

L'Arche USA 2017 Peer Cohorts Conversations - Lived Servant Leadership

Conversation # 3: Servant Leadership in connection with other Guiding Principles

Read through the L'Arche Guiding Principles on next page: Servant Leadership, Partnership, Subsidiarity, Accountability, Participation, Inculturation, Solidarity, Stewardship

Text

- Let me hear Your lovingkindness in the morning; For I trust in You; Teach me the way in which I should walk; For to You I lift up my soul. *Psalm 143:8*
- Wisdom is something that comes, little by little, through a lot of listening – *Jean Vanier*
- People say, what is the sense of our small effort? They cannot see that we must lay one brick at a time, take one step at a time. A pebble cast into a pond causes ripples that spread in all directions. Each one of our thoughts, words and deeds is like that. No one has a right to sit down and feel hopeless. There is too much work to do. *Dorothy Day, The Long Loneliness*
- And that is just the point... how the world, moist and beautiful, calls to each of us to make a new and serious response. That's the big question, the one the world throws at you every morning. "Here you are, alive. Would you like to make a comment?" *Mary Oliver*

Image/Meditation

I consider these 8 principles as parts of a whole that help guide L'Arche and can me in living L'Arche.

- Which slice do I pick more often – which comes most naturally to me?
- Which slice do leave for others - do I need to learn more about it or grow more in it?
- Which slice seems exotic and is calling to me now?
- Which do I need most in my membership?
- Which other slice I rely on most as a servant leader?



Reflection Questions

1. Is there a principle that is less clear or familiar to me, or one that I wonder how others live it in L'Arche? How could I learn more?
2. Mary Oliver points to our need to continually make a new and serious response to the world. How might these principles help guide that response?
3. As I think about my current lived experience, particularly any difficult aspects of membership or leadership, is there a wisdom to be heard and applied in listening to these principles?

L'Arche USA Guiding Principles: L'Arche USA seeks to embody the following governance principles, which apply to all members and structures in L'Arche in a spirit of mutuality:

1. **Servant Leadership:** Roles and structures of the Federation are at the service of the mission as lived out in our communities. Those in authority gain wisdom through respectful listening and taking counsel.
2. **Partnership:** Trust and collaboration operate freely within L'Arche. The structures are to foster that dynamic and embrace the partnerships among the spiritual, legal, financial, and communal elements.
3. **Subsidiarity:** Matters affecting L'Arche are dealt with at the most appropriate level, closest to the people affected. Only when they cannot be solved there are they referred to another level.
4. **Accountability:** When given a responsibility in L'Arche and the authority to go with it, accountability is to report back to those who gave the authority. Accountability is about being responsible and being linked to the wider body. It is also about taking responsibility for the consequences of one's actions.
5. **Participation:** Effective communication is essential in L'Arche. Processes are defined, published, and open. Wherever practical, they involve the people who implement and are affected by the decision. They include people with and without intellectual disability.
6. **Inculturation:** L'Arche communities live in different cultures. L'Arche embraces this diversity, while engaging in an ongoing process of reciprocal and critical interaction, adaptation and challenge between the community and the culture.
7. **Solidarity:** All in L'Arche share a common humanity and a fundamental equality. We have a shared responsibility for each other and are committed to the common good.
8. **Stewardship:** Out of grateful hearts, L'Arche seeks to care responsibly for its people, resources, time, and environment.