



Anything But Ordinary Time

"Look! I'm making all things new."
Revelation 21:5a

APCE Virtual Event

February 4-6, 2021

Workshop B: Navigating Difficult Conversations (B-4)

Friday, February 5, 2021 12:30-1:30pm

Facilitator: Barbara A. Wilson

Description: The Church is the Body of Christ and is called to be a community of faith, love, hope and witness. This workshop will provide courageous and brave space for contemplation and reflection that leads to collective action to move forward the work of justice. We will explore **practical frameworks** for healthy relationship building, collaboration and partnerships that increase resilience and vitality, and that deepens mission impact.

Rules of Engagement: Eric Law's "Respectful Communication Guidelines"

(adapted from the Kaleidescope Institute)

- **R – take Responsibility** for what you say and feel without blaming others
- **E – use Empathetic** listening
- **S – be Sensitive to differences** in communication/cultural styles
- **P – Ponder** what you hear and feel **before you speak**
- **E – Examine your own** assumptions and perceptions
- **C – keep Confidentiality**
- **T – Tolerate ambiguity** because we are not here to debate. There are no “winners” or “losers.”

Opening Group Exercise (5-7 minutes): Empathy Video (4.23 minutes)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cDDWvj_q-o8

Post in the chat – what did you see?

Small Group Exercise: Let's Celebrate 6 minutes)

What gives you energy and hope about relational ministry—collaboration, relationships, partnership for mission impact? Write down and share your thoughts.

| |
|--|
| |
| |
| |
| |

Consider: Turning to One Another, Margaret Wheatley

I believe we can change the world if we start listening to one another again.

Simple, honest, human conversation. Not mediation, negotiation, problem solving, debate or public meetings. Simple truthful conversation where we each have a chance to speak, we each feel heard and we each listen well. What would it feel like to be listening to each other again about what disturbs and troubles us? About what gives us energy and hope? About our yearnings, our fears, our prayers, our children?

Framework #1: Dignity Model, Dignity by Donna Hicks, Ph.D. (12 minutes)

Video (3 minutes): <https://www.youtube.com/watch/wSosTocATEA>

THE TEN ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF DIGNITY

Acceptance of Identity: Approach people as being neither inferior nor superior to you. Give others the freedom to express their authentic selves without fear of being negatively judged. Interact without prejudice or bias, accepting the ways in which race, religion, ethnicity, gender, class, sexual orientation, age, and disability may be at the core of other people's identities. Assume that others have integrity.

Inclusion: Make others feel that they belong, whatever the relationship—whether they are in your family, community, organization or nation.

Safety: Put people at ease at two levels: physically, so they feel safe from bodily harm, and psychologically, so they feel safe from being humiliated. Help them to feel free to speak without fear of retribution.

Acknowledgement: Give people your full attention by listening, hearing, validating, and responding to their concerns, feelings and experiences.

Recognition: Validate others for their talents, hard work, thoughtfulness, and help. Be generous with praise, and show appreciation and gratitude to others for their contribution and ideas.

Fairness: Treat people justly, with equality, and in an even-handed way according to agreed-on laws and rules. People feel you have honored their dignity when you treat them without discrimination or injustice.

Benefit of the Doubt: Treat people as trustworthy. Start with the premise that others have good motives and are acting with integrity.

Understanding: Believe that what others think matters. Give them the chance to explain and express their points of view. Actively listen in order to understand them.

Independence: Encourage people to act on their own behalf so that they feel in control of their lives and experience a sense of hope and possibility.

Accountability: Take responsibility for your actions. If you have violated the dignity of another person, apologize. Make a commitment to change hurtful behaviors.

THE TEN TEMPTATIONS TO VIOLATE DIGNITY

Taking the Bait: Don't take the bait. Don't let the bad behavior of others determine your own. Restraint is the better part of dignity. Don't justify getting even. Do *not* do unto others as they do unto you if it will cause harm.

Saving Face: Don't succumb to the temptation to save face. Don't lie, cover up, or deceive yourself. Tell the truth about what you have done.

Shirking Responsibility: Don't shirk responsibility when you have violated the dignity of others. Admit it when you make a mistake, and apologize if you hurt someone.

Seeking False Dignity: Beware of the desire for external recognition in the form of approval and praise. If we depend on others alone for validation of our worth, we are seeking false dignity. Authentic dignity resides within us. Don't be lured by false dignity.

Seeking False Security: Don't let your need for connection compromise your dignity. If we remain in a relationship in which our dignity is routinely violated, our desire for connection has outweighed our need to maintain our own dignity. Resist the temptation to settle for false security.

Avoiding Conflict: Stand up for yourself. Don't avoid confrontation when your dignity is violated. Take action. A violation is a signal that something in a relationship needs to change.

Being the Victim: Don't assume that you are the innocent victim in a troubled relationship. Open yourself to the idea that you might be contributing to the problem. We need to look at ourselves as others see us.

Resisting Feedback: Don't resist feedback from others. We often don't know what we don't know. We all have blind spots; we all unconsciously behave in undignified ways. We need to overcome our self-protective instincts and accept constructive criticism. Feedback gives us an opportunity to grow.

Blaming and Shaming Others to Deflect Your Own Guilt: Don't blame and shame others to deflect your own guilt. Control the urge to defend yourself by making others look bad.

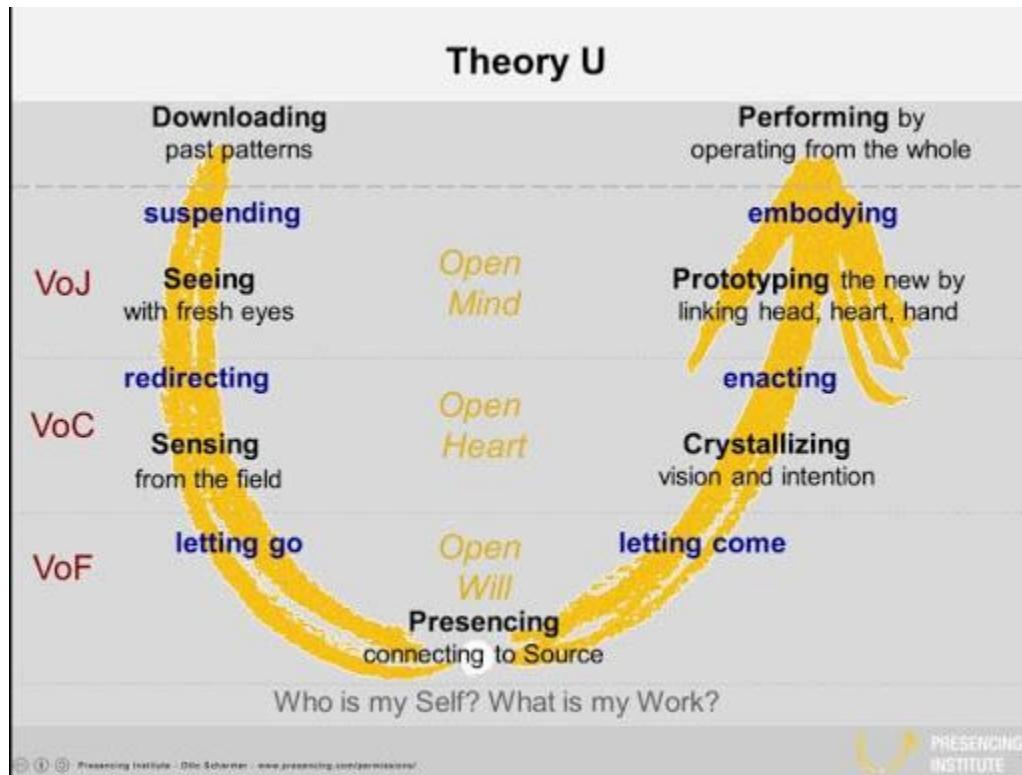
Engaging in False Intimacy and Demeaning Gossip: Beware of the tendency to connect by gossiping about others in a demeaning way. Being critical and judgmental about others when they are not present is harmful and undignified. If you want to create intimacy with another, speak the truth about yourself, about what is happening in your inner world, and invite the other person to do the same.

Framework #2: Ego to Eco Leadership, Theory U, Otto Scharmer, Presencing Institute (12m)

Building upon two decades of action research at MIT, the process shows how individuals, teams, organizations and large systems can build the essential leadership capacities needed to address the root causes of today's social, environmental, and spiritual challenges. In essence,

we show how to update the operating code in our societal systems through a shift in consciousness from ego-system to eco-system awareness.

Tapping Our Collective Capacities, Illuminating the Blind Spot, Working for Societal Transformation



Framework #3 Faith-Rooted Relational Meetings (One-on-Ones) (12m)

Alexia Salvatierra: *Faith-Rooted Approach/Organizing is Living, Serving, Leading, Building Relationships and Organizing as if God is REAL.*

Faith-Rootedness is connecting *being with doing*.

Relational Meetings are: Deliberate, intentional conversation to build and/or deepen a relationship.

1. Requires thoughtful, prayerful preparation
2. Person more important than self-interests
3. Mutuality and accountability
4. Sharing of stories and self-interests
5. Learn/share what's important/values
6. Face to Face; deep listening
7. 30-45 minutes (no more than 1 hour)

Q & A

AFTER WORKSHOP CHALLENGE: LET'S DREAM TOGETHER

F-1.0301 The Church Is the Body of Christ

The Church is to be a **community of faith**, entrusting itself to God alone, even at the risk of losing its life. **What should relationships look like for us as a community of faith?**

The Church is to be a **community of hope**, rejoicing in the sure and certain knowledge that, in Christ, God is making a new creation. **How should our relationships reflect us as a community of hope?**

The Church is to be a **community of love**, where sin is forgiven, reconciliation is accomplished, and the dividing walls of hostility are torn down.

What dividing walls between us must be torn down in order to deepen relationships?

The Church is to be a **community of witness**, pointing beyond itself through word and work to the good news of God's transforming grace in Christ Jesus its Lord.

How should our relationships reflect us as a community of witness?

| |
|--|
| |
| |
| |
| |
| |

Thank You!

Email: bwilson@chicagopresbytery.org