

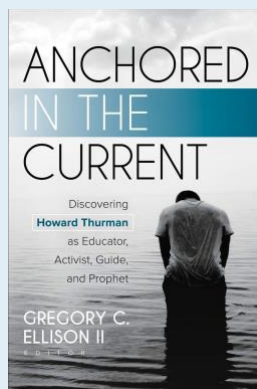
## GROWING EDGE Conversation Starter—August, 2020

### Episode 25: Anchored in the Current

#### September Questions of the Month

In this Growing Edge Podcast, we talk with author, educator, and activist Gregory Ellison II about his new book *Anchored in the Current*, a collection of essays about the work and enduring influence of the African American mystic, theologian, and civil rights activist Howard Thurman.

- (1) Greg offers a Thurman quote that grounds him at moments when he must make challenging choices. Are there words, images, or practices that ground you at such times?
- (2) Greg reflects on his experience of eulogizing his father, after whom he was named, in front of 3,000 people. He ponders the question, “What *must* I do to live a good life so I can have a good death?” How would you respond to that question?
- (3) In the podcast, we talk about the importance of not trying to bypass life’s darkness in order to get quickly to the light. What is your experience with the play of darkness and light that is part of all of our lives?
- (4) Greg says that “Howard Thurman created space for ‘the other’ to show up as him or herself.” Who has done that for you, in person or in art? How do you do that for other people?
- (5) Toward the end of the podcast, Greg speaks of the way Thurman’s work can open us to empathy for “the other,” and affirms the vital link between personal and institutional transformation. How do you think about that link, and what is your personal experience of it?



Anchored in the current is available to The Growing Edge audience at a 40% discount. Click [HERE](#) and use GROWINGEDGE as the discount code.

## Some Approaches to this Month's Question

You may want to explore the podcast and Questions of the Month privately, through journaling and silent reflection. But we urge you to consider gathering online for an exploration with one or more family members or friends. If that idea appeals to you, look into using Zoom, Facetime, Skype or some other video platform or talk with each other while practicing safe social distancing.

If you aren't familiar with [Zoom](#), it's easy to learn and has proven a wonderful way to host "face to face" conversations during the pandemic. A full-featured Basic Plan with unlimited meetings is free. There's a 40 minute time limit on conversations among three or more, but you can log right back on for another 40 minutes. If the technology baffles you, check for online instructions, or get on the phone and ask any middle-schooler you know!

For group explorations, we first listen to the podcast individually or together. Then, before you meet, review the [Circle of Trust Touchstones](#) from the [Center for Courage & Renewal](#). They're designed to create safe space for open-hearted dialogue on a wide range of topics.

As convener, read the Touchstones aloud—or ask others to read them aloud—and let people comment on them if they wish. Remind people of how important it is to make sure everyone gets ample time to speak and be heard. Then take a moment of quiet before inviting people to speak.

Begin the conversation by reading the Questions of the Month, then inviting people to respond whenever they are ready. No "forced marches" around the circle! As the Touchstones advise, listen to what people have to say without any cross-talk. Ask honest and open questions to help them say more, if they wish, but avoid trying to "fix, save, advise, or correct each other."

We need to find every way we can to reweave community during these hard times—and one of those ways is gathering online for conversations about things that matter. Give it a try!