Hear to Heal
Training in Active Listening

November 11, 2016

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Facilitating

Individual and Collective Journeys towards Common Ground
I seek this day the disciplined mind.

Give me the listening ear.

I seek this day the disciplined heart.

Give me the listening ear.

I seek the disciplined life that makes my ear... become mindful of expressions of life foreign to my own.

Give me the listening ear.

I seek the stimulation that lifts me out of old ruts and established habits.

Give me the listening ear.

I seek the stimulation which keeps me conscious of myself, my needs, my personal interests.

Give me the listening ear.
Set the context for the work of reconciliation and social transformation

- Foster deeper listening which will help us to: connect with one another
  - Explore 3 forces which make it difficult to listen in the context of racial reconciliation and ways to address them
Guidelines

• Support yourself and challenge yourself
• Be aware of your preferences
• Take care of yourself and others
• Be aware of intent and impact
• Trust what comes up inside you
• Lean into any discomfort as a learning opportunity
• Hold confidences of others
• Be present (no technology)
• Enjoy the experience!
What is your predisposition?

Step into Difficult Conversations
Be Candid
Be Open
Analyze Meaning
Focus on Subjective Realities
Be Willing to Help
Focus on My Gift
Peace
Focus on Intent
Look for Solutions
Attend to the External Community

Engage Silence
Be Diplomatic
Honor Personal Boundaries
Empathize with the Other
Focus on Objective Realities
Be in Solidarity With
Focus on the Source & Ground of Gift
Disruption
Focus on Impact
Step into the Complexities
Attend to the Internal Community
Get Oxygen

Exhale

Too Much Carbon Dioxide

Release Carbon Dioxide

Inhale

Live

Not Enough Oxygen

Die

Model based on the work of Barry Johnson, PhD and Polarity Management Associates

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Contribute to Reconciliation

+ Candor
  - Position is known by others
  - Issues can be addressed quickly
  - Others are encouraged to speak up

and

Tact
  - Feelings and individual needs are considered
  - Can be relied on to promote harmony
  - Careful and deliberate in addressing issues

- Caustic approach hurts and puts others off
- Damage relationships
- Waste time because of conflicts and complaints

Contribute to Brokenness

- A deceptive environment is promoted
- Waste time by avoiding real issues
- Not trusted to be real with others and others are not open
When it comes to reconciliation, what makes it difficult to listen?

1. Our predispositions – **Recognize them as one pole of a polarity and leverage the polarity**

   - For each pole: What actions will you take to gain or maintain the positive results of that pole?
   
   - For each pole: What early warnings can you identify which will let you know that you are beginning to experience the negative results of over focusing on that pole and neglecting the other pole?
When it comes to reconciliation, what makes it difficult to listen?

1. Our predispositions – **Recognize them as one pole of a polarity and leverage the polarity**

2. We focus on the wrong thing – **Actively listen by focusing on the content and FEELINGS, then check assumptions**
Howard Thurman One of the most influential thinkers and spiritual leaders of the 20th century was a systems thinker who believed “personal spiritual renewal was important to the liberation process and that inward liberation was a prerequisite for social transformation.”
“Seek first the kingdom and his righteousness…”

Deepen our understanding of personal commitments, spiritual values, purpose, and strengths in order to: 1) experience greater peace within self; and 2) be freed to serve, and promote peace and justice in the broader community.

Deepen our understanding of the “needs of the times” in order to better appreciate and leverage differences, build on commonalities, and promote peace and justice in the broader community.
Internal Warring?

Convene the members of the inner community

...Ask Transcending Questions

- Who am I really?
- To what am I ultimately committed?
- What refusal am I postponing?
- Etc.
What forces and fears... Interfere with Personal Spiritual Renewal?

1. Loyalty to established identity and individuality
2. Discomfort with new identity
3. Over focus on personal relevance in the external community
4. Not connecting with greater source which is beyond self
5. New ways don’t feel natural
6. False sense of independence - Not seeing the depth of interconnectedness with the Other
7. Fear of losing autonomy/freedom
8. Concern about being exposed and vulnerable
9. Concern about risking key relationships
10. Other priorities
11. Life’s demands
12. Etc.
When it comes to reconciliation, what makes it difficult to listen?

1. Our predispositions – **Recognize them as one pole of a polarity** and leverage the polarity

2. We focus on the wrong thing – **Actively listen by focusing on the content and FEELINGS**, then check assumptions

3. Our typical approach is overwhelmingly transactional – **Focus also on transcendence and disciplines of the spirit which lead to personal spiritual renewal and inward liberation**
“... In the quietness of this place, surrounded by the all-pervading Presence of God, my heart whispers:

Keep fresh before me the moments of my High Resolve,

that in fair weather or in foul, in good times or in tempests, in the days when the darkness and the foe are nameless or familiar, I may not forget that to which my life is committed.

Keep fresh before me the moments of my High Resolve.”

Howard Thurman, Meditations of the Heart
Selected Readings by Howard Thurman For Our Times

Jesus and the Disinherited
Search for Common Ground
Luminous Darkness
Disciplines of the Spirit

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