

January, 2021 Growing Edge Podcast

Conversation Starter & Questions of the Month



Episode 29: The Handing Over Time

A Time Of Reflection, Transition, Truth-Telling & Hope

In the January podcast, we reflect on 2020 and what we see ahead in 2021. Here are a few questions for your own exploration, journaling, and dialogue with others. For conversations with friends, we urge you to use the online Zoom format.

1. After Parker gets us off to an unplanned start—stumbling into the New Year, as it were!—we ask each other is "How is it with your soul?", a traditional way of asking "How are you?" in certain cultures. Consider a session with friends where everyone gets a chance to respond to that deeper form of the question.
2. We live in a time when we must try to hold a creative tension between the harsh realities around us and the better way we know to be possible from experience. How is it going for you as you try stand and act faithfully in what we call "the tragic gap?"
3. Here's a quote that's featured on every page in our website: "Hope is holding a creative tension between what is and what could and should be, each day doing something to narrow the distance between the two." What kind of actions, small or large, can you commit to taking this week in support of one or two of your hopes?
4. With every crisis in life, there's also an opportunity. In what way have you seen a "breaking down" within yourself or in relation to others? How do you understand the opportunities that might be opened up because of the breakdown?

5. We found Mary Oliver's poem, "Starlings in Winter," a rich source of reflection. What caught your attention about that poem, what word, or line, or feeling? What is putting "lift into your boots" in this moment? What does it mean for you to risk hope as we head into the New Year?

Some Approaches to this Month's Questions

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.