

Contemplative Dialog Process for the Ministry

LEADERS DIALOG PROCESS

The Power of Commitment:

Simple and Profound Acts that Make a Difference

This session will include an introduction to and exercise in contemplative dialog. Helen Spector created this dynamic process for the Parliament of the World's Religions, which Yogacharya O'Brian participated in and brought to our ministers and the larger community.

We are inspired to offer this opportunity because we believe that anyone can exercise effective leadership when they feel deeply about an issue and take initiative. We believe that the power for making change comes from the motivations people feel when they can see the human impact of an issue, and that people already have a source of wisdom from their spiritual tradition or deepest source of values that inspires or compels them to act. And we believe that while one individual can make significant change, acting in community has an even greater power for sustaining broad-based change over time.

We have put these beliefs into questions that we ask you to reflect upon and respond to—questions that can lead you to the point where you know what you would like to do, and feel that you can make a commitment to something simple and profound that will make a difference. This is the same process used at the International Leaders' Assembly at Montserrat, Spain, and with participants at the Parliament of the World's Religions in Barcelona in July, 2004.

The questions that follow sketch out a progression of reflection and commitment. They outline a process for personal reflection and possible discussion with others that can produce both real commitment and significant change in the individual, the ministry, the community, and the world. This morning, we focused on the power of spiritual attunement to create positive change. Now, we come to the time to reflect on the inspiration of our deepest values and our hopes for this ministry as we contribute to an awakening world and prepare to commit to simple and profound acts that support a better world for all.

SUPPORTING YOUR CONVERSATIONS

As you and the others in your group reflect on and share your experiences and hopes about creating positive change through attunement and spiritually conscious action, please support yourselves with the following guidelines:

- To experience each other as equally human and equally divine, take time to introduce yourselves;
- To share what you have in common, allow time for each person to talk about what this issue means to them and what they hope for the future;
- To understand and be understood, support your conversations with deep, appreciative listening and heart-felt sharing;
- To move forward toward a commitment that you can take yourself, let go of the need to agree with one another; allow each person their own truth with grace and respect.

CHOOSE A FACILITATOR

- To keep your group on track throughout the process, please choose a facilitator to keep time for each segment of individual and group sharing.

SEGMENT ONE

(15 minutes)

Personal Reflection: (6 minutes)

How do I experience myself as a disciple and ministry leader,
or how do I see myself as worthy of contributing to the growing edge of this ministry?

Sharing: (8 minutes total)

Please take 2 minutes to introduce yourself & share about your individual reflections.

SEGMENT TWO

(18 minutes)

Personal Reflection: (6 minutes)

*What is the source of my most deeply held values, and what do I find there that inspires me to commit to awaken and contribute to an awakening world?
What compels me to act to make a difference?*

Sharing: (12 minutes total)

Please take 2-3 minutes to share with your group about your individual reflections.

SEGMENT THREE

(18 minutes)

Personal Reflection: (6 minutes)

How do I see/hope/feel/believe that spiritual attunement can help put us on the road to a thriving life and ministry?

Sharing: (12 minutes)

Please take 2-3 minutes each to share with your group about your individual reflections.

SEGMENT FOUR
(16 minutes total)

Personal Reflection: (8 minutes)

Consider one thing that an inspired and committed act of yours could do to make a difference and positively impact you, this ministry, your family, your place of work, your community, and our awakening world.

What simple and inspired act for thriving of my soul and this ministry am I willing to commit to before I leave here today?

What must I become to be a conduit for this?

Who will I engage?

What is my first step?

Please write your commitment in the space on this page for your own record AND also on the commitment card given to you, with your name and contact information.

SIMPLE AND PROFOUND ACT:

Sharing My Personal Commitment (8 minutes total)

Please take 2 minutes each to share your commitment with your small group by reading what you have written.