with yourself, be able to talk with yourself."

"Silence, Please" has proven to be the most popular theme in Finland's rebranding, and one of the most popular pages on VisitFinland.com. Maybe silence sells because, so often, we treat it as a tangible thing—something easily broken, like porcelain or crystal, and something delicate and valuable. Vikman remembers a time when she experienced the rarity of nearly complete silence. Standing in the Finnish wilderness, she strained her ears to pick out the faintest sounds of animals or wind. "It's strange," she says, "the way you change. You have all the power—you can break the silence with even with the smallest sounds. And then you don't want to do it. You try to be as quiet as you can be."

Author

⁴ Daniel A. Gross, Nautilus Magazine, originally published August 21, 2014, accessed at <http://nautil.us/issue/16/nothingness/this-is-your-brain-on-silence> on July 29, 2015