

WHO DO WE CHOOSE TO BE

Facing Reality | Claiming Leadership | Restoring Sanity

DISCUSSION GUIDE: “Perception”

“Every species uses its limited perceptions to make sense and respond; it chooses what to pay attention to and how it’s going to respond to that information. This is the essential freedom of all living things” (p. 179)? What do you pay attention to? How do the things you attend to shape your reality?

The attention you give takes attention away from other things. What do you ignore—not pay attention to—willfully or otherwise? How do the things you pay less attention to (or no attention at all) shape your reality?

What do you make of the following statement by Wheatley? “The more that is seen, the less that is known. Not everything can be known by its material existence; not everything that is observed has material explanations” (p. 184).

As human beings, we make meaning by telling ourselves stories. What narratives do you tell yourself?

Are there any metanarratives that guide your life? Said less dramatically, are there any stories (fiction, non-fiction, personal experience or otherwise) that you think about often? How do these stories define you, your behavior, and how you see the world?

Wheatley paraphrases Dr. Stephanie Pace Marshall saying that organizations must discern the stories they are living into and “as a collective, consciously [choose] the one they want to live into. It’s not strategic plans...that create change. We need to see clearly the narrative we are blindly following and consciously choose the storyline of who we want to become” (p. 210).

What happens when there is no shared storyline in an organization, institution, or community?

How can organizations, institutions, and communities create common narratives?

NEXT WEEK

read chapter 5, “Interconnectedness” (p. 216-270)