



AUTHENTIC SPACE

Box Cutters: Discussion Guide Questions

Searching for Space: Prior to the gathering, instruct participants to go online to view Rev. Anna Layman Knox's portion of the *"Engaging with Young Adults in Ministry"* presentation at the 2014 Susquehanna Annual Conference.

- 1) As you are watching Anna's presentation, consider times in your life where people of faith have helped you to see God's love more clearly.
 - Reflect on your experience as a Christian, and try to remember any instances where you were able to help someone through a difficult time and provide them a hope that they could not find. Consider being prepared to share one of those experiences with the group.

Find Some Space: Start each gathering by asking everyone to share their thoughts with the group.

- 1) Before the group arrives, make name tags with the listed descriptions. There should be one name tag for every individual in the group. (Make sure to have extras on hand in the event that someone brings a friend.) As each person arrives, stick a name tag to his/her back, or part of their body where s/he cannot read what is written on the tag. Once everyone has arrived and has a name tag, have participants move around the room reading each other's descriptions.
- 2) Encourage everyone to try to remember the label each person has been given. Then challenge the group to treat each other according to the labels they have been given.
- 3) The group leader may choose to reveal the labels individuals have been given. We recommend that labels be revealed following Chapter 1 discussion, and before watching Chapter 2. (See end of Chapter 1 discussion section for some guiding questions.)

- Air Head
- Educated
- Liberal
- Conservative
- Country
- Young
- Old
- Needy
- Pretty/Handsome
- Fun
- Awkward
- Naive
- Jock
- Privileged
OR Create Your Own

Open with the prayer written by your group during the first session of the series.

Measure The Space: Participants will receive an overview of the subject and create a baseline for discussion.

1) Watch Chapter 1 of "Box Cutters"

- Anna referenced Archbishop Desmond Tutu's belief that each person is a 'God carrier'; that human beings must not just be respected, but be held in awe and reverence. In his work *God Has A Dream*, Tutu states, "If we took this seriously we should not just greet each other. We should really genuflect before one another. Buddhists are more correct, since they bow profoundly as they greet one another, saying the God in me acknowledges the God in you". It takes a great deal of practice and intentionality to see the Christ in someone and interact with them from that frame of reference. What are some practical steps we can take daily to help make this a common practice for us?
 - How could seeing Christ in a young adult open new avenues for ministry and conversation with that individual?
- Share with someone sitting near you a time when you had a transformational conversation.
 - What are the elements of a "real conversation"?
 - In what environments do "real conversations" take place?

Furnish the Space: Participants will debrief on the experience of being labeled.

- 1) Can you guess, by the way people have been treating you, the label you have been given?
 - If you were able to figure out your label early on, did you choose to embrace or contest that label?
- 2) Share a time in your life when you have been given a label that you either chose to embrace or contest. Why did you choose to interact with your label that way?
 - What kind of "labels" are we given with our baptism?
 - How do you think labels impact our ability to be in ministry with young adults?

Use The Space: Participants are invited to take some form of action regarding young adult ministry.

1) Watch Chapter 2 of "Box Cutters"

- Share a tradition of the church that you hope to see continue.
 - Why do you think it's important that traditions to continue?
 - Are there traditions we have as a congregation that either help or hinder young people in being a part of our community?
 - If there are traditions that hinder young people from being with us, how could we tweak those traditions to help our congregation reach a different generation? What might a different generation have to offer our traditions?
 - How do we engage more deeply with our own spirituality in a way that invites authentic dialogue with other generations?

Share The Space: Participants are offered a challenge to complete before the next meeting.

- 1) Read John 20:19-30. Remember a time when you had questions or doubts about faith or being a disciple of Christ.
 - Who helped you navigate those questions?
 - Who helped you to see Christ in your time of doubting?
- 2) This week, find at least one person you know who is not a Christian, or has doubts about the Christian faith. Take time to find out that individual's doubts about the Christian faith and why s/he is not a Christian. Listen to the answers given and try not to "defend" your beliefs, but strive to hear what the other person is saying.
- 3) Consider being willing to report to the group the answers that are shared with you. Think about ways your congregation may be able to address these doubts.