

PERSON, PLACE, & THING:
BEYOND THE NOUN OF LEADERSHIP



2020-2022



SEMINAR 2

Preparation Invitations



William C. Friday
Fellowship FOR HUMAN
RELATIONS

Ready to Return? From *Who* to *Why*, From *You* to *Here*

There are many ways to navigate (back to) the fellowship's standing invitations to rest, reflection, reckoning, and relationship. The following invitations hope to hold space for the challenges, contradictions, and competing obligations of a world that just keeps coming. As we gather ourselves back in, let us play with purpose and promise. Hiding and seeking among the lost and the found, can we look and listen for one another? We ask only for the time you have, not for that which you cannot spare. Unless otherwise noted, these preparations will be a welcome foundation for Seminar Two.

What We're Working With

A History of Religion in 5 ½ Objects – Chapter 1 “Stones” (Plate)

Leadership on the Line – Chapter 10 “What’s on the Line?” (Heifetz and Linsky)

Fellowship framing and Seminar One convening documents

Your fellowship journal (at home)

Your pinch pot (in hand)

One another (in heart)

Seminar Two goodies (on their way)

Courage. Curiosity. Creativity. Connection.

What We're Working Toward – Practices of Return

Remembering One Another (requested by March 1)

Please upload a picture of something that matters, a short note that remembers you to your cohort, and a favorite song to our 2020–2022 Friday Fellowship “Awesome Box” by Monday, March 1. Please feel free to reach out with any questions. We’ll use this collection of pictures, words, and songs to reintroduce ourselves to one another.

Remembering Yourself

Spend some time exploring the “[This I Believe](#)” project and consider reading or listening to 3–5 essays. None are long and each offers unique perspectives on how beliefs – and their systems – shape our stories. You might use this [list of themes](#) to select essays of interest. Take note of what catches your eye. **Whose stories are you drawn to? What can you glean about your innate curiosity? If you had to go back for a story or person, what/who would it be? And why?**

Review [these guidelines](#) before drafting a short “This I Believe” essay of your own that you will share during Seminar Two. Your story will highlight a belief or set of beliefs core to who you are and why you are here. You are welcome to use your fellowship journal. I ask that you have this writing in hand during Seminar Two.

Picking Up Things that Matter

Once upon a time, you turned clay into something more. M.C. Richards proposes that in the forming of pots we are also forming ourselves. S. Brent Plate reminds us that stones and rocks—and clay pots, too—have much to teach those who listen. **If that is true, what does your pinch pot have to say about you?** Spend some quiet time with your pinch pot in hand. **What are you holding these days?**

From Full to Empty – A Measure of Enough

Part of our work is to keep looking for and noticing the fine line (or slippery slope) between that which is “just enough” and that which becomes “too much.” Our pinch pots will help us stay attentive to a quality of fullness that does not overflow. Before we gather, will you collect things (any kind of little wonder) that fit inside your pinch pot? What kind of “fill” will you find in your home or yard to share with those who gather in person during Seminar Two? I will adapt this exchange for those who gather virtually. For all of us, this exercise is an invitation to remember the boundaries of what any one pot – or person – can carry.

Between Rocks and Hard Places

As you consider Plate’s chapter on stones, what are you picking up? This text extends many different invitations. We’ll spend time in conversation about cornerstones and stumbling blocks. We’ll also consider how to lean in and listen – to people, places, and things. I could send pages of questions for you to consider, but I wonder what you are curious about. **What questions does this chapter raise for you?**

Sticks and Stones, and "Sorry" Rocks, Too

Plate uses the standing stone of the Onyota'a:ka people and "sorry rocks" taken from Uluru, a geological formation sacred to the Anangu people, to remind us that not everything is ours for the taking. Spend some time journaling about the relationship between finders and keepers, between owners and stewards, and between collectors and colonizers. **What can rocks teach us about the relationship between people, places, and things? What about power? What have you picked up along the way? What might need to be remembered, reclaimed, or returned?**

Beyond the Noun – Practices of Being

If even one more word is one too many, please lean into any kind of activity or practice that gives life. Take a walk. Take a breath. Look up. Look down. Listen in. Make tea. Find water. Get quiet. Rage on. Wherever you are and whatever you need, do that thing, including absolutely nothing at all.

Person, Place, Thing – Ecosystems of Care

Watch the short animated film "[An Object at Rest](#)" about the lifecycle of a rock. Do you find yourself caring for or about this living thing? **What can things – living or otherwise – teach us about ecosystems of care? What kinds of interdependencies place the human in conversation and community with creation? Why might interdependence matter?**

Prologue in Pictures

The fellowship's prologue gestures at multiple pathways to the words, worlds, and works through which we become human, neighbor, friend, and fellow. Consider making a collage (from newspapers, magazines, coloring books) that brings your wishes for this fellowship to life. **What kind of picture might you piece together about this unfolding journey?**

Where's Your Line? What's On It?

Chapter 10 in *Leadership on the Line* invites us to consider the relationship between purpose and practice. **How do you measure things that matter? Is there a metric for human flourishing? What does love have to do with leadership? And why are you here – in this state, in this fellowship?**

Person, Place, & Thing:

Beyond the Noun of Leadership

