

APPENDIX

DEED BEFORE CREED

I think it is funny that Adler starts the second chapter of *Religion of Duty* by positing a movement in which members are “in matter of religious opinion...entirely free to differ” while they all supposedly have a belief “that truth is progressive and may be increased in the world”. And then in the next paragraph he expresses the thought that people should have a definite concept of the meaning of god and if they don’t, they are without a robust mind.

Felix Adler - Religion of Duty - Chapter 2 - Changes in the Conception of God

In treating a distinctly religious subject such as that of the present chapter, it is not inexpedient to first point out the fact, that when I consider such themes I express my private views, and commit no one to them but myself. The members of the Ethical Society are bound by nothing but the acceptance of certain elementary moral truths, and are united in the endeavour to add to these, believing that truth is progressive and may be increased in the world, and that there is a duty to try to increase it. Members of an ethical society properly seek to sustain one another in an attempt better to realize in daily living the principles which are accepted by all. On great moral questions they are united; in matters of religious opinion they are entirely free to differ.

What I shall have to say upon a matter of religious opinion may not, then, be construed as a creed, to which the Ethical Society and fellowship shall be committed, but must be regarded as my personal opinion.

Next paragraph

I, for one, feel that indefiniteness is intolerable to a robust mind.

W. Edwin Collier - The Illusion of Spiritual Neutrality, February, 1944

Men’s creeds are not their private affairs. I know someone - Whitehead, I think - has said that religion is what a man does with his solitude, which is one of those platitudinous half-truths which do more harm than good. As a matter of fact, creeds are not man’s private affairs, because creeds, if they are sincerely held, affect the believers’ deeds, and their deeds affect other members of the community. We are all members one of another; mankind is interdependent. We cannot, therefore, be neutral in the matters of creeds which affect moral deeds.

Concept Map

The task went beyond the individual to embrace the whole of life and involved the recognition that each of us serves a vocation committed to the transformation of society by the **consecration of all life to the spiritual and ethical ideal**. Moral experience is the central arena of all human endeavor, which must face and overcome the three "shadows" of sickness, sorrow, and sin. From

that arena and back to that arena all concept building proceeds -- hence "deed before creed."
Howard Radest - *Toward Common Ground*

Adler has called for a movement of "deed before creed", which some have interpreted as a kind of crude activism. One must read the phrase in a Kantian key: deed without creed is meaningless, creed without deed is empty. More accurately, deed before creed; theory and philosophic principle were to be the consequences of experience. In the beginning was not the word, but the act.

Jerome Nathanson, *What We Believe*

"We believe that an ethical faith need not, and indeed cannot, be grounded in any one way. It is not that we are indifferent to questions about the ultimate nature and meaning of things. Far from it. It is that we believe the universe far too vast to be comprehended in its inner-most core or in its totality by any one person or by all people together. It is that we believe there is room for a great many differing interpretations of everything that is, and still may be. It is that we believe the justification of any religious faith, including an ethical faith, is not to be found in its grounding (important as this is for each of us individually), but in its consequences."

RELIGION

THE HUMANIST WAY

p 1 The religious philosophy known as Ethical Humanism (also called Ethical Culture) is a moral faith based on respect for the dignity and worth of human life. It is a practical, working religion devoted to ethical living, without imposing ritual obligations or prescribing beliefs about the supernatural. Thus it is purely a religion "of this world."

Yet this life-centered faith is not secular in the commonplace usage of being antireligious, nor is it to be understood as indifferent to religious values. On the contrary, for the Ethical Humanist, life itself is inherently religious in quality; to make this affirmation is simply to believe that human existence in this world is intrinsically worthy of reverence, that the world of ordinary experience is capable of inspiring profound feelings of spiritual devotion.

Commitment to the supreme worth (or sanctity) of human life is the core of the Ethical Humanist faith. This recognition of a spiritual obligation to treat human life as *sacred* persuades Humanists that their belief can, with justification, be considered a religious faith.

P. 16 A Different Way of Thinking About Religion

Although the more conservative students of comparative religion still refuse to accept early Buddhism as one of the world's religions (because of its lack of belief in a God), from the standpoint of this book--and that of many other students of religious philosophy--such an objection is unwarranted. To restrict religion solely to theism (belief in God) is the tendency of those who have never seriously considered alternative expressions of religions faith and experience. But religion is a term we choose to claim, and to apply to Humanism's spiritual life, believing that the function that religion serves in living remains as vital as ever.

It is natural, spontaneous, and inevitable to experience ethical commitment as religious, because ethical feeling functions as religion has always functioned, guiding and uplifting our hearts and minds as religion has always done. Ethical faith is unitive. It gives wholeness to personality and to our vision of life. Religion provides human beings with a sense of relatedness and rootage in the sources of our being, offering focus, direction, and motivation to our moral struggles and aspirations, undergirding social idealism, and highlighting the beauty and mystery of our universe.

P 5 The Second Humanist Manifesto of 1973, a consensus statement signed by many leading Humanists, struck a balance between those holding religious and nonreligious conceptions of Humanism by acknowledging ethical religion as consistent with the Humanist philosophy, while rejecting autocratic and dogmatic religious foundations. In the opening paragraphs of the section entitled "Religion," the Manifesto declared:

The cultivation of moral devotion and creative imagination is an expression of genuine "spiritual" experience and aspiration.

We believe, however, that traditional dogmatic or authoritarian religions that place revelation, God, ritual, or creed above human needs and experience do a disservice to the human species...As nontheists, we begin with humans, not God, nature not deity.

CONCEPT MAP

Religion as Ethics

We are philosophically and practically committed to a view of humanity as *Homo ethicus*. That is, we see all of life primarily through an ethical lens and we live all of life primarily in pursuit of quality of relationship and of social transformation. We define ourselves in terms of a commitment to study, promote, live by, and apply ethical values. We value care and respect for the individual, the pursuit of justice in society, and the creation of community.

HOW WE ARE A RELIGION

As noted above, the semantics of the word *religion* was addressed in the Leaders' statement of 1895, where the Ethical Movement was seen as a religion when religion is defined as "passionate devotion to a supreme cause." Adler expressed a tolerance in relation to the terminology and considered it optional whether our way of life is characterized as a "religion" or as a "philosophy," though it is clear that he was content with the term "religion." In a footnote to the Supreme Court's judgment in *Torcaso v. Watkins* (1964), it was noted that a non-theistic religion is for legal purposes as valid as a theistic religion. We urge careful clarification when the term religion is used. We assert our affirmation of the term religion when it refers to:

The reverence, wonder, and thankfulness with which we take our place in the universe.

The sense of a larger whole of which we are a part.

The organization of communities that generate values and meaning and seek fellowship in pursuit of ideals.

The passionate devotion to the cause of serving the good of humanity and the world.

A way of life that integrates our values and gives ethical direction and resources for ethical living.

Access to the "ethical energy" that resides in the human mind and heart and in the inspiration of human companionship and collaboration.

NATURALISM

Joseph Chuman

Nature comprises the totally existent, and there is no reality outside of nature. Though “naturalism” is a term with variant meanings, in my understanding it encompasses material substance, non-material energy and forces, as well as ideas. Naturalism implies discernable regularities in nature, while disavowing incorporeal substances that transcend empirical perception. If such entities exist their “reality” remains totally unknown and are effectively otiose to human activity, except to stimulate the imagination and emotions emergent from the recognition of human finitude.

Naturalism seeks to overcome dualism and views mind as dependent upon physical substance and activity. There are no minds without bodies. Ideas emerge from humankind’s interaction with nature and the social environment. Though so tagged to natural process, mind is not merely epiphenomenal. Ideas, once projected, become an effective force in motivating human response and action.

Human beings are natural beings, having evolved from other forms of life via natural selection devoid of supernatural agency. Thus, humankind’s physical and mental attributes are, in general, fitted to human survival.

Humankind’s status as a natural being, coupled with the powers of organizing empirical perceptions into sustainable ideas, is suggestive of the organic relationship of all living things and, more speculatively, reality as a whole. In short, humankind interacts within a “web of life.”

Nontheistic Religion

The Humanist Way

p. 15 Since a nontheistic conception of religion is basic to Naturalistic Humanism, it may be helpful to be as specific as possible in our usage of that term. At the outset, it is essential to understand that "nontheistic" is not used as synonym or euphemism for "atheistic." The atheist, like the theist, takes a definite position with respect to the doctrine that God exists. The atheist denies or disbelieves it. The theist affirms it. But while the individual member of the Ethical Humanist movement may be an atheist, agnostic, theist, deist, or believe whatever else the individual regards to be probable or true about the God question, the ethical philosophy takes no official position with respect to such belief. As nontheistic religion is defined, the prefix "non" should be understood to mean simply that the theistic reference does not apply. Ours is a religion or belief of a totally different type in which the God question is not of primary concern. As we have emphasized before, Ethical Humanism's starting point is ethics, not speculative theology.

Ethical Humanism is commitment to a way of life, to a creative relationship to others and thereby to ourselves, in which metaphysical and theological arguments are set aside. Whether or not God exists may be an interesting question. But the answer to that question--if answerable at all--should make no crucial difference in how we ought to live, how we ought to treat our fellow beings. My ethical obligations and potentialities--and yours--remain exactly the same, whether God exists or does not exist. Our shared task is to live decently, compassionately, and caringly in the world we inhabit.

CONCEPT MAP

P. 14 NON-THEISM - THEN AND NOW

The first comparative area of thought that Adler and the early Leaders had to address was that of Theism, since they were separating themselves from theistic communities. This question has not disappeared, for theistic religion remains a powerful force in modern life. Adler's own approach is instructive....

We may modernize his thought by saying that where the ancient model of ultimate reality was drawn from the V.I.P's of ancient culture--kings, judges, warriors, patriarchs, parents--Adler substituted the model of democratic society. "We have replaced the God-idea by that of a universe of spiritual beings interacting in infinite harmony," (p. 126). In the writings published in 1906 under the title *The Religion of Duty*, he discussed Theism at length and indicated what he could and what he could not accept from that system of thought....

Adler left an unresolved tension in our thinking on the question of Theism by insisting that members of the Ethical Movement are free to believe in this regard as they may wish, while declaring the supremacy of ethics and its independence from theology. A supreme and independent ethics must inevitably challenge traditional theistic systems of thought in which ethics is based on the revelation of a Creator in nature (deism) or through personal messengers and their sacred writings (theism). That tension remains within the Movement: Some remove the tension by totally rejecting what theism has to teach; some attempt to revise traditional theism; some leave such issues to private speculation; and many, as we have seen above, transmute the values of the ancient theistic systems into a humanist frame of reference. Historically, the period following Adler's death saw an emphasis on a humanism that found little place for Adler's own

transcendentalism. By Adler's design, his metaphysics was not an orthodoxy for the Movement he created. However, continued reading of and renewed interest in Adler's thought has led to reappraisal of his concepts and their contemporary relevance.

P. 20 NON-THEISM

It is difficult to get off of the debating ground on which pro-theism, antitheism, and non-theism have set up their warring camps. It is our judgment that the debate needs to take a new turn. What is at issue in the God-debate is a symbol of humanity's search for meaning. Since all understanding has to pass through the psychological and sociological processes by which we project and extrapolate from our experience to the larger world, we can see that the debate is about what is an appropriate, legitimate, and pragmatic Diagram for humanity's place in the universe. The challenge involves both theoretical philosophy and social critique....

Today the Ethical Movement needs to adventurously explore a philosophy of meaning, without losing its basic resistance to any particular philosophy becoming a creedal orthodoxy. We need to explore what ethics as a clue to philosophical significance might mean. *What kind of universe follows from there being ethical actors in it?* We need to develop a philosophy of human nature and human society that would underpin our ethical focus. This would take us beyond theistic and atheistic groundings of ethics and ground a philosophical ethics in its own frame of reference. Looking to the future, we need a usable metaphysics of ethics. What is the larger reality of which we humans as social beings in relation to ourselves, other life, and the world are expressions?

PROCESS THEORY - SYSTEMS THINKING

The philosophy of process is... (a) general theory of reality.... Its concern is with what exists in the world and with the terms of reference in which this reality is to be understood and explained...The guiding idea of its approach is that natural existence consists in and is best understood in terms of *processes* rather than *things* — of modes of change rather than fixed stabilities. For processists, change of every sort — physical, organic, psychological — is the pervasive and predominant feature of the real.

Process philosophy pivots on the thesis that the processual nature of existence is a fundamental fact with which any adequate metaphysic must come to terms.

Process philosophy puts processes at the forefront of philosophical and specifically of ontological concern. Process should here be construed in pretty much the usual way — as *a sequentially structured sequence of successive stages or phases*.

An Evolutionary Perspective

Evolution is an emblematic and paradigmatic process for process philosophy. For not only is evolution a process that makes philosophers and philosophy possible, but it provides a clear model for how processual novelty and innovation comes into operation in nature's self-engendering and self-perpetuating scheme of things. Evolution, be it of organism or of mind, of subatomic matter or of the cosmos as a whole, reflects the pervasive role of process which philosophers of this school see as central both to the nature of our world and to the terms in which it must be understood. Change pervades nature. The passage of time leaves neither individuals nor types (species) of things statically invariant. Process at once destabilizes the world and is the cutting-edge of advance to novelty. And evolution of every level, physical, biological, and cosmic carries the burden of the work here.

HUMANISM

Humanism is hard to define because it is more a perspective than a specific philosophic position. The Encyclopedia Britannica does us a favor by saying, "In recent years the term humanism has often been used to refer to value systems that emphasize the personal worth of each individual but that do not include a belief in God. Modern Humanism, also called Naturalistic Humanism, Scientific Humanism, Ethical Humanism and Democratic Humanism is defined by one of its leading proponents, Corliss Lamont, as "a naturalistic philosophy that rejects all supernaturalism and relies primarily upon reason and science, democracy and human compassion." Modern Humanism has a dual origin, both secular and religious, and these constitute its sub-categories."

That description indicates the difficulty in offering a succinct definition of humanism. It is a perspective that has evolved from the Enlightenment's belief in reason as the best tool for understanding reality, through the 19th century rejection of supernatural religion, into the 20th century attempt to collect the pieces into one perspective that included both the scientific, rationalistic approach and belief in the human origins of morality and ethics.

Alan Bullock in *The Humanist Tradition in the West* explains "As a rough generalization, Western thought has treated humankind and the cosmos in three distinct modes. The first, the supernatural or the transcendental, has focused on God, treating human beings as a part of the Divine creation. A second, the natural or scientific, has focused on Nature and treats humankind as part of the natural order like other organisms. The third, the humanistic, has focused on humankind, and on human experience as the starting point for human being's knowledge of themselves, of God and of nature."

The humanism of the 20th century started explicitly as a religious movement. The Humanist Manifesto of 1933 starts, "The time has come for widespread recognition of the radical changes in religious beliefs throughout the modern world. The time is past for mere revision of traditional attitudes. Science and economic change have disrupted the old beliefs. Religions the world over are under the necessity of coming to terms with new conditions created by a vastly increased knowledge and experience". This religious humanism combined the belief in science and reason while envisioning it as a religion, with the functions, ceremonies, and moral guidance that revealed religions traditionally provided. In the late 20th century the humanist movement came into conflict with conservative Christian groups in the United States and "Secular Humanism" became the most visible element of organized humanism.

The Humanist Way - Edward Ericson

P. XI Definition of Humanism - in the context of this study, (humanism) affirms the freedom, dignity and well-being of human beings as the supreme object of the moral life, without belief in an supernatural power or being. It is committed to the pursuit of the human good as the ultimate value of this life....

Difference between Religious and secular humanism is whether or not a purely nontheistic belief can properly be considered a religion.

P. 4 As Naturalistic Humanists, we accept our place as children of an inconceivably vast and ever-creative universe. Whether individual Humanists, or particular groups of Humanists, prefer to consider Humanism as religious (the position taken here), or as solely philosophical, Humanists generally are in agreement that human life is the outcome of an incalculably dynamic

natural universe in its ongoing evolutionary progression. In this conception of reality, there is no need to assume a supernatural intelligence presiding over the origin and destiny of life or the cosmos.

P. 53

...the term Humanism as a religious and/or secular philosophy of life is of more recent coinage and application. A term so widely used is bound to take on various shades of meaning. Thus, Humanism is sometimes used to identify a philosophy of life that entirely excludes the religious or that is hostile to religion. Thus,

CONCEPT MAP

We reaffirm our place in modern Humanism, and describe Ethical Culture as:

[1] A practical humanism in its focus on what we can do for and with our fellow humans to create a more just and humane world; we look to human resources to solve human problems.

[2] A philosophical humanism that (a) proclaims the supremacy of ethics as a basis for understanding and guiding life, and (b) that gains conceptual leverage on human existence by placing the fulcrum of understanding firmly in human experience and particularly in human moral experience.

We are therefore *Ethical Humanists* and often use that name interchangeably with that of Ethical Culturists.

VISION STATEMENT OF 2003

P. 1 Ethical Culture examines life through the lens of human experience and searches for meaning within human relationships. It is a part of that great and living humanist tradition which affirms the primacy and beauty of this life and this world, and which cherishes reasoned inquiry, the scientific method and the creative vision of the humanities.

Ethical Culture as a Humanist Movement (1)

The following declaration was adopted at the 1966 Assembly of the American Ethical Union (2) as a position paper of the Fraternity of Leaders (3). It has no authority as a creed or statement of faith but is an interpretation of the Ethical Culture Movement subscribed to by the Leaders there assembled.

Ethical Culture is a Humanist movement. Even before the designation Humanist gained currency as one of our common descriptive terms or names, Ethical Culture was a Humanist Movement in its essential purposes and values. It was the first such organization of national and international scope to develop an ethical, social and religious philosophy on a non-creedal, non-theistic basis. This foundation has been sufficiently broad and flexible to accommodate a variety of philosophical approaches.

Humanism, in the context of ethical and religious philosophy, and as a way of life which many men and women are coming to accept as an alternative to the supernaturalist and other-worldly religions, is a tradition which runs with increasing force through the thought and life of civilization. We recognize that no group or association can lay claim to a monopoly on the title and heritage of Humanist, for to attempt this would be itself an expression of exclusiveness and sectarianism contrary to the spirit and character which

this tradition signifies. Therefore, in identifying ourselves as Humanist, we affirm our participation in a great and living heritage, the common property of all who value spiritual and intellectual freedom, who affirm life and the world, who cherish the life of reason and the scientific method and who seek, within the framework of the human enterprise – relying upon natural and human resources – to create the good society and to uphold the dignity and worth of man.

We speak of Ethical Culture and Humanism as one concept, we would thereby recognize a universalism and a relevance to both terms which we value without slighting or down-grading either.

The Ethical Culture Movement can identify itself as Humanist only if the name Humanist is preserved from restrictive, narrow sectarian and dogmatic usages which unfortunately, it has sometimes been made to serve; we would strive to represent and develop a constructive and adequate Humanism. A movement which is dedicated without reservation to the worth of the person, and which is moved by a spirit akin to reverence in its search to understand the deep resources of man and nature cannot narrow itself to a position of creed-like doctrinalism, whether that tendency appears in religious, secular or political dress.

We believe that from the beginning, the founders, leaders, and innumerable workers of the Ethical Movement have been Humanists in their practical labors, social vision and reform, humane ideals, and stress upon human capacities and dignity. They have been Humanists in placing man's relationship to his fellow man and his community at the center of their moral and spiritual quest; and they have been Humanists in believing that man must assume responsibility for the direction of his life and destiny. The common ground has united us, for nearly a century, not restricting our freedom to explore or to hold to a variety of philosophical and metaphysical positions. This range of freedom has been summarized in the maxim: "Diversity in the creed; unity in the deed."

In our Movement, we do not restrict the name "Humanist" to apply only to those who subscribe to a particular philosophical style or metaphysics dubbed "Humanist", but rather use this term to affirm a broadly defined and commonly held commitment and faith. Neither does the name Humanist signify among us a particular emphasis or position with respect to either the religious or the secular aspects of our philosophy, for attachment to the tradition and name of humanist cuts across these lines.

In identifying ourselves as a Humanist Movement, and in associating with other groups which fit this designation, we hold to the standard of intellectual and spiritual breadth. We stand ready to share with other Humanist bodies in creating a deeper, wider, and more adequate expression of this way of life; but we cannot accept a basis of unity which would be purchased through the surrender of the distinctive values and freedoms which give this Movement its historic significance and potential. All discussions and projects looking toward the creation of a greater instrument for unity among Humanists must bear this purpose in mind. Similarly, we would not seek to curtail or expunge what may be most distinctive and best in the Humanism of a kindred association.

Finally, we would make it clear that our identification as a Humanist Movement is not dependent upon our affiliation with other groups bearing this label. We shall strive in

every practicable way to shear with like-minded associations in building a strong, united movement, but our essential character as a Humanist fellowship, and our claim to this designation, is not derivative from such affiliations.

We would reaffirm the term Ethical Humanist, adopted officially in the language of the Declaration of the Amsterdam Congress, which in 1952 established the International Humanist and Ethical Union. (This union brought about a common alignment of existing Humanist bodies and member groups of the earlier International Ethical Union which had been disrupted by World War II.) We find the term “Ethical Humanist” to be a designation which appropriately recognizes our respective organizational histories and tradition, and which aptly and distinctively signifies our shared and corporated endeavor as a united world movement.

Fraternity of Leaders of the American Ethical Union

Chicago, April 27, 1966 ⁴

¹ Text as it appeared in “Ethical Culture 1876–1966” page 3 with erratum corrected

² Drafted by Edward L. Ericson as part of a special commission chaired by Joseph L. Blau

³ Now known as the National Leaders Council

⁴ Presented to the International Humanist and Ethical Union 4th World Congress, Paris, July 25–30, 1966

LOVE LIFE - LIVING ETHICAL HUMANISM

Although love is trivialized and made sentimental fluff in our virtual reality of a world, actually love as an approach to living is the enemy of closed-mindedness and the answer to many of the mysteries of human nature. Although traditional religion talks of love, it hasn't actually run with it, thought it through, made it essential to their big picture.

So I want us to broaden our understanding of love. Is love merely a personal feeling or can it be a cultural force?

If asked what is the central principle of Ethical Humanism, most of those in the know would immediately offer Felix Adler's statement, "Act to being out the best in others and you will be bringing out the best in yourself." And if you ask me to simplify that, I would say that our central principle is – love life.

Well, to mix my metaphors, it does seem that in the flow of human history there has been a dance between our caring, involved, outwardly directed side, what could be called love, and the side I don't want to call hate but our self-absorbed, aggressive, individualistic side. That is simplistic which is why I say a dance because there are so many factors involved in the evolution of humankind. As our organic natures interact with our cultural natures, it is a dance of many pieces.

There is plenty of love out there and in here but in the ebb and flow of the dance of life different aspects of human nature are at any one time being supported, reinforced and championed. And I believe humankind is in need of and yearning for a burst of love, empathy, respect, and appreciation; all to respond to and counter the dominant aggressive, controlling, competitive, self-absorbed individualist side of human nature.

But to be human is to be intertwined in the lives of everyone else and the reason for living if we have any reason is to make a good life out of it. The actual meaning that we produce about our living is not about here and beyond but about here and just beyond, in the life we are part of.

In that experience, what makes sense for a religious group to suggest as a way of living a good life – loving yourself or loving it all? We are called the Ethical Society because we think the ultimate experience in life is the one we are living in life and living is creating a world with our choices. The alpha and omega and the beatific vision are all here and now. If you believe in God and that presence isn't here in the natural experience, he, she or it is nowhere. And in that intertwined experience each of us decides who we are in the way we relate to the rest of life.

I'm calling it love but the feeling, that attitude, is acceptance, respect, empathy for all that is different from oneself. To love what appeals to you, speaks to you, is to love yourself and in that you are only living in your own virtual reality. To accept that we are intertwined with all of life is to start to get beyond ourselves and into real life – the one of difference.

Buried in our Ethical Humanist religious philosophy is an understanding of love that goes beyond treating your neighbor as yourself – beyond that to loving the differences. Others don't need you treating them like yourself but like themselves. Everything in life has its own destiny. Caring for the human race in general and having a generalized concern for those in your neighborhood is not fully the idea of loving life. Loving life is a sense of being part of and connected to all those individual people and things and acting on that feeling.

SOCIAL JUSTICE

What is our message? To simplify the issue, it seems to me that the primary ethical issue of our times is the indulgent, destructive American lifestyle. It is disconnected from nature and people who are disadvantaged. We live in an unethical culture and since as a good humanist I accept that humans create the culture and our participation in that culture keeps it humming along, then my conclusion is that the only ethical thing to do is, separate from and fight against that life-style.

Our culture is built on the unequal distribution of power, resources and wealth. The residue of slavery builds racism into our culture, our life-styles treat nature as a resource and a trash can and the meaning of life becomes consuming and pleasure. If we honestly care about people and if we want to be effective in addressing social problems we must go to the source - the way we live. I'm not interested in judging people but in building authentic community that doesn't hide from uncomfortable truth and supports each of us as we do our own version of better.

We have seen the enemy and it is us.