

Helpful Resources for Making Service Learning a Spiritual Endeavor

By HERI Project Staff

In an effort to extend this discussion on spirituality as it relates to service learning, the HERI project staff compiled a list of book titles that may serve as helpful resources for administrators, service practitioners, students, and faculty.

Alexander, S. (Ed.) (1999). *Everyday Spiritual Practice*. Boston, MA: Skinner House Books.

This compilation of essays explores various practices within everyday life that can strengthen spiritual growth and development. Covering issues ranging from individual work-life balance to civic action, this book urges us to listen and pay attention to our internal and external worlds.

Bellah, R.N., Madsen, R., Sullivan, W.M., Swidler, A., Tipton, S.M. (1996). *Habits of the Heart: Individualism and Commitment in American Life*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

This sociological study explores how communitarian elements of American society have been superseded by the classic myth of rugged American individualism. The result is the now-common (but poorly understood) view that one is totally autonomous, entering and conducting all social relations on the basis of pure self-interest - a view that is doing a great deal of damage to families and to the American social fabric as a whole.

Dass, R., Gordon, P. (1986). *How Can I Help: Stories and Reflections on Service*. New York, Alfred A. Knopf.

This book explores the mental roadblocks (pity, abstraction, professional warmth) which challenge the "inherent generosity of the heart" for those in the help-seeking professions. The authors describe the different motivations for serving others and the necessary lineaments of "the listening mind." One hazard of the helping profession is "know how" or specialization. Another is burnout. Dass and Gorman offer salient avenues of renewal for those in need.

Green, T., Woodrow, P., Peavey, F. (1994). Insight and Action: How to Discover and Support a Life of Integrity and Commitment to Change. Philadelphia, PA: New Society Publishers.

This handbook serves as a guide to facilitating both support groups and “clearness groups” (sessions for assisting individuals through reflective processes). It provides an excellent section on the art of “Strategic Questioning”.

Himes, M.J. (1995). Doing the Truth in Love: Conversations about God, Relationships and Service. New York, Paulist Press.

This compilation of essays offers a basic theology of God/human relationships and service to assist readers in reflecting more faithfully and more theologically on their own lives, particularly if they are involved in pastoral ministry or service projects.

hooks, b. (2003). Teaching Community: A Pedagogy of Hope. New York: Routledge.

Teaching, hooks explains, can happen anywhere, any time - not just in college classrooms but in churches, in bookstores, in homes where people get together to share ideas that affect their daily lives. Spirit, struggle, service, love, the ideals of shared knowledge and shared learning - these values motivate progressive social change.

Horwitz, C. (2002). The Spiritual Activist: Practices to Transform Your Life, Your Work and Your World. New York, Penguin Compass.

This book serves as a practical guide to individual and social transformation. Each chapter contains activities designed to address core values and beliefs, questions for reflection, resources, and stories from socially conscious leaders discussing their lives and spiritual practices.

Kazanjian, V.H., Laurence, P., Eds. (2000). Education as Transformation: Religious Pluralism, Spirituality and a New Vision for Higher Education in America. New York: Peter Lang Publishing, Inc.

This book offers a collection of twenty-eight essays written by a wide range of educators--including presidents, chancellors, deans, faculty members, administrators, religious life professionals, students, and other leaders in the field of education--on the themes of religious pluralism and spirituality in higher education.

Lerner, M. (2000). Spirit Matters. Charlottesville, VA: Hampton Roads Publishing Company Inc.

Lerner's book seeks to link the inner and outer, the personal and the societal, to give us a clearer sense of how we can heal and transform ourselves, our institutions, and the global society. According to Lerner, the central problem of our time is the "globalization of selfishness". To overcome this state of being, Lerner argues that we must develop an "Emancipatory Spirituality." Through a variety of spiritual practices, we can develop a deeper understanding of the role of Spirit in the universe.

Marian, D., Browder, A., and Toole. P. (2000). Sustaining the Soul that Serves: A Guide to Sustain Emerging and Seasoned Leaders. Sustaining the Soul that Serves.

This book serves as a guide for enabling leaders to care for themselves so that they may better serve others. In so doing, the book attempts to facilitate the development of a more sustained, productive, and spirituality centered cadre of youth leaders and community activists who work for social justice and peace in the 21st century.

Nouwen, H. (1994). Discovering Our Gift through Service to Others. Washington, D.C.: FADICA.

This short monograph offers a series of reflections on spiritual identity, the nature of community, and its link to Christian service.

Palmer, P. (1990). The Active Life: A Spirituality of Work, Creativity, and Caring. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Drawing upon evocative stories from several religious traditions, Palmer celebrates the exuberance and unpredictability of the active life. He also frankly names its many temptations: the desire to prove ourselves, to be powerful, to dazzle others, to settle for quick fixes, to allow our sense of inadequacy to prevent us from acting. But the path to wholeness, he argues, lies as much in our failures as our successes, and in the compassion they teach us.

Palmer, P. (1998). The Courage to Teach: Exploring the Inner Landscape of a Teacher's Life. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

In this book, Palmer argues that good teaching comes from the identity and the integrity of the teacher. Teachers should therefore be encouraged to turn their inquiring minds inward in order to develop a deeper understanding of what it means to fulfill their spiritual calling.

Palmer, P. (2000). Let Your Life Speak: Listening for the Voice of Vocation. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Drawing from his own personal experiences, Palmer offers insights on how to “lead from within” in order to develop a greater sense of meaning and purpose in life. Likewise, he focuses upon how individuals can illuminate new pathways towards a vocation that reflects their spiritual calling.

Parks, S. (2000). *Big Questions, Worthy Dreams: Mentoring Young Adults in Their Search for Meaning, Purpose and Faith*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Inc.

In this book, Parks offers a vision for how mentoring communities might function in various spheres of life such as higher education, professional education, the workplace, travel, the natural environment, families, and religious faith communities.

Rhoads, R.A. (1997). *Community Service and Higher Learning: Explorations of the Caring Self*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Rhoads explores how higher education might foster an ethic of care. He suggests that community service serves as one outlet for how caring might be (and should be) encouraged and provides some basic principles for using community service as a vehicle towards transforming higher education practices.

Sanders, S.R. (2000). *The Force of Spirit*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press.

“So far as we know,” writes Sanders, “we are the only species capable of thinking about the universe as a whole. So far as we know, we alone are able to withdraw from the struggle for survival and the fever of reproduction long enough to gaze back at the source.” This collection of personal essays helpfully reminds us of the importance of reflective and contemplative moments in our lives and the importance of community service to cultivating the internal spirit.