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Dennis Patrick Slattery

### Preparation for the Banquet:

At this time in America, and in the rest of the world, we seem to need moral leadership especially, but the need for moral inspiration is ever present. Robert Coles, *The Lives of Moral Leadership*, 3.

Emergent complexity without adaptation is like the intricate crystals formed by a snowflake: it's a beautiful pattern, but it has no function. Steven Johnson, *Emergence: The Connected Lives of Ants, Brains, Cities, and Software*, 20.

Hope does not draw its life-giving sap from its specific object. It works the other way around: hope enlivens its object, infuses it with life, and illuminates it. Vaclav Havel, *The Art of the Impossible*, 237.

### **Areas for Discussion: Paths of and to Inspiration.**

1. Joseph Campbell: the way to transcendence: learn to read poetry, to enter into it as an experience.
2. Retrieval of a particular kind of imagination, which means learning certain skills to be present to something in an unbiased way, to be receptive and open without quick, knee-jerk judgment.
3. To imagine power from a very different angle, as something to be spread out, shared, not consolidated and hoarded.
4. Hoarding power, privilege, money, status all militate against inspiration.
5. Cultivate a more profound respect for language as a principle of imagination, not as an oppressive instrument or "tool" to win over people by slogans, clichés, false assumptions and obfuscation and intimidation.
6. Education in the humanities, in poetics, in a way of being able to reflect, meditate on, assimilate, make connections, yield to differences and entertain contrary points of view.
7. Become literate and conversant with other people's sacred texts, mythologies, stories, ideals, beliefs, dreams, aspirations outside one's own ken.

8. Acknowledge the different, but not the necessity between Jihad and MacWorld: globalism against tribalism. Global and tribal stances and attitudes existing in proximity to one another.
9. Engage a full sense of BIOMIMICRY, to see in what ways the natural order self-organizes for sustainability, increased intelligence, and adaptability and to implement these patterns into social, cultural practice.
10. Move off the mark that there is one absolute truth that should be used to colonize the rest of the world. Rather, to grasp the ways, for example, that what Joseph Campbell, borrowing from James Joyce, calls the monomyth must be respected for the way it is inflected locally, tribally, and nationally, globally.
11. Develop a spiritual consciousness rather than a faith consciousness that is rooted in one tradition or belief system to the exclusion of all others. To inaugurate a global ecumenism so that other belief systems can be accommodated and valued.
12. Recalibrate the dualistic mind set that forces and individual or a people into an us-them mentality, a narrowing of vision that promotes conflict rather than a compromise based on a reality that the dualistic mind set is a cultural, not a natural or inevitable form of being and perceiving.
13. Ability to illustrate the intimate relationship between complexity and simplicity, that one without the other as a way of perceiving leads to closed, and quickly intolerant systems of belief.
14. Foster an attitude that war or the destruction of another to “prove” who is right is outmoded, barbaric, is not the last resort, which means it is used very quickly; that the use of technology to destroy another destroys some essential nature of one’s own being.
15. Power, force, might as standards of who is correct is fallacious, wrong, and now globally perilous.
16. Retrieval and reestablishment of moral courage. By this I mean relinquishing the obsessive desire to control power, goods, privilege at the expense of larger more insidious forces of destruction such as global warming, class and racial prejudice, engineered toxins, and exhaustion of the planet.
17. Come to terms in a realistic way with ENOUGH. When is enough in fact adequate, not sufficient, overly abundant, and even excessive? As in: the government is doing/not doing enough to make us safe. We must reimagine ENOUGH as a mythology and a pervasive and often detrimental psychology that transforms into social policy.

18. Muster the courage to remember: to look at and face without flinching the same destructive patterns rearing up once again to repeat earlier historical debacles; to cultivate an historical imagination of remembering in order not to repeat what clearly failed in the past; to examine how nations, like individuals can be addicted to the same behaviors in order to cultivate harmful and destructive consequences on its people, on itself.
19. Rethink and redesign the nature and purpose of authority; for example, does authority originate in the soul and move outward? Is it granted one because of position and privilege, whether it is warranted or not? Is it short lived? Is it a permanent attribute or characteristic in some individuals? Authority's relation to inspiration is crucial to unfold.