

Meeting 14 —Authenticity (Up to 90 minutes)



**women
thriving
in ministry**
AN INITIATIVE OF ASBURY THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

The Gathering Time—5 minutes

- As people join the meeting, welcome them and create a place of hospitality. When all have arrived, open your time in prayer.

Conversation Starter—15 minutes

These questions are to get people thinking about what comes naturally (or has been acquired) and what is still unfamiliar and requires committed work.

- What is something you've done this week that you feel 100% comfortable doing?
- What's something that you have to do this week that feels like a really big stretch?
- Which do you prefer doing?
- Tell us about your experiences the last month with adding in a practice to nurture your body/soul, relationships, or purpose. Anything to report?

Sharing Together—40 minutes

Homework, to be shared in advance:

This month we're going to be doing something that may push you out of your comfort zone a bit, but we think it will give you an opportunity to get some helpful feedback that you may not always be able to get! We're asking you to interview 2-4 people who know you well (hopefully one who is in your work environment) with the following three questions:

- What do you think I'm best at?
- In what area do you see me growing?
- Describe me in 5 words. (A sentence OR using 5 different words to describe you)

Anticipate that each conversation may take 5-15 minutes. You can spend some time chatting with your interviewee, but it's not necessary. The goal in conducting these interviews is to gather some feedback about who you are (becoming) to see if it resonates with your self-perception. You're welcome to reflect on this feedback if you're interested. We will have an opportunity to do so in our meeting this month.

To the Mentor: *Please share the instructions and questions above with your mentees.*

The discussion will not immediately engage the feedback they received, but they'll have time to share their reflections on it at the end. The goal for today's conversation is to engage their self-understanding and help them to consider their self-worth and self-confidence. We don't want to focus on our ego...in fact, a sign of authenticity is quiet ego, not spending too much time

thinking of oneself. Open this conversation by framing the work that you're doing as an invitation for the Holy Spirit to bring to your awareness a sober understanding of yourself. Perhaps read Romans 12:3 with your group.

As you're able, be open and sensitive to conversation that points toward growth in this area as an act of spiritual maturity.

- The focus for this month is on the topic of Authenticity. How do you understand Authenticity?
- Teaching:
 - Dr. Bloom and his research group explain that Authenticity comprises “our sense of self-worth and self-confidence. Authentic people understand both their strengths and weaknesses and they feel good about themselves. They do not spend very much time thinking about themselves.
 - It includes 3 dimensions:
 - Self-integrity--includes self-worth, self-efficacy (achieving important goals), and sense of mastery in one's life
 - Authenticity at work--being able to be true to yourself in work environment
 - Personal Growth--ability to grow and develop as a person, gaining new skills and knowledge, progressing toward full potential
- Can you share an example when your gifts have been authentically received in ministry?
- Have you ever felt like you weren't the person that "THEY" wanted for the "job"? (because of gender, race/ethnicity, age, hair color, vibe, etc.)
 - We all will likely face *something* that puts us into a questionable box (or more than one something). How have you experienced that pain?
 - Have you been able to find healing from some of the rejection/pain?
- The Holy Spirit is at work in each of us, sowing seeds that will grow in us the Fruit of the Spirit. What is a fruit that you can see growing in your own life? (Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, and self-control) How can you be open to the Spirit growing this in you in fuller measure?
- How do you think the world defines Authenticity? (Several things come to mind for me: the t-shirt that said IDGAF on it—it meant, “I don’t give a [flip].” Also, the mentality that “I am who I am” or “Love me or hate me, this is me.”)
- How does it contrast to how we might understand Authenticity from a Christian point of view?

Prayer Practice—Journaling--10 minutes

In the WorkWell app, Alex Elle provides a “writing for self-understanding” exercise. In this exercise, Alex provides some excellent questions for us to consider that can contribute to our self- understanding. As we lean in and dig deep, these questions can be a tool that supports our well-being and growth. We have provided these questions for you to sit with today. We will read them aloud twice. You are invited to select one or two of them that you feel drawn to consider. Instead of selecting specific questions, you might consider what comes up for you

after reading all of them together. Then, you will be invited to turn off your cameras and do a stream of consciousness exercise where you write (completely unedited) for five minutes. Your mentor will keep time for you and you will hear a chime when it's time to come back to the group. After the five minutes of writing, you will have a chance to share whatever you would like to about what came up for you. You are invited to take these questions and return to them again for reflection, prayer, and journaling. You also may wish to write a letter to yourself (or a letter to God) utilizing one or more of the questions offered. We are reminded that any practice can become a spiritual practice when we invite God into the process, so we approach this exercise in a spirit of prayer!

Here are the questions:

- Who are you today?
- Who do you want to be in life?
- What is your purpose?
- What feels hard and heavy right now?
- What feels easy and light?
- How do you want to get to know yourself better?
- Where do you feel lost?
- What feels certain and true?
- What does change feel like?

Inviting Response—15 minutes

- Think back to the homework assignment we gave you. How did you feel about the feedback you got from the interview?
- After our conversation today about authenticity, how do YOU answer those three questions:
 - What do you think I'm good at?
 - In what area do you see me growing?
 - Describe me in 5 words. (A sentence OR using 5 different words to describe you)
- Is there anything that you've not said yet that you'd like to say?
- WorkWell App: consider adding one of the Self-Discovery practices and keep doing one that works well for you.
- Confirm next meeting time.

Closing Prayer—5 minutes

Remind them of the Group Commitments, one being prayer for one another. Are there any updates or new prayer concerns within this group? Share them now. Ask each person to pray for another person. (Agree upon those prior to praying.)