The background features a dark blue gradient with faint, light blue circular patterns. A prominent scale is visible, with numbers ranging from 40 to 260 in increments of 10. The scale is curved and has tick marks. There are also several circular diagrams with arrows, suggesting a flow or cycle. The overall aesthetic is technical and analytical.

# CORE VIRTUES (HOW TO IDENTIFY AND MAP THEM), A VIRTUE FLOW CHART, PATIENCE, HAPPINESS, AND...

LARRY R. CHURCHILL  
WORKING VIRTUES, SESSION 6  
FEBRUARY 20, 2020  
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"I'd like you to check my  
Core Values."



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*"I keep my core beliefs written on my palm for easy reference."*



## CHIEF SEATTLE'S ORATION, 1854

Your religion was written upon tablets of stone by the iron finger of your God so that you could not forget. The Red Man could never comprehend or remember it. Our religion is the traditions of our ancestors -- the dreams of our old men, given them in solemn hours of the night by the Great Spirit -- and is written in the hearts of our people.

# WHAT ARE THE IMPORTANT (CORE) VIRTUES?

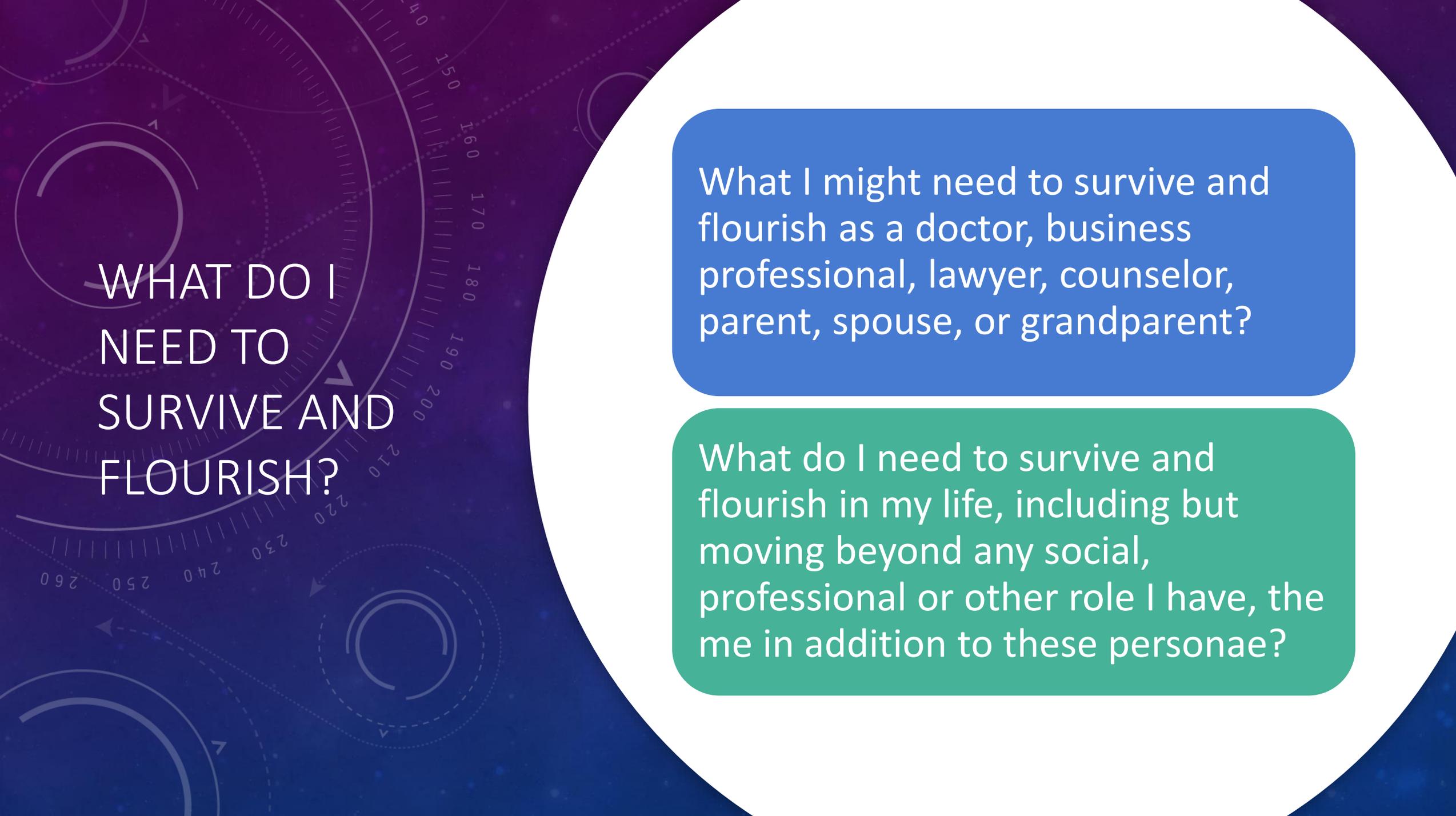
## *FROM SESSION 1*

- Virtues as Life Skills; **What virtues are needed to survive and flourish under the demands of living a life?**
- Are these the same for everyone? Do certain occupations or life situations call for special virtues?
- Are there age-appropriate virtues, e.g., different for the 20 year-old and the 70 year-old? Different for grandparenting than for parenting?

# 8 BASIC VIRTUES OF MEDICAL PRACTICE

*(TEEACCHH)*

- Trustworthiness
- Equanimity
- Empathy
- Advocacy
- Compassion
- Courage
- Humility
- Hope

The background features a dark blue to purple gradient with intricate circular patterns, including concentric circles, dashed lines, and numerical scales (140, 150, 160, 170, 180, 190, 200, 210, 220, 230, 240, 250, 260).

# WHAT DO I NEED TO SURVIVE AND FLOURISH?

What I might need to survive and flourish as a doctor, business professional, lawyer, counselor, parent, spouse, or grandparent?

What do I need to survive and flourish in my life, including but moving beyond any social, professional or other role I have, the me in addition to these personae?

# ESCHEW THE CORE!



What are *the* core virtues? The answer is practical, not theoretical; the definite article usually leads us astray.



What are *my* core virtues? Now, at this life stage; given my particular situation, those that address the surplus of self beyond my roles

# WHAT ARE MY CORE VIRTUES?

## 4 QUESTIONS

*from Session 1*

1. What are the traits of character, the virtues I most admire in others?
2. What virtue deficits do I think are most damaging?

# WHAT ARE MY CORE VIRTUES?

## 3. What is my mantra?

- “Let me be worthy of the day” + “May I find joy in the day.”
- “Do the best you can and take what comes.”
- A mantra is a daily saying , but also part of what we say at decision time, in times of uncertainty, or peril, or confusion.
- If my mantra shifts it is because my circumstances and the demands of my life have shifted; and/or I have had new insights.

# WHAT ARE MY CORE VIRTUES?

## 4. What is my practice?

- I must have a virtue practice. Beliefs and convictions won't get me there. A practice is not an illustration of a virtue; it is the virtue.
- The practice is its own reward; it holds within it the knowledge I seek.
- This knowledge is only partially conceptual; it resides most powerfully in the body.
- This knowledge is largely apophatic (ineffable), and I point to it, symbolize it, talk about it in parables, puzzles, and metaphors.

PRACTICING JUST 1 WILL LEAD TO (ALL?) THE OTHERS



# ANN PATCHETT, "MY YEAR OF NO SHOPPING," NYT 12/15/2017

Once I got the hang of giving shopping up, it wasn't much of a trick. The trickier part was living with the startling abundance that had become glaringly obvious when I stopped trying to get more. Once I could see what I already had, and what actually mattered, I was left with a feeling that was somewhere between sickened and humbled. When did I amass so many things, and did someone else need them?



If you stop thinking about what you might want, it's a whole lot easier to see what other people don't have. There's a reason that just about every religion regards material belongings as an impediment to peace. This is why Siddhartha had to leave his palace to become the Buddha. This is why Jesus said, "Blessed are the poor." It's why my friend Sister Nena, an 85-year-old Catholic nun, took a vow of poverty when she entered the convent at 18.



The things we buy and buy and buy are like a thick coat of Vaseline smeared on glass: We can see some shapes out there, light and dark, but in our constant craving for what we may still want, we miss life's details.

# PRACTICES CAN BE COMPLEX: CREATING “BOUNDARY MARKERS”

1. Be 100% present.
2. Listen with soft eyes.
3. Welcome silence.
4. When the going gets tough, turn to wonder.

Keats-- "I am certain of nothing but of the holiness of the heart's affections and the truth of the imagination."

5. Be invitational, not invasive.

Rilke-- "Love consists of this: two solitudes that meet, protect and greet each other. "

6. No Fixing; Healing begins when you allow others to tell their stories.
7. Honor 100% confidentiality. Create a safe and sacred space.

--Keith Hagan, MD, inspired by Parker Palmer, *A Hidden Wholeness*



# A RECAP: WHERE WE STARTED

*WORKING VIRTUES: Essential Moral Skills for a Good Life* --- the OLLI description

***“the moral life goes on continuously and is best defined not as episodic choices but as streams of practical virtues, or traits of character. These character traits live in us as personal and interactive skills, and it is these skills that both give us our daily orientation, and also shape our decisions and choices. This course will define and explore those moral skills...”***



A THREE-PART  
ANALYSIS

Virtues named

Skills engaged

Practices embodied

# VIRTUES WE HAVE NAMED

- Empathy
- Compassion
- Kindness
- Forgiveness
- Humility
- Truthfulness
- Hope
- Spiritual Virtues
- Lifespan Virtues

# SKILLS WE HAVE EXPLORED

1. Probing Curiosity: Interrogating my prehistory
2. Memory: What I have thought and felt
3. De-Centering: Taking the Ego out of the driver's seat
4. Relinquishing: Taming my moral vanity and giving up moral certainty
5. Cognitive: Thinking slowly
6. Feeling Skill:
  - a) emotions
  - b) sense of my body moving and being in time and space

SKILLS WE HAVE  
EXPLORED  
(CONTINUED)

7. Imaginative Skill: Expanding the reach of my empathy
8. Assertive Skill: Claiming my own moral authority
9. Connective Skill: Linking goodness with happiness
10. Narrative Skill: Story-telling/story-making

-- from Chapters 2 & 3, *Ethics for Everyone: A Skill-Based Approach* (Oxford, 2020)

## PRACTICES WE HAVE NOTED

- Mindfulness
- Meditation (e.g., meditative walking, or eating)
- Prayer, Centering Prayer
- Inner practices of letting go
- Fasting
- Retreats (e.g., from commercialism--buying nothing for a year; silence, especially in groups)
- Enacting “boundary markers”
- Potentially anything. . .



A FLOW CHART: VIRTUE  
TO SKILL TO PRACTICE,  
AND BACK AGAIN

Empathy

Imaginative Skill

Practice that embodies  
this skill, e.g.,  
suspending judgment,  
that results in...

Redefining the Virtue

WHEREVER WE START, WE END AT THE  
SAME PLACE--WHERE CONCEPTS, SKILLS  
AND PRACTICES FLOW IN THE SAME  
STREAM





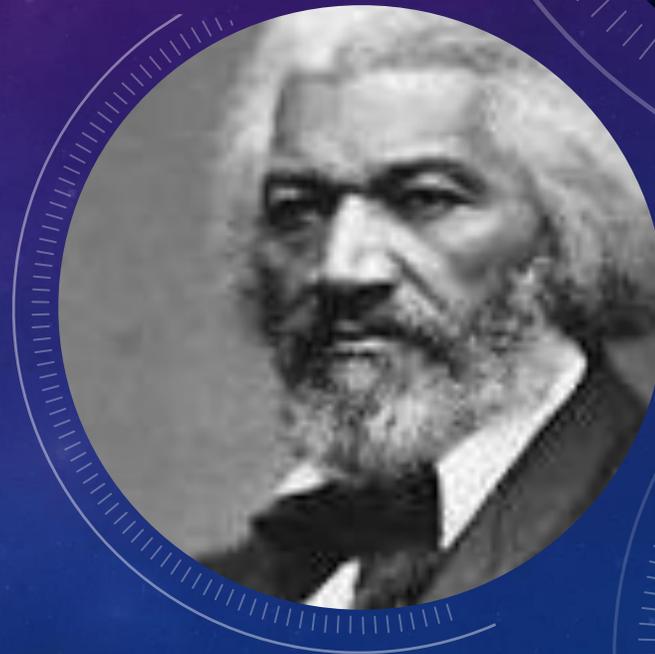
# PATIENCE

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- Patience is about time: annoyance or frustration about slowness of time in achieving a goal, or others using or wasting “my precious time”—so fundamentally, a matter of disengaging the ego
- Making time a friend, rather than an enemy
- Time works for me when I can be in the present fully, “being here now, being somewhere else later”; when I can at least neutralize the tyranny of clock time, exchange clock time for living time....when every time has its own beauty, wonder and meaning
- *Some of the best things happen when I am waiting around for other things to happen*

# HAPPINESS IS EMBRACING MY VIRTUE POTENTIAL

1. There are similarities among us, but our virtue profile is unique and unrepeatable, like fingerprints and faces.
2. Bringing the potential of our virtue profiles to fruition is why we are here.





KEEP PRACTICING

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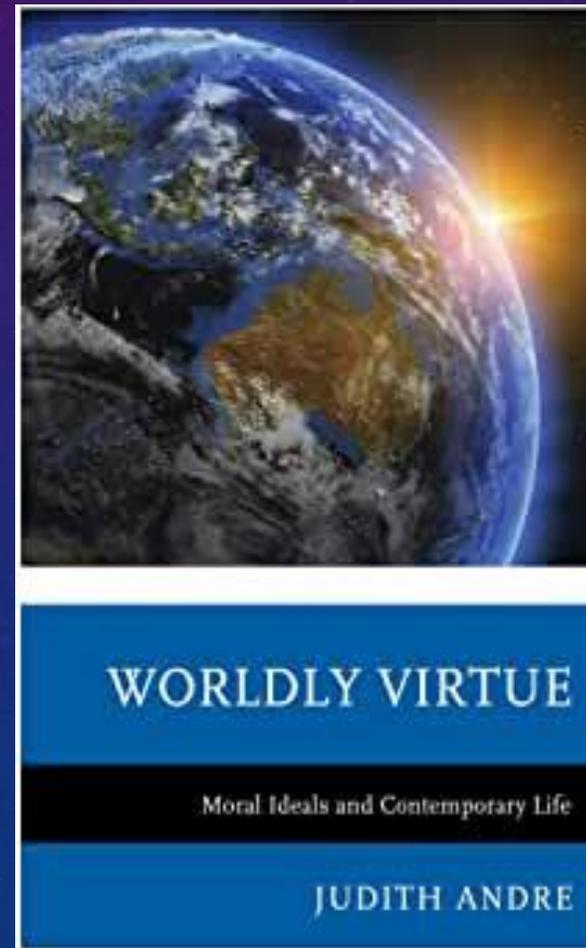
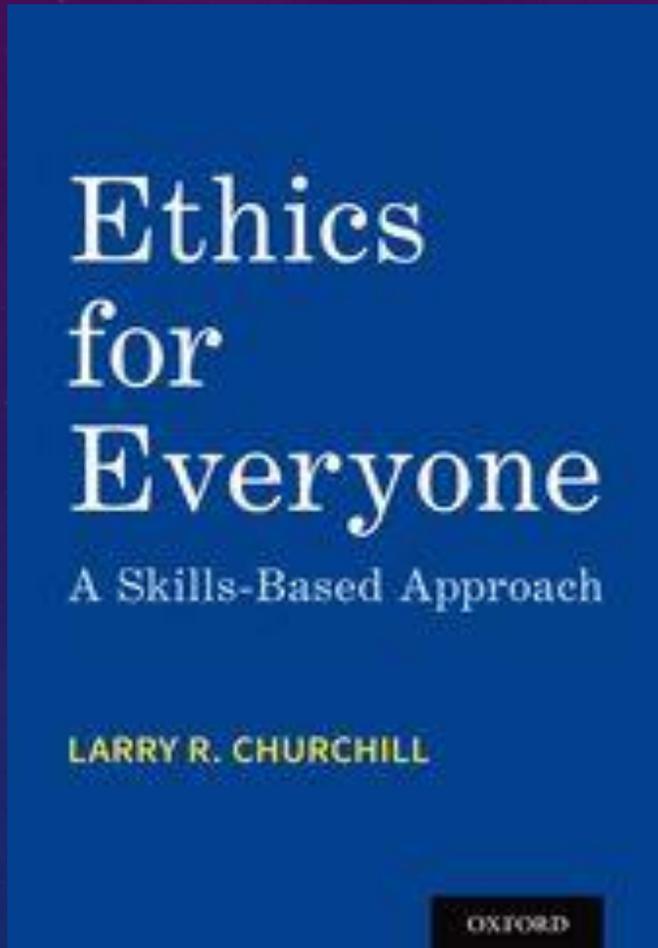
BE PRESENT TO  
YOUR PRACTICE

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REFLECT ON  
YOUR PRACTICE

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# BOOKS I HAVE RELIED UPON...



# ADDITIONAL INFLUENCES ON MY PERSPECTIVE

## (A PARTIAL LIST)

- Richard Rohr, *Daily Meditation*
- St. Francis of Assisi, *Canticle of the Sun*
- Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition*
- Buddhist teachings
- Epictetus, *Handbook, or The Art of Living*
- Marcus Aurelius, *Meditations*
- Martin Buber, *I and Thou*
- David Schenck and Larry Churchill, *Healers: Extraordinary Clinicians at Work*
- David Wallace-Wells, *The Uninhabitable Earth*
- Walt Whitman, *Leaves of Grass*
- Jesus of Nazareth teachings
- Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*
- Abraham Heschel, *Essential Writings*
- Abraham Maslow, *Religion, Values and Peak-Experiences*
- Ken Wilber, *The Simple Feeling of Being*
- Michel de Montaigne, *Essays*
- *Emily Dickinson (Helen Vendler [ed.] Selected Poems)*