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- Archetypes — if that's all it is, we lose ...
  - Reading Bonhoeffer ... accountability that you lose if you only imagine the idea of deity as being from within. You lose the external judgment, external sense of ... you could be more than you are
    - or, you hold yourself accountable to a higher standard. Self-accountability could be the most powerful form of accountability, if you're serious about it
  - I resonate more with outer accountability
    - Something compelling and helpful about seeing it as external.
    - obviously, it does get formed by our own values and our own struggles.
    - God created man, and ever since man has been returning the favor
    - We do that, but there's a reason why we project it out into the universe. Not necessarily a bad thing
- How you manage that place between, being committed to truth, but also reflecting on it, and standing away from it
  - That's the heart of spiritual practice.
  - Prayer is designed to help us do that.
  - Effort to be mindful
  - Bc none of us can live a life of pure reflection. Need to be engaged in the world
  - Bodhisattva ideal ... you stay in the world
  - Part of spiritual maturity is that awareness ... dual place ... more flexible I am, the more agile I am at moving back and forth ... commitment and reflection, the healthier, there effective, more humble and not taking myself too seriously
  - No end point ... anti-racism work is good example ... we're committed to dismantling racism, but if we have the patience and humility to listen to input from folks who tell us impact, we have to say, maybe we should take our fragility as an object of reflection
  - Who are we in this relationship? Could make us more effective.
  - Shouldn't make us run for cover, away from the work
  - Spiritual maturity — stay in place of listening
- Humanist friends ... freak out at the word prayer.
  - Love classical poetry. Keats talking to grecian urn, Robert frost, autumn leaves
    - We don't tax those poets with being stupid, because they are addressing inanimate objects. Don't take it literally. We get they are involved in a poetic exercise ... we can bring that same poetic exercise to our experience with sacredness
    - We're not going to get phone call from god. We have to get beyond the "rightness" or wrongness about those ideas
    - Other people who are equally mistaken on the other side of the concreteness ... god exists ... punishing gays ...
    - Also leads to immaturity. Not being able to move in the metaphor ... trying to make it literal ... doesn't
- Judgment with maturity vs immaturity
- John Cooper ... qualities appear as practices. Chaplain. Practice rather than achieve
  - What are the resources when a practice is called for.
  - If I'm really tired, am I less likely to show up?
  - Practices easier with some than others (family vs. congregation)
  - How can I know myself better, to know myself better, and become more of the person I want to be.
    - We're so judge ...
    - Life experience — become unembedded from others' approval of me ... become object of reflection
- Laurel: working on myself ... way to cultivate spiritual maturity in a congregation?

- Two questions: how do you encourage individual members of the congregation to do their own work?
  - How does an institute assess its collective spiritual maturity?
  - Naming that process, developmental process ... we're all on this path
    - Part of why we come to church ... who are the people we want to be like ...
    - We find people at congregations we want to be like
    - How do we get the institution / community to look at itself?
      - Get out of fear, egotism, how open is the community to the feedback about their impact on the environment? Commitment to self awareness? movement, our city, particular issues we're focusing on.
      - How do we know who we are? As covenanted community?
  - How to present the question to the congregation?
    - You can take each of these qualities, inquire about it, on a collective level.
    - How willing are we, as a group, to live with complexity and ambiguity?
    - Or smash our conflicts down to black/white questions
    - How do we understand leadership and the corruptions of leadership, and the responsibilities of the loyal opposition and the critical supporter? How do we manifest them, as we choose and support our leaders in the community?
    - Fantasy is, what if we had a community full of people, doing the personal work, and in the community, and the community does the work ... mutuality of personal and institutional practice back and forth
- me: Piaget ... markers of maturity
  - But these ... we go back and forth over the marker
  - Ongoing practice that you never check them off
  - But also a lightbulb moment, when we become able to reflect on this thing, rather than React to it.
  - If someone is still embedded in their fear and rejection of being in the presence of pain (your own or others) ... escape in whatever way
    - Moment when you go, oh, it's not just this situation is unbreable, but in general, I have trouble being with pain
    - How is that affecting my life, my world?
    - There is an "aha" ... but that's just the start ...
- Teaching our congregations
  - What happens lightbulb moments to be a possibility?
    - Some of the best ways, put in uncomfortable positions
    - CPE ... we put ourselves in the hospital room ... with person who's hurting ... confront the question of, what do we bring? Who are we in that position?
    - With leadership, we get ourselves elected to the board, but do our congregations help us say, what about this is spiritual practice?
    - Grow personally, rather than just filling hole for congregation.
    - AND, just giving people vocabulary of developmental process
    - Not that those others are stupid ... not maliciously ignorant ... the lightbulb hasn't come on ... even for us adults
    - Process of unfolding that is under way in all of us.
    - We're so easily shamed ... horrible to tag someone as spiritually immature
    - Helpful to be able to say, I may not yet be the person I want to become
  - Victor: situation where you encountered ... seen blocks in person ... how do you facilitate that?
    - Only in the situation where that person is saying to me, this situation is causing me discomfort, can you help?
      - In that case, I might explore with them, reflectiveness / embeddedness ...
      - If they're not asking for help, how is it affecting me and my behavior, that I see this "immaturity" ?? What am I called to do in response? (but not fix them)

- What does my practice need to be, dealing compassionately and groundedly, how can I be the best possible model? That's my job. Only when asked, it's not my job to fix.
- Janet (Mrs. Victor): collective spiritual maturity ... Piaget, some societies never make it to formal operations. How do you assess a collective spiritual maturity? Learning vocabulary, yes, but what else?
  - Purpose would be to help the community assess itself. Meta question: how easy it is for us to look at ourselves?
  - Pays a lot of attention to what its impact outside of itself? Larger community how are we affecting them? Do we know? Have curiosity?
  - How metaphorically fluent are we? Can we use lots of different ways of talking about the holy?
  - How willing are we, as a body of people, to be in the presence of pain? If we need to change the hour of the Sunday morning service ... someone's world will come apart, others might feel rejected if it doesn't happen? Who is in the presence of that pain, so those people can move? Can figure out what it is they're losing? Begin to engage with that loss? Articulate that loss?
  - All the qualities, can be assessed individually or community-wise
- Janet: useful tool, to step back and observe
  - Twisted shorts ... what ways to address it
  - Getting at, being sensitive to other people's needs
  - Holding conflict up to the light, not making a decision
  - Kendyl: always ask yourself, how have I gotten hooked? Where am I not aware of my immature attachments, or embednesses, my need to be loved or to be right about this issue.
  - Nervous, spiritual maturity of that other person ... it's always a personal journey, one's own spiritual maturity
  - When I am modeling that ... working with these qualities, ways of being in the world, and people can see it
  - That's the point of leadership, and the teaching process
  - Here's what it looks like on the hoof, imperfect and unfinished
  - That's what spiritual leaders always do ...
- Janet: collecting samples over time of turbidity in a stream
  - Little measurements over time ... not constant temperature taking of congregation
  - Continual sampling, noticing,
- Lea: congregation would need to identify what they want to be noticing ...
  - Twelve might be too many at once
  - Kendyl: is spiritual maturity a concept that even makes sense to us. Do we aspire to it?
- Tool, how do we get from embedness to reflection ... mindfulness meditation... observing your own life
  - (very different from buddhist meditation)
  - Difference between a dog and a cat ... the cat will watch and observe, and not take the bait
- Ideal to become audience of our own process ... we gain awareness and effectiveness ... assuming there's a kind of person we want to be
  - Happiness ... want to be happy ... what's going to make us happy? Not Madison avenue.
  - What can we pursue that will bring us to that state?
  - Power to get people to do things my way ... need to be admired ... that falls by the wayside, the more I can focus on these things ... ask, is this moving me towards where I want to go?
- Place safe enough to practice without being judged
  - Accountability is part of that.
  - Safety of the place is both the absence of shame/judgment, AND the assurance that I will hear about it, if I'm hurting somebody

- F?? Conflict in congregation, 10 yrs back. Observer and accountable, 5 years from now, how will I feel about how I behaved and how others behaved
  - Bring you into observe mode. Wore chalice every day.
- Toehold humanist gospel: we all need to live our lives, as an ethical person ...
  - That is a spiritual practice
  - Could feel on display, theological non-conformist
- Janen: UUism is whatever you make it ... you belong because you're a piece of it ... coming from fundamentalism, that was such a great thing other ... blessing and responsibility
- sally: friedman, generation to generation, differentiation
  - Systems theory ... interpersonally and institutionally
  - Idea of self-differentiation, big part of sophrosyne ... where do you leave off and someone else begins? Boundaries but not necessarily what you create ... also your recognition of the truth that's in the world
  - In order for us to not make other people the objects of our projections, that also requires self-awareness.
  - More embedded in unreflective reactivity, the more it's all about everybody else. I HAD to do that thing, because that other person \_\_\_\_\_ [made me do it]. ... other forces in my life are compelling me to respond
- Prayer : words like worship and prayer ... there are verbs that can have an object or not have an object
  - Example: I'm going to play ... meaningful statement.
  - Soccer? The flute? Bridge? What are you going to play
  - I don't know, I'm just going to play
  - Mom failing to understand ... if she insists that verb has an object
  - I'm going to worship, doesn't have to be transitive verb
  - Experience I'm going to have, not about object of that experience
  - If I'm singing, doesn't mean who's listening
  - If I'm praying, I'm engaging in a human activity ...
  - Human activity formerly known as prayer
    - Human experience ... might not be comfortable with that word, but it's something still happens to us, emerges from within us
    - Don't believe there's somebody out there ... dag hammerskjold
      - Oh lord, thine the day and I the days
      - The day s in the ands of whatever the forces of good in the universe, not ours to control. Our task is to the particular day, how we respond, for ourselves, our fellows, response to beauty
      - Who cares what he means by Lord? That's his problem. I'm captured by the spiritual essence of that aspiration, that the day should belong to something holy, and I should belong to the day
  - Lyda: when you're aware of somebody struggling ... people I care about, if they haven't asked me to do anything, might tell them something once, then drop it.
- Victor: prayer / worship. Orthodox judaism. Those words were very oppressive to me.
  - Didn't realize till many years later it didn't need an object. So powerful to realize a humanist can pray.
  - Kendyl: grew up UU ... language of prayer is a learned language. Envious of others who had that embedded knowledge
  - Depriving our children to not give them words of depth and power that are engraved in their neural pathways ... if we don't do it, Madison Ave. will

- John Cooper : grew up humanist. Earliest memories, I had spiritual experiences, and there was no container. Deep spiritual wounds from UU ... alienated child in my home congregation.
  - Bruce Lee student ... finger pointing at the moon. If you look at the finger, you will miss the heavenly glory
  - Q: what have you found, as a way of making space, in congregational work? Pain is a natural response to spiritual distress. How do you hold that pain?
    - Kendyl: very important to acknowledge that people come to our congregations wounded.
    - That roundedness is to be welcomed. yes, come in, ... and our expectation is that you are going to get over it. We are going to make this a place in which you can grow beyond that. The positives of that background, and get on with it.
    - No interest in running a catering service for people to nurture their woundedness, wherever it comes from.
    - Affirm the pain ... this is a place that we will begin the presence of your pain, and eventually, we believe that you will heal. Find ways of being a self with integrity, that doesn't need to be a victim the rest of your life.
    - There is more than pain! We are a community to testify to that. As you grow into that more healed, competent self, that has more to give than that pain
      - receptive, but also challenge people to grow beyond that
  - Spiritual experiences: discovered as fundamentalists discover sex ... overwhelming experience that I had to go out and find ways to talk about.
  - Lea: covenant ... ??
    - No consensus around that. The purpose of the church is spiritual growth. The categories don't matter. If we were all clear that our agenda is to help each other grow spiritually, challenge each other, create structures of accountability, excited about the possibility, sharing the ways in which each of us has grown, the community has grown ...
    - We could ritualize it.
    - Receive new members ... are you committed to being on a path of spiritual growth with us? We are committed to it, for you
      - We come to practice and learn how to be our best selves
      - If we don't have a sense of how deeply engaging that work can be, it can sound like ethical heroism ... making us better people (narrow sense)
      - Our best selves needs to have more expansive understanding than just that narrow ethical focus
  - Laurel: community w/spiritual maturity ... ministers that were beloved. When they left, that was test of community's emotional maturity ...
    - Good interim ministry work, the spiritual maturity of the congregation
  - Lyda: hopefully, your minister is a non-anxious presence. But if you only have one non-anxious person, you're in trouble.
    - Be attentive to the question: how did THAT come out of my mouth? Capacity for self-reflection ... not about the words, but the reflection and learning
  - Jacquie: internal personal growth ... in relation to justice.
    - Kendyl: 1, having some awareness of your self in that tangle category. The worst thing we do is go charging in to help the victims, to fix it. Whether they want us to or not. That's all about us. Our discomfort, not theirs. We've gotten better about this. To be in a genuinely listening posture with community we feel has been treated unjustly, so we don't compound the problem. What makes sense for them? As we want to be competent allies
      - also, 2. How do we do uncorrupted leadership? That is not about our egos and fears and needs for power?
      - How do we acknowledge the complexity of some of the problems we would like to solve in simple ways? How do we affirm our movement toward moral order and the

beauty of wholeness and right relation that doesn't always operate according to a formula. Justice comes out of relationship, when you figure out what accountability, mercy, mean? How to hold them together, into outcome that serve everybody? Ways to apply these categories to the work we do in justice

- Jacquie: white supremacy group, marching, we are not going to be erased.
  - I understand that. Other side is, larger community.
  - How to work with them?
- Kendyl: trying to understand what it means to be white. We used to have no racial identity. We are not color-less, without racial identity.
  - then, alt-right folks ... claim about white identity, celebrating white identity.
  - message: for us: what is white identity/. If its a thing, and we have it, then what would it mean to celebrate it in a way that wasn't oppressive?
    - complicated, confusing, no answer
    - but, somewhere, way to find a way forward from impasse
    - We've got to be able to talk to folks we disagree with
    - Figure out how to understand their inherent worth and dignity
- In 50s, Ken Patton wrote article, resigning from the white race. Adulation from other white people, but what did POC think of that?
  - We're now taking our whiteness as an object of reflection
- How do we learn to be more competent in implementing our values?
- Final quality: fluency with metaphor. No one language can express everything ... each language has concepts that can't be expressed as well as another language
  - The more fluent we are, the better
- Victor: developmental unfolding of spiritual maturity ... does older age provide a special time for spiritual growth?
  - Kendyl: I HOPE SO! They think so in other cultures.
    - Traditional indian model, student, householder, wandering aesthetic
    - Old age, if you live that long, spiritual inquiry and learning and growth
    - Some older people in my congregation, become translucent ... the light shines through them
- Lyda: hospice ... write dreams ...
  - father, dreamt of fishing ... limit ... this is your limit
  - kendyl: maybe we grow into something on behalf of humanity as a whole. The growth is not just ours, but for the benefit of others.
- Lea: maslow, spiritual development comes after other needs met

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