

Faith and Learning Scholar Community Dialogue Dinner

Hope, Solidarity, and Justice

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Agenda and Leading Questions

(Remember there is no leader at your table, so begin the dialogue as a community of friends.)

"Even when all hope seems out of reach based on the evidence before us, faith can prevent us from falling into all-encompassing despair. Intrinsic faith, or faith in the intrinsic value of one's actions in the pursuit of justice, can powerfully sustain agents in struggle. Faith can even serve as a bedrock for the renewal, restoration, or the strengthening of hope when hope might otherwise be lost."

—Stockdale

(CH 5: Hope Under Oppression, 2021, New York: Oxford University Press)

Introductions

Go around your table and introduce yourself.

- "I am _____, and Fall break gave me the opportunity/challenge to _____."
- Hope is one of the foundational virtues in many spiritual traditions. Go around your table and share your understanding of hope and what it means to you OR share an experience in which you or someone you know has modeled living "hope" in our world.
- Go around the table again and share your response to the text and point out a particular section or concept of hope that challenged you and that you would like to explore in the dialogue this evening.

What is hope?

- Hope is a future-oriented attitude involving at least the desire for an outcome and a belief that the outcome is possible. (Downie, p. 2)
- Hope is an attitude that consists of the desire for an outcome, the belief that it is possible, and a positively oriented "what if" attitude toward the hoped-for end. (p. 3)
- Hope is a sense perception, a conscious mental state with a phenomenological character; there is something that it is like to hope for an outcome. (p.3)

Are you able to resonate with hope being an attitude, a desire, a feeling, a belief, a perception?

What is solidarity... emerging hope?

- The concept of solidarity challenges us to think not just about how I would live and act but how we should live and act together. (p. 5)
- Social Solidarity: solidarity based on common experiences and identities that help us to understand our moral obligations in addressing global threats like climate change, and solidarity based on common experiences and identities such as women's common experience of sexism in a patriarchal society. (Scholz 2009, VU professor!)
- Hope as virtue... ⁴ Does hope add value to our moral, social, and political lives?
- Recovering hope depends on discovering some new way of relating to others, specifically a way that recognizes the interdependence of the self and other in generating the best confidence for keeping hope alive. (p. 7)
- The hope born of solidarity is often a renewed or strengthened hope for some form of justice... a kind of collective hope for justice.

Explore the relationship between hope and this form of solidarity as it brings people together across differences, united not by shared experiences or identities but by their sense of what has to be done together in the pursuit of justice. How do we act together in solidarity?

Collective Hope

- Scholz (VU professor) p. 6: Political solidarity is primarily a movement of social change... Hope means that they believe the future can be better than the present. Hope might be necessary for solidarity... Without hope, there would be no reason

to act collectively... but it is also the case that the beginnings of a solidarity movement evidence not of hope for some but rather its loss or absence. So, a loss of hope can also spur solidarity.

- The hope born of solidarity begins with the recognition that there exist other people who are committed to standing by oneself against injustice. Examples in the text: hooks, Wong, Young, Mohanty, Jaffe.
- Collective Hope requires 3 positions (p. 8)

What is the object of collective hope and the possibilities for justice to emerge? Explore your experience with collective hope... in your life, our University, our world?

Hoping Well for Justice

- Utopian hope for complete justice whose realization would radically transform the world such that a moral ideal of complete justice, the object of hope, is obtained. (pp. with outcomes for racial justice, elimination of sexist oppression, and a world in which all people have the income they need to live a good life... the collective project of achieving that dream of a just society. (p. 14)
- Utopian Hoppers? (p. 16ff)

Share collective hopes for justice that you are aware of in your experience. Share commitments that you have committed yourself to and how hope/hopelessness was a driving force to "walk the talk".

Faith: Hope, Solidarity, Justice

- Faith in humanity that supports humanity's "goodness" (Rawls). Hope for justice rests on a kind of faith beyond what we see in the world right now. Faith that might vindicate the hope for justice. (p. 18)
- What is important is that the object of hope or the guiding ideal--elimination of all forms of injustice in the world--structures and guides individual and collective action; and that we do not lose sight of where we have been, how things are now, and where we are going. (p. 18)

Explore how FAITH may be an important virtue to achieve deep hope and solidarity for the common good for all people and our planet, our Earth...

Faith and Learning Dialogue Dinner Guidelines for Conversation

All gathered have wisdom to share from reading the text and from their lived faith journey. Guidelines for dialogue will enhance our conversations.

BE FULLY PRESENT We begin promptly at 6PM Be prepared with your thoughts from the text with what you would like to talk about at dinner.

- There is no appointed "facilitator." All the members at the table are responsible for the dinner dialogue.
- Leading questions are found on your table to begin the dialogue. These prompts are an invitation for everyone to share a few times before entering the dialogue based on the text.
- We gather in the spirit of Augustine; we learn and grow from each other's questions and insights: both Faculty Mentors and Student Scholars are learning from each other. Faculty Mentors are not formal teachers at the dinner table, and Student Scholars are not formal "listeners" at the table.
- Let everyone speak. Gently invite people who have not spoken to share their insights, questions, and/or thoughts

In Augustine's words

"All kinds of things rejoiced my soul in their company, to talk and laugh, to do other kindnesses, to read pleasant books together, to pass from lightest jesting to talk of deepest things and back again, to differ without rancor, to teach each other and to learn from each other. These and such things kindled a flame that fused our very souls together and made us one out of many."

—St. Augustine, Confessions 4.8