

Love the Other

Adapted from the #anth101challenge7 by Dr. Wesch

Your challenge is to understand and empathize with somebody as different from you as possible, preferably with differences that are especially difficult for you to understand. Practice being present.

Step 1: Find an other. They should have beliefs, ideas, or ideals that you find very difficult or even impossible to understand.

Step 2: Big Talk. Set aside at least one hour to have a very deep conversation with them. While listening to your other ask yourself these questions (from *Soulful Spirituality* by David Benner):

1. Am I fully present or distracted?
2. Am I loving or judging?
3. Am I open or closed to being changed?

Select questions from below to get you started (adapted from “36 Questions to Make you Fall in Love”):

1. What are you most grateful for in your life?
2. What would constitute a “perfect” day for you?
3. Name 3 things you and your other appear to have in common.
4. Share your life story with your other in 4 minutes.
5. Alternate sharing something you consider a weakness about yourself. Share 3 items.
6. Alternate sharing something you consider a positive characteristic about your other. Share 3 items.
7. If you were a character in a movie and the opening scene is an image of you doing something all alone with nobody watching that is supposed to give us a glimpse into the real you, what would we see? (You can do a montage of scenes if one doesn't seem to capture it all.)
8. If you were going to become a close friend with your partner, please share what would be important for him or her to know.
9. When did you last cry in front of someone? By yourself?
10. If you were to die this evening with no chance to communicate with anyone, what would you most regret not having told someone? Why haven't you told them yet?

Step 3: Reflect on all you have learned about who they are and who they are becoming, where they have been and where they are going, what they have done and what they will do, who they have touched and who they will touch.

Step 4: Share a few sentences with Ben Deaver at bendeaver@tallgrass.church or (785) 341-9863 about your experience. Take a selfie or screenshot of the two of you or if you or your partner prefer to remain anonymous, take an artistic shot that demonstrates the differences you have overcome. You may also find or create an image that represents these differences, your similarities, a topic of conversation, or your experience building a new connection.