



# WHOLEHEARTED

Digging Deeper to Broaden Our  
Reach

# WE WEAR THE MASK

Paul Laurence Dunbar  
1872-1906



## **We Wear the Mask**

BY PAUL LAURENCE DUNBAR

We wear the mask that grins and lies,  
It hides our cheeks and shades our eyes,—  
This debt we pay to human guile;  
With torn and bleeding hearts we smile,  
And mouth with myriad subtleties.

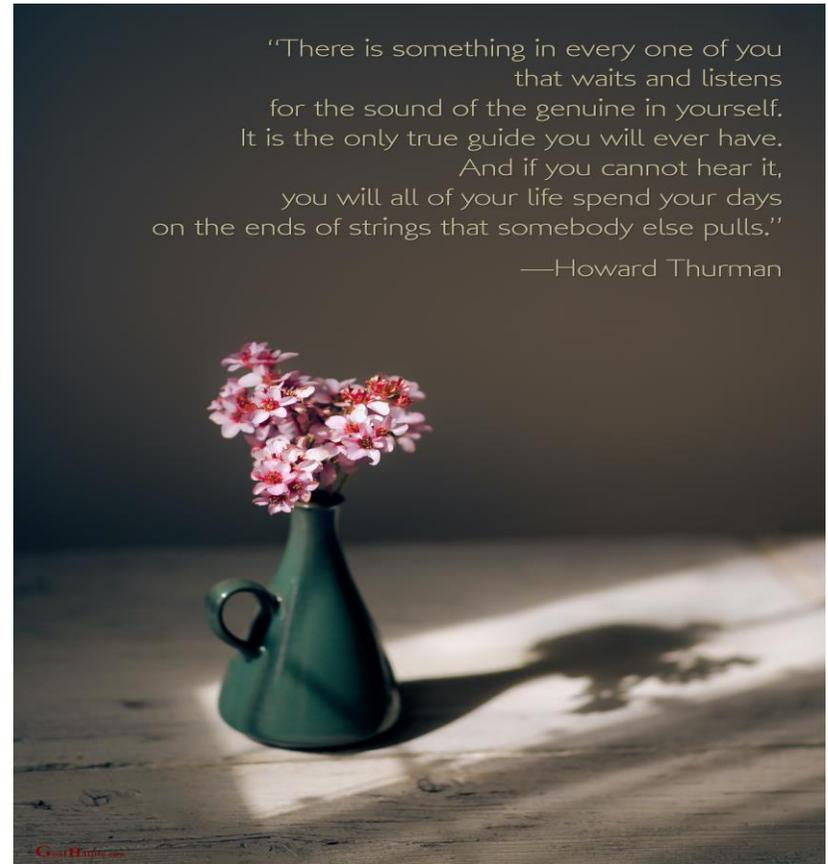
Why should the world be over-wise,  
In counting all our tears and sighs?  
Nay, let them only see us, while  
We wear the mask.

We smile, but, O great Christ, our cries  
To thee from tortured souls arise.  
We sing, but oh the clay is vile  
Beneath our feet, and long the mile;  
But let the world dream otherwise,  
We wear the mask!

Paul Laurence. Dunbar, "We Wear the Mask." from The Complete Poems of Paul Laurence Dunbar. (New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, )

# MASKED MINISTRY VS. AUTHENTIC ENGAGEMENT

- What mask do we wear?
- Why do we wear the mask?
- What's at stake when we wear the mask in leadership/ministry?
- What does it mean to be authentic?
- What does authentic engagement look like?
- What do we gain when we engage from a place of authenticity?



# WHOLEHEARTED LEADERSHIP

**Wholeheartedness** - The capacity to engage in our lives with authenticity, cultivating courage and compassion.

- 1. Courage to be imperfect.** The word courage comes from the Latin word, *cor* meaning heart. The original definition meant “to tell the story of who you are with your whole heart”. Wholehearted people have the courage to let the whole truth, including their imperfections, be known to others.
- 2. Compassionate to themselves and others.** When we are harsh and judgmental to ourselves, do we not also treat others the same? To be compassionate with others, we must also be kind to ourselves.
- 3. Connection as a result of authenticity.** Wholehearted people are willing to let go of who they think they should be in order to be who they really are. We all need connection. It gives purpose and meaning to our lives. As leaders, we need to fully engage with people, but shame and fear unravel connection. We wonder, “Is there something about me that if other people know and see it that I would feel unworthy of connection?”
- 4. Embrace vulnerability.** Vulnerability is at the core of our shame, fear and struggle for worthiness; but Brown discovered it is also the birthplace of joy, creativity, belonging and love.

# MODELS OF WHOLEHEARTEDNESS

*“Do the work your soul must have.”*

Katie G. Canon

*“The self corrective mantra that serves as an answer to every moment of professional indecisiveness, a response to constant critiques of colleagues, and a means of shutting down incessant complaining about institutions, places of employment, or partners that normalize sexism, racism, classism or violence.*

*~Alison P. Guise Johnson*

*“You understand so little of what is around you because you do not use what is within you.”*

Hildegard of Bingen, Scivas

*“Without using the word, Hildegard recognized that the human person is a microcosm with a natural affinity for or resonance with the macrocosm, which many of us would call God. We are each “whole” and yet part of a larger Whole. Our little world reflects the big world. Resonance is the key word here”.*

*~Richard Rohr*