

Bulletin for Authenticity

Business

Chalice Lighting

Come into this circle of community. Come into this sacred space.

Be not tentative. Bring your whole self!

Bring the joy that makes your heart sing.

Bring your kindness and your compassion.

Bring also your sorrow, your pain.

Bring your brokenness and your disappointments.

Spirit of love and mystery; help us to recognize the spark of the divine that resides within each of us.

May we know the joy of wholeness.

May we know the joy of being together.

Andrew Pakula

Sharing of Joys and Concerns

Silence – holding ourselves and each other in silent support

Shared Readings

Our power lies in our small daily choices, one after another, to create eternal ripples of a life well lived. *Mollie Marti*

It is naive to think that self-assertiveness is easy. To live self-assertively—which means to live authentically—is an act of high courage. That is why so many people spend the better part of their lives in hiding—from others and also from themselves. *Nathaniel Branden*

Hard times arouse an instinctive desire for authenticity. *Coco Chanel*

Honesty and frankness make you vulnerable. Be honest and frank anyway.

Kent M. Keith

How desperately difficult it is to be honest with oneself. It is much easier to be honest with other people. What is true is invisible to the eye. It is only with the heart that one can see clearly.

Antoine de Saint-Exupéry

Example is not the main thing in influencing others. It is the only thing. *Albert Schweitzer*

Communication works best when we combine appropriateness with authenticity, finding that sweet spot where opinions are not brutally honest but delicately honest. *Sheryl Sandberg*

I'm a thousand different people. Every one is real. *Candy Darling*

The struggle to excavate your true, authentic self from beneath the mountain of conditioning and ridiculous expectation is the epic struggle of your lifetime. *Bryant McGill*

When I'm watchin' my TV, and that man comes on to tell me, how white my shirts can be, but he can't be a man 'cause he doesn't smoke, the same cigarettes as me. . . . I try and I try and I try, but I can't get no satisfaction. *Mick Jagger, Keith Richards*

Deep Sharing / Deep Listening

Round 1

What does authenticity mean to you? Share briefly.

Round 2

Share more deeply stories and experiences of authenticity as a result of your exploration of the preparation materials.

Round 3

As time allows, share additional thoughts on authenticity or reflect on what others have shared.

Closing Words

Our deepest calling is to grow into our authentic selfhood,
whether or not it conforms to some image of who we ought to be.
As we do, we will not only find the joy that every human being seeks;
we will also find our path of authentic service in the world.
Parker Palmer

Song or Chime

The Covenant

I commit myself:

- to come to meetings when I possibly can, knowing that my presence is important to the group
- to let the facilitator know if I will be absent or need to quit
- to share with the facilitator the responsibility for good group process by watching how much time I take to speak and noticing what is going on for others
- to do the reading and thinking about the topic ahead of time
- to not gossip about what is shared in the group, and tell only my own story to others
- to honor the safety of the group by listening to what others share with an open heart
- to refrain from cross-talk, judging, or giving advice
- to share as deeply as I can when it is my turn

Preparation for Authenticity

Among the many meanings of the term “authenticity,” it most commonly assigns the degree to which one is true to one’s own personality, spirit, or character, despite external pressures (Wikipedia). Brené Brown writes in her book *The Gifts of Imperfection*, “Authenticity is a collection of choices that we have to make every day. It’s about the choice to show up and be real. The choice to be honest. The choice to let our true selves be seen.” This implies two things, first, that there is a basic “realness” to everyone, and second, that it can be challenging to embody and display this basic truth about one’s self.

The difficulty of genuine expression is the risk of being different and not accepted. Acknowledging this fear, Adlai Stevenson encourages us not only to be authentic, but to accept others’ authentic expressions: “I think that one of our most important tasks is to convince others that there’s nothing to fear in difference; that difference, in fact, is one of the healthiest and most invigorating of human characteristics without which life would become meaningless. Here lies the power of the liberal way: not in making the whole world Unitarian [Universalist], but in helping ourselves and others to see some of the possibilities inherent in viewpoints other than one’s own; in encouraging the free interchange of ideas; in welcoming fresh approaches to the problems of life; in urging the fullest, most vigorous use of critical self examination.”

The reward of an authentic expression is put as follows by Rachel Archelaus. “As you become more aligned with the truth of who you are, the question of liking yourself goes away. It is a natural state of being.” Or, as Eckhart Tolle writes, “Only the truth of who you are, if realized, will set you free.”

I tore myself away from the safe comfort of certainties through my love for truth—and truth rewarded me. *Simone de Beauvoir*

The privilege of a lifetime is to become who you truly are. *Carl Jung*

Because going against our natural inclinations can make us feel like impostors, we tend to latch on to authenticity as an excuse for sticking with what’s comfortable. *Herminia Ibarra*

Behind most of our masks, however, is a truth that is hidden for a specific reason. Often we don’t know what that truth is. I wasn’t ready to deal with my truths, but ready or not, they started to bubble to the surface. Once that began to happen, try as I might, I couldn’t get the toothpaste to go back into the tube. *Brian Copeland, Not a Genuine Black Man*

All the world’s a stage,
And all the men and women merely players;
They have their exits and their entrances,
And one man in his time plays many parts.
William Shakespeare, As You Like It

Cherish forever what makes you unique, ’cuz you’re really a yawn if it goes. *Bette Midler*

People change and forget to tell each other. *Lillian Hellman*

Living with integrity means:

- Not settling for less than what you know you deserve in your relationships
- Asking for what you want and need from others
- Speaking your truth, even though it might create conflict or tension
- Behaving in ways that are in harmony with your personal values
- Making choices based on what you believe, and not what others believe

Barbara De Angelis, Real Moments: Discover the Secret of True Happiness

The thing that makes you exceptional, if you are at all, is inevitably that which must also make you lonely. *Lorraine Hansberry*

Questions to Ponder

1. What does authenticity mean to you? This question will be part of the sharing at the meeting.
2. What do you consider to be authentic parts of your personality?
3. Are these authentic parts steady for you, or do you find they change?
4. Has there been a time or situation where being authentic was difficult or where your actions did not match up with your beliefs? What held you back from acting in a way that matched your beliefs?
5. Are there ways in which you are affected by other people's being or not being authentic?

Facilitator Notes for Authenticity

Business

Chalice Lighting

Come into this circle of community. Come into this sacred space.

Be not tentative. Bring your whole self!

Bring the joy that makes your heart sing.

Bring your kindness and your compassion.

Bring also your sorrow, your pain.

Bring your brokenness and your disappointments.

Spirit of love and mystery; help us to recognize the spark of the divine that resides within each of us.

May we know the joy of wholeness.

May we know the joy of being together.

Andrew Pakula

Sharing of Joys and Concerns (each person about 2 minutes)

Silence – holding ourselves and each other in silent support – 3 minutes

Shared Readings

Our power lies in our small daily choices, one after another, to create eternal ripples of a life well lived. *Mollie Marti*

It is naive to think that self-assertiveness is easy. To live self-assertively—which means to live authentically—is an act of high courage. That is why so many people spend the better part of their lives in hiding—from others and also from themselves. *Nathaniel Branden*

Hard times arouse an instinctive desire for authenticity. *Coco Chanel*

Honesty and frankness make you vulnerable. Be honest and frank anyway.

Kent M. Keith

How desperately difficult it is to be honest with oneself. It is much easier to be honest with other people. What is true is invisible to the eye. It is only with the heart that one can see clearly.

Antoine de Saint-Exupéry

Example is not the main thing in influencing others. It is the only thing. *Albert Schweitzer*

Communication works best when we combine appropriateness with authenticity, finding that sweet spot where opinions are not brutally honest but delicately honest. *Sheryl Sandberg*

I'm a thousand different people. Every one is real. *Candy Darling*

The struggle to excavate your true, authentic self from beneath the mountain of conditioning and ridiculous expectation is the epic struggle of your lifetime. *Bryant McGill*

When I'm watchin' my TV, and that man comes on to tell me, how white my shirts can be, but he can't be a man 'cause he doesn't smoke, the same cigarettes as me. . . . I try and I try and I try, but I can't get no satisfaction. *Mick Jagger, Keith Richards*

Deep Sharing / Deep Listening

In the rounds of sharing, pay close attention to the allotted time so that all members have the opportunity to share.

Round 1 (each person about 2 minutes)

What does authenticity mean to you? Share briefly.

Round 2 (each person about 5 minutes)

Share more deeply stories and experiences of authenticity as a result of your exploration of the preparation materials.

Round 3

As time allows, share additional thoughts on authenticity or reflect on what others have shared.

Closing Words

Our deepest calling is to grow into our authentic selfhood,
whether or not it conforms to some image of who we ought to be.
As we do, we will not only find the joy that every human being seeks;
we will also find our path of authentic service in the world.
Parker Palmer

Song or Chime

The Covenant

I commit myself:

- to come to meetings when I possibly can, knowing that my presence is important to the group
- to let the facilitator know if I will be absent or need to quit
- to share with the facilitator the responsibility for good group process by watching how much time I take to speak and noticing what is going on for others
- to do the reading and thinking about the topic ahead of time
- to not gossip about what is shared in the group, and tell only my own story to others
- to honor the safety of the group by listening to what others share with an open heart
- to refrain from cross-talk, judging, or giving advice
- to share as deeply as I can when it is my turn