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Practices for Awakening Leadership

Fall, 2015

“The most common way people give up their power is by thinking they don’t have any.”
– Alice Walker

As people of faith drawing inspiration from ecology, progressive Christian faith, recovery movements, and grassroots relational organizing, we seek recovery to right-relationship with God and the spiritual/relational power God offers. We see God’s power of love being enacted as compassion and justice *through us* for the sake of the world. We call this “leadership.”

To support ourselves and our faith communities in taking courageous public action for the recovery of human life and the healing of God’s creation, we engage in the following practices:

1) Spiritual Grounding through which we see our place within God’s evolving universe and learn to practice an earth-honoring faith.

Personal: **We engage in daily spiritual practices** through which we acknowledge our *powerlessness* over addictive societal systems, come to believe that a Power greater than ourselves can restore us to wholeness, and reclaim a right relationship with God’s creative power moving through us and the whole creation.

Interpersonal: **We incorporate spiritual grounding and other Practices for Awakening Leadership** when we come together with others who also desire this in order to further open our relationships to God’s creative, life-giving power.

Faith Community: **We reimagine our faith traditions** by reclaiming the Bible as a resource for an earth-honoring faith, repenting of ways we have not used our Scriptures and traditions in support of justice for the oppressed, and reviving our ritual life as a source of compassionate action in service of the diversity, interdependence and well-being of God’s creation.

Public Sphere: **We plan and lead creative public rituals and actions** through which we heed God's call to worship by "doing justice, loving kindness and walking humbly with God."

2) Relational Practices which enable us to cultivate the power present in our relationships and the capacity of our relational networks to take action for the common good.

Personal: **We engage in Intentional Relational Conversations (One-to-One's)** where we discover more about ourselves while learning about another. Over time we discern whether mutual interests lead us to act together for the common good of our civic communities, watersheds and bioregions.

Interpersonal: **We seek authentic, mutual Relationships with the most vulnerable and oppressed among us and those who dwelled on this land before we did.** We listen for the ways in which injustice to the land is linked to injustice to its peoples and the ways in which environmental injustice enacts oppression. We seek to become visible allies with one another by examining our disproportionate resources and privileges, and using them with thoughtfulness, transparency and respect.

Faith Community: **We organize focused Listening Seasons** in which a group or congregation conducts multiple one-to-one conversations throughout its community over several weeks to discern common concerns, ideas, and themes. We intentionally seek to include the participation of those who are too often invisible or discounted.

Public Sphere: **We develop individual and collective relationships with political and economic leaders** to support the recovery of our institutions as spaces in which relational power can advance the common good of people and their ecological communities.

3) Telling Our Stories to claim the power of God at work in our lived experiences and share our stories to advance the recovery of human life and the healing of God's creation.

Personal: **We become curious about our own stories and sense of call.** We claim responsibility to educate ourselves about the ways our personal journeys have been shaped by the stories of our families, ancestors, communities, cultures, economic systems, political systems, societal institutions, faith traditions, land, and the 13.8 billion-year unfolding of God's universe. We become literate about the ways these various stories do or do not contribute to a sustainable planet for all.

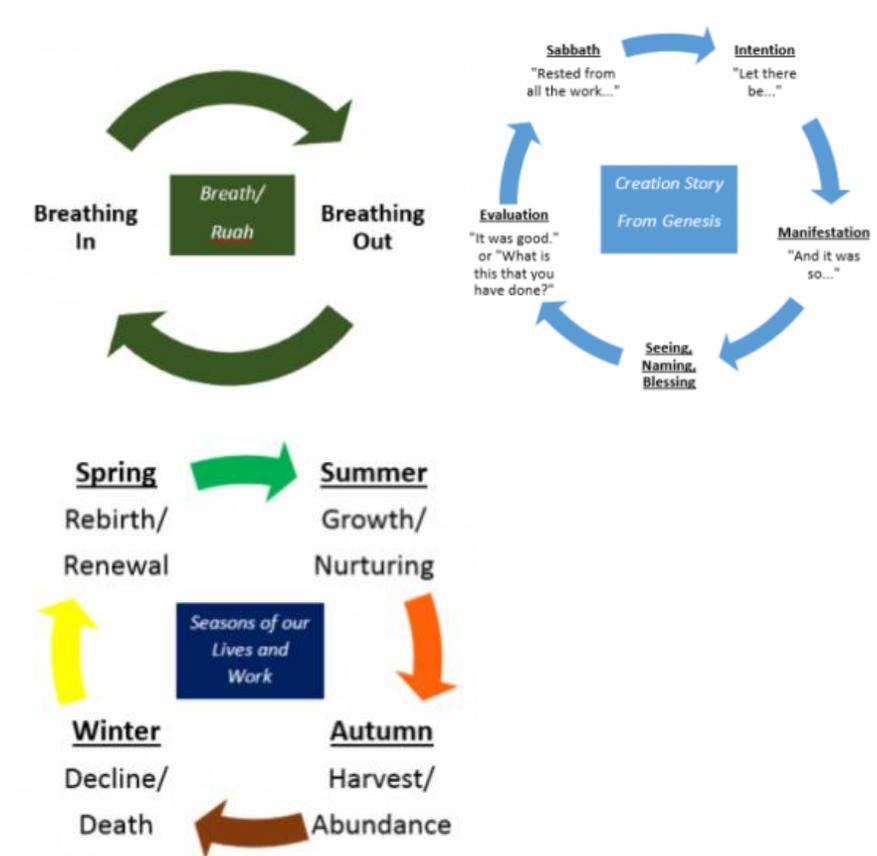
Interpersonal: **We practice sharing our stories and motivation for action with others whenever appropriate opportunities arise.** We become more confident about the ways God can use our stories alongside the stories of others to inspire recovery for human life and healing for God's creation.

Faith Community: **We publicly share our stories and visions within our communities of faith and other communities.** Discovering that our personal stories can be both instructive and inspiring, we seek opportunities to tell our stories publicly, practicing them in advance, and

requesting feedback afterwards to further develop the power and capacity of our stories to make a difference.

Public Sphere: We organize opportunities for our stories and the stories of the most marginalized among us to have public impact on public officials, public policies and economic practices which impinge upon God’s living earth. We learn how to call forth the time, money, turn-out and other resources that enable these stories to make a positive difference.

4) Rhythms of Engagement through which we realign the rhythms of our lives with the regenerative cycles of God’s creation. A few examples include:



Personal: We allow the breadth of God’s cycles to shape the rhythm of our personal and family life. We seek to allow God’s priorities to shape the pace and rhythms by which the good gifts of creation flow through our lives.

Interpersonal: We ask for support and extend support to others in finding the right balance of God’s rhythms, so that those rhythms might take deeper root in our lives.

Faith Community: **We organize gatherings of our faith communities to explicitly include the rhythms of Preparation, Action, Reflection, Evaluation and Sabbath.**

Public Sphere: **We help organize our faith communities to prepare for and engage in public action. We reflect upon and evaluate** our leadership efforts and public actions, celebrating our successes and identifying specific areas for growth. We pause to delight in our relationships with human communities and all of God's creation before moving onto the next daily, weekly or monthly cycle of action.

5) Mentoring and Mutual-Mentoring whereby sustained attention fosters the nurturing and development of our deepest gifts.

Personal: **At every stage of life, we reflect upon the way our own sense of call could be nurtured by a mentor and the gifts we have to offer by serving as mentor to another.**

Interpersonal: **We invite somebody to mentor us and offer ourselves as a mentor to another, trusting that both mentoring and being mentored develop greater clarity** about our call and a greater capacity to live it out.

Faith Community: **We seek to develop cultures of mentoring within our faith communities and the other communities of which we are a part.**

Public Sphere: **We engage in public efforts to create and incentivize mentoring.** We support a transition from compartmentalized notions of "jobs we do" to a more holistic sense of "vocations we pursue" to promote social justice while nurturing the community of life.

6) Conscious Leadership Development through which we generate a vast regenerative ecosystem of courageous leaders capable of taking public action for the recovery of human life and healing of God's creation.

Personal: **We take interest in our own leadership development by investing our curiosity, energy, time, money and other resources to nurture our capacity to live out our call.**

Interpersonal: **We model interest in our own leadership development and the development of others** by explicitly naming the God-given gifts, call, struggles, and potential we see in ourselves and that which we see in others. We risk inviting and offering feedback for the purpose of growth. We affirm one another's courage in stepping out into uncharted territory, celebrating how mistakes and failures provide rich opportunities for growth throughout creation.

Faith Community: **We cultivate cultures of conscious leadership development within our communities of faith** by regularly and personally inviting others into developmentally appropriate leadership roles, even when this takes more time and energy than doing it ourselves.

Public Sphere: **We engage in public efforts to promote leadership development throughout the workforce** through public actions that create pathways out of dead-end jobs into life-giving vocations that improve the health and well-being of communities.

