

Discussion Guide to A Convergent Model of Renewal: Remixing the Quaker Tradition in a Participatory Culture by C. Wess Daniels (Pickwick Publications 2015)

Introduction

“I don’t want to be an anti, against anybody. I simply want to be the builder of a great affirmation: the affirmation of God, who loves us and who wants to save us.” -Oscar Romero

- Discuss the first quote by Everett Cattell. What do you know of Cattell? As a small group do some quick internet research. How do you think his life may have informed this vision for renewal? What do you think he means by it? Where have you seen instances of renewal as a “falling to the ground and dying” around you?
- What does convergent mean? Is there anything surprising or challenging about the way this word is being used?
- What obstacles and opportunities do you see Quaker meetings/churches and yearly meetings facing?
- What are the three core impulses within the convergent model? Why do you think these things are important for seeking renewal? Is there anything missing from this you think is essential?
- What other parts stand out to you about this chapter? What parts did you gravitate towards? Which parts did you struggle with? What questions are you left with?

Chapter One: Alasdair MacIntyre and the Ongoing Nature of Tradition

“Tradition is the living faith of the dead, traditionalism is the dead faith of the living. And, I suppose I should add, it is traditionalism that gives tradition such a bad name.” -Jaroslav Pelikan

- What is your experience with “tradition?”
- What is the connection between tradition and modernity?
- If tradition is a historically extended argument, what argument(s) do you think the Quaker tradition is making?
- What are the stages of the development of a tradition?
- What are the qualities of an apprentice and how does one become an apprentice to a tradition?
- What do you think Dandelion means when he says, “Everything is testimony that comes from God?”
- What is happening in the example of the gardener (p. 34)? And how does this connect to understanding the nature of tradition and practices?
- Where have you experienced “epistemological crises?” or the “Dissolution of historically founded certitudes?”
- Consider the “questions of continuity.” Where do you see these at work within your own tradition?
- What other parts stand out to you about this chapter? What parts did you gravitate towards? Which parts did you struggle with? What questions are you left with?