



continuing the journey of transforming grace:

transforming practice

June 10, 2024

First Step: "Take a Breath"

This reflection begins the five-part series offering skill-building to address the division and polarization encountered in our interactions with others, particularly those with whom we disagree. This reflection invites awareness of the importance of pausing to breathe deeply as the first step taken when we find ourselves in situations of discomfort or distress in our challenging times.

Opening Song:

Peace Like a River, Tabernacle Choir

Opening Reflection

Prayer Before the Prayer

by Desmond Tutu and Mpho Tutu,
read by Marcus Bohlman

Can we meet in the middle and look for the place where the path begins?

Scripture

Corinthians 4: 18

"...we look not to what is seen, but what is unseen; for what is seen is transitory, but what is unseen is eternal"

Practice

How Does Breathing Impact the Brain

Neuroscientist, Dr. Yewande Pearce

Box breathing

Pause to Listen and Learn

If you Want to Make a Change, Allow All Voices to Be Heard, with Todd Rose

Questions for Reflection and Dialogue

Without a pause, we may experience the chaos of defensive response and the propensity to violent rhetoric. Recall a moment when you experienced the discomfort of wanting to respond while recognizing your own inner turbulence.



Imagine yourself pausing to focus on your breath. How might it have been a tool for Transforming Grace? Explore this practice while you are watching a newscast, immersed in a conversation, or responding to an email of dissonance.

Share your reflections with another.

Closing Prayer

Give me the courage to pause
Allow me the radical response of
stillness in the face of chaos
Provide me the remembrance that to breathe
connects me to my deepest intentions
Release me into the space of finding common ground
through the fog of division
Awaken me to willingness to be still until the
turbulence settles
Open my ears to listen and my heart to believe
something else is possible.

Give me the courage to pause

Closing Song

Sending You Light

Ana Hernandez, Fran McKendree