

Initiatives

In Support of Christians in the World

National Center for the Laity
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www.catholiclabor.org/NCL.htm

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50 Years since Vatican II

Lay ministry has been “an important development” since Vatican II (1962-1965), says journalist Russell Shaw. Lay ministry, professional and volunteer, “has brought fresh vitality to many parishes and made a significant contribution to pastoral work.” But these post-Vatican II years have also seen “the neglect of formation for the lay apostolate in the world.”

“Lay ministry as such,” Shaw continues, is not a cause of the neglect. Rather, one cause is a *clericalization of the laity*—a problem to which both those involved with in-house ministry and those not so involved might contribute. This clerical mentality undermines the outward thrust of Vatican II and could, says Shaw, make “Pope Francis’ vision of a missionary church engaged in outreach to the world... a dead letter for American Catholicism.” (*America* [9/29/14], 106 W. 56th St., New York, NY 10019)

Shaw draws upon Pope Francis to caution priests and others against the omission of ordinary work as a calling from God. “We priests,” Francis said before his papal election, “tend to clericalize the laity. We do not realize it... And the laity—not all, but many—ask us on their knees to clericalize them.” (*Pope Francis: Conversations* by Sergio Rubin, Penguin Press [2010], 375 Hudson St., New York, NY 10014; \$16)

Francis writes more recently: Not all lay people have clear awareness of their workaday responsibility partly because of “an excessive clericalism... Even if many are now involved in lay ministries, this involvement is not reflected in a greater penetration of Christian values in the social, political and economic sectors. It often remains tied to tasks within the Church, without a real commitment to applying the gospel to the transformation of society.” (*Joy of the Gospel*, National Center for the Laity, PO Box 291102, Chicago, IL 60629; \$8)

Taking the Initiative

In Business

The economy, we are told, is recovering. If so, it is not yet a recovery of wages. Nor is it a recovery of trust, which it cannot be as long as the dominant business ideology only asks: *Is it profitable for this quarter?* Milton Friedman (1912-2006) famously expressed the short-sighted ideology this way: “Society is a collection of individuals... There is no *social responsibility* [for business], only the responsibility of individuals,” who are welcome to spend their own time, money and energy as they like. A business, however, is obliged to “make as much money as possible.” (*N.Y. Times Magazine*, 9/13/70)

Some business leaders in London think the matter is more complex. For the past two years they have tried “to clarify the purpose of business itself,” reports Charles Wookey, secretary to the group, Blueprint for Better Business (Vaughn House, 46 Francis St., London SW1P 1QN, England; www.blueprintforbetterbusiness.org). Business needs public trust in order to consistently yield a fair return for owners or investors, claims Wookey. That means the common good is a business consideration and that profit is “the result and not the purpose” of business.

The members of Blueprint come from several religious traditions. However, they appreciate Catholic social thought as a source for responsible business. Blueprint hosts occasional conferences, supplies resources and serves as a support network. It also wrote a list of principles and practices for chief executives and their staff. Blueprint participants are piloting their list within select companies. (*The Tablet* [11/1/14 & 10/26/13 & 11/20/13], 1 King St., Clifton Walk, London W60QZ, England)

Former NCL president Greg Pierce (Acta, 4848 N. Clark Street, Chicago, IL 60640. www.actapublications.com) has likewise made a list, “Seven Virtues of Catholic Managers from *Romans* 12-16.”

Kirk Hanson (Markkula Center, 500 El Camino Real, Santa Clara, CA 95053; www.scu.edu/ethics) lists “six ethical dilemmas

that are built into our decisions to become business people and professionals,” including “being a change agent” and “service to the common good [as] part of one’s calling.” His list along with audience reply is available as a 20-page booklet from Center for Business Ethics (175 Forest St., Waltham, MA 02452; www.bentley.edu/cbe).

Then there is a list of “Six Practical Principles for Business” in *Vocation of the Business Leader* (Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, Piazza S. Calisto 16, Rome 06 69 87 99 11, Italy; www.vatican.va). The booklet suggests that business people first look squarely at the real ins-and-outs of their company and the marketplace. Only then do they draw upon Scripture and Catholic social principles to compare the world as it really is to the world as they’d like it to be. And then, like-minded business people act inside their institutions to improve the world, and reflect on that action. Our NCL has a handful of free copies of *Vocation of the Business Leader*. Send along \$15 and NCL will include the 445-page *Compendium of the Social Doctrine* by the same Pontifical Council.

Intersections between business and Catholic social thought will be explored at De La Salle University (2401 Taft Ave., Manila 1004, Philippines) on February 26-28, 2015. To get more information about this “Prosperity, Poverty and the Purpose of Business” conference, contact John A. Ryan Institute (2115 Summit Ave. #55S, St. Paul, MN 55015; www.stthomas.edu/manila).

To appreciate how many stakeholders are involved in a single product, try the four-minute video, *I, Smartphone* (Institute for Faith, Work & Economics, 8400 Westpark Dr. #100, McLean, VA 22102; www.tifwe.org). Kevin Brown mentions the video in his article, “Capitalism and the Common Good.” Responsible business people must operate with serious calculation, but they cannot assume that the market itself has a benevolent *invisible hand*, he writes. (*Christianity Today* [9/14], 465 Gundersen Dr., Carol Stream, IL 60188)

Taking the Initiative *With Investments*

It is no longer novel to invest money with an expectation of something other than or in addition to *the maximum rate of return*. In 1967, for example, the Industrial Areas Foundation (637 S. Dearborn St. #100, Chicago, IL 60605;

www.industrialareasfoundation.org) used a handful of stocks and many stock proxies to pressure a company about job training and hiring. In the early 1970s IAF used a greenlining tactic in which depositors (institutions and individuals) pledged to move their accounts to whatever bank provided the best mortgage plan in a particular city. Thereafter, Interfaith Center for Corporate Responsibility (475 Riverside Dr. #1842, New York, NY 10115; www.iccr.org) established routine mechanisms for religious institutions and others to leverage companies toward the common good.

Recent trends, new investment instruments and some confusing terms have extended the *socially responsible investing* or *ethical finance* movement. (The terms are confusing, at least to your editor, because #1. they sound similar; #2. the strategies and plans overlap; and #3. England and other countries use synonyms for U.S. concepts.)

The *social investment* strategy does not use negative screens against companies. Instead it directs investors to defined benefits like affordable housing, improved agriculture and more. The investor expects to preserve principal but gives up quick investment growth.

Last June Catholic Relief Services (209 W. Fayette St., Baltimore MD 21201; www.investingforthe poor.org) with other sponsors brought international investment leaders together around a related concept, *impact investing*. In October Chicago Ideas Week (600 W. Chicago Ave. #775, Chicago, IL 60654; www.chicagoideas.com) likewise convened a discussion on impact investing. The panel featured a prominent philanthropist, a portfolio manager and a leader from Impact Engine (222 Merchandise Mart Plaza #1212, Chicago, IL 60654; www.theimpactengine.com).

This concept, which began in about 2007, puts an investment behind an enterprising business. The environmental venture or maybe a health facility submits an application. It thereafter furnishes a progress report detailing measurable results. Kiva (875 Howard St. #340, San Francisco, CA 94103; www.kiva.org) and Zidisha (46835 Muirfield Ct. #301, Sterling, VA; www.zidisha.org) specialize in impact investments for individuals and even some major brokerages also offer it. The hub for this trend is Global Impact Investment Network (30 Broad St. #3800, New York, NY 10004; www.thegiin.org).

A *social impact bond*, also called *pay for success bond*, is another related instrument. It

supports a non-profit that promises to deliver a service more efficiently than in a tax-funded program. A government entity repays the investor if the program meets its clear and measurable goals, like reducing homelessness or less emergency room use because of preventive health care. The investor risks some capital if the experiment falls short. (*U.S. Catholic* [9/12], 205 W. Monroe St., Chicago, IL 60606)

Taking the Initiative

In Health Care

Common Ground (1034 E. Ogden, Milwaukee, WI 53202; www.commongroundwi.org) is a community organization that includes 40 churches, small businesses and agencies. It noticed that the Affordable Care Act of June 2010 has a provision for Consumer Operated Oriented Plans (COOPs). In February 2012 the organization applied for a federal loan to be repaid before 2027. So began Common Ground Health Care Coop (120 Bishop's Way #150, Brookfield, WI 53005; www.commongroundhealthcare.org).

Today the CGHC coop has 25,000 insured members, recently including some small businesses. It partners with two care provider networks. CGHC operating surplus goes toward lower premiums and extended coverage. (*Milwaukee Business Journal* [9/5/14], 825 N. Jefferson St. #220, Milwaukee, WI 53202)

The parallel Catholic school system began because of dissatisfaction with public education. Through it and to this day thousands of working families make economic and cultural inroads. Are any of those Catholic leaders who object to the Affordable Care Act exploring alternative insurance systems? The Amish and Mennonites, for example, generally forego health insurance. Instead, their communities have a mutual aid fund. They negotiate in advance with one hospital. In return for cash-up-front (old type cash with Andrew Jackson's picture) the hospital might give 40% off and/or a flat rate on specific procedures.

Christian Brothers Services (1205 Windham Pkwy., Romeoville, IL 60446; www.cbservices.org) suggests the first step to an alternative health care system. CBS is not an insurance company. It is a buying cooperative for religious orders and dioceses that, says Bro. Michael Quirk, FSC, is not into "profit, not stock value and not executive bonuses." Instead, by pooling risk CBS can "purchase better coverage,

with higher limits, at significantly reduced costs."

Alliance of Health Care Sharing Ministries (PO Box 389, Washington, IL 61571; www.healthcaresharing.org) is also not an insurance company, but it is open to individuals including Catholics. Members keep their own insurance but maybe find a more economical policy. They also make a regular donation to AHCSM. In a monthly publication AHCSM shows which members received help toward a medical expense.

A handful of clinics, including Catholic ones, use a similar principle. Everyone keeps their own insurance. Benefactors get free primary care. The uninsured also get free care. (Yes there are still uninsured, even with the Affordable Care Act.) St. Luke's Family Practice (1700 McHenry Village Way #2, Modesto, CA 95350; www.stlukesfp.org) and Our Lady of Hope Clinic (6425 Odana Rd. #3, Madison, WI 53719; www.ourladyofhopeclinic.org) use this model. (*Our Sunday Visitor* [10/4/09 & 11/29/09], 200 Noll Plaza, Huntington, IN 46750)

120+ Years

Of Catholic Social Thought

Catholicism itself does not endorse specific political or economic policies. Rather, Catholicism says policies are the job of lay people inside their institutions—sometimes disagreeing with one another. Those Catholics and other like-minded people are challenged to go beyond the individualism pervasive in most workplaces, in advice columns and TV shows, in pop spirituality and in political parties--Republicans accent individual economic rights while Democrats highlight individual lifestyle rights.

An alternative balances individualism with:

- Commensurate responsibility for the common good.
- Decision-making that presumes support from the corporate office or a Washington, DC agency but occurs in local groups like neighborhood clinics, precincts, the branch office, private social service agencies and more.
- A notion of success that accounts for contributions of all stakeholders.

- An economy that resembles a communal workbench with jobs that feed but also nourish.
- An appreciation for *relational persons*: not *people* in the aggregate, but real immigrants, entry-level staff, the unborn, executives, families, students, fathers, the unemployed, seniors, and mothers.
- A preference for public virtues like compromise, creativity, sustainability, friendship, gratitude and incremental change over empty *employee morale* gimmicks and over stale rhetoric about *family values* or *it takes a village* or the *quarterly bottom line*.
- A synergetic disagreement, not ideological squabbles for the sake of argument.

Clifford Longley uses the example of Imperial Chemical Industries to illustrate a difference between the Catholic sensibility and extreme individualism.

ICI was formed in 1926 and became a world leader with several chemical products and ingredients. It went through acquisitions and sales of divisions until 2008 when ICI went out of business—though parts of it are now owned by two other companies.

In 1987 ICI said its goal is to serve “customers internationally... Through achievement of our aim, we will enhance the wealth and well-being of our shareholders, our employees, our customers and the communities which we serve.” First *service*, then profit and “well-being” for stakeholders.

In 1994 ICI said: “Our objective is to maximize the value for our shareholders by focusing on... [our] competitive cost base.”

ICI’s first statement, says Longley, “was a commitment to serve the common good. The second was a commitment to make money. The second was an example of market fundamentalism.”

Catholic social thought differs from the ICI 1994 statement, Langley says. It “puts the emphasis on human dignity and the common good, and insists that wealth creation is only acceptable when it serves the interests of all the stakeholders.”

Langley mentions that Pope Francis’ campaign for economic inclusiveness might be catching on. For example, Christine Lagarde, director of International Monetary Fund (700 19th St. NW, Washington, DC 20431) draws upon the pope’s *Joy of the Gospel* (National Center for the Laity, PO Box 291102, Chicago,

IL 60629; \$8) to say that the neglect of solidarity and reciprocity leads to a quarrelsome, unstable and inefficient economy. (*The Tablet* [5/28/14 & 10/18/14], 1 King St. Cloisters, Clifton Walk, London W60QZ, England)

Longley develops his thoughts in a 92-page report, “Just Money: How Catholic Social Teaching Can Redeem Capitalism” (Theos, 77 Great Peter St., London SW1P 2EZ; www.theosthinktank.co.uk, free download).

North American Spirituality

St. Katharine Drexel, SBS (1858-1955)

Drexel is known for her ministry to Native Americans and to blacks. But she could be the patron saint of wealthy U.S. business people or certainly the patron of philanthropists.

All through the current recession the wealthiest people in our country “earned more, but the portion of the income they gave to charity declined,” says a study by *The Chronicle of Philanthropy* (1255 23rd St. NW, Washington, DC 20037; 10/5/14). Meanwhile the middle-class increased donations. The difference in degree is “big,” says *The Chronicle*—down 4.6% for the wealthy; up 4.5% for others. The middle-class and poor were likely more generous than the study indicates because it did not consider most cash donations.

The subtitle to a new Drexel biography summarizes her approach to wealth: *Katharine Drexel: the Riches to Rags Story of an American Saint* by Cheryl Hughes (Eerdmans Publishing [2014], 2140 Oak Industrial Dr. NE, Grand Rapids, MI 49505; \$20).

Some background about her money: Drexel’s mother died weeks after Catherine Mary (her baptism name) was born. Her step-mother came from a prominent family, and by the way was an ancestor to Jacqueline Kennedy (1929-1994). Francis Drexel (1824-1885), her father, was a wealthy banker. Her parents were serious Catholics who gave generously to several causes. The terms of the estate were rather specific. Drexel used her share and generous allocations from her sister and half-sister to become the “chief executive of a multi-million dollar charitable empire,” writes Amanda Bresie. (“Mother Katharine Drexel’s Benevolent Empire” in *U.S. Catholic Historian* [Summer/14], 620 Michigan Ave. #240 Leahy, Washington, DC 20064)

Her cause was funding and founding mission schools for Native Americans and

blacks. She also started a religious order, the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament (1663 Bristol Pike, Bensalem, PA 19020; www.katharinedrexel.org). They began several missions including in Arizona, New Mexico, Tennessee, Virginia and best known Xavier University (1 Drexel Dr., New Orleans, LA 70125).

Drexel insisted on sound business practices, requiring grant applications and progress reports. She pioneered some now standard grant procedures, including quarterly checks rather than a lump grant, incentive funding and other funding stipulations. Unfortunately, no Native American school ever became self-supporting, as Bresie writes.

Drexel and her order, whose schools were often superior to local ones, faced racial opposition in some places, including from Ku Klux Klan in Texas. Drexel's record on civil rights is reason enough for her to be a saint.

Hughes, Drexel's biographer, details two strains in her spirituality. She practiced mortification her entire life and in our age of consumerism voluntarily doing without is healthy. Drexel, however, was scrupulous and even members of her order recognized disturbingly unhealthy practices. Her extreme self-denial was wrong then and today.

Drexel was totally devoted to the Eucharist—after all, her order is Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament. She believed so much in Christ's real presence in the consecrated bread and wine that she necessarily saw Christ in others, particularly the poor. If today some Christians don't reverence the real presence inside churches and chapels, maybe by the same logic it is because they do not perceive the sacredness of their fellow workers, neighbors and all those who are struggling.

Rest in Peace

James Cunningham (1923-2014)

Cunningham was among the first in the U.S. to participate in specialized Catholic Action. While a student at the University of Notre Dame in the early 1940s, Cunningham met Fr. Louis Putz, CSC (1909-1998), who had recently escaped the Nazi horrors in Europe. Putz imported the Catholic Action method of lay formation to the U.S., a process with which Putz uniquely had direct experience. Cardinal Joseph Cardijn (1882-1967) devised this *observe-judge-act* model in Belgium in 1913. It was the basis

for several movements, including Young Christian Students, Young Christian Workers and Christian Family Movement.

After graduation Cunningham joined the Navy. He was aboard the destroyer USS Perkins in Tokyo when Japan formally ended World War II on September 2, 1945.

Cunningham returned home to Chicago and became director of Hyde Park-Kenwood Community Conference, an umbrella for over 50 block clubs and churches. Like Joseph Meegan (1912-1994) of Back of the Yards Neighborhood Council, he was among the first to develop citizen participation in neighborhoods.

In the late 1950s Hyde Park was the setting for one of the first urban renewal plans. That process became a case study for urban development.

Cunningham convened many area meetings to critique the plan and amend several provisions. Just before the final draft went in front of City Council, Msgr. Jack Egan (1916-2001) mounted a well-intentioned campaign against the plan, and implicitly against HP-K CC's support of the draft. Egan held a Chancery position and said he "represented" the archdiocese. He was concerned that the plan would overly favor the University of Chicago and displace the poor. Nearby mostly white parish neighborhoods would soon experience re-segregation, Egan feared.

Egan's 11th hour campaign "misfired to an unanticipated degree," write Peter Rossi and Robert Dentler in *Politics of Urban Renewal* (The Free Press, 1961), their 303-page case study of these events. Cunningham stayed focused and eventually the plan was implemented. Egan, meanwhile, was heavily criticized by several friends, including his mentor Msgr. Reynold Hillenbrand (1904-1979). The criticism, which Egan called his "heresy trial," was that a Church employee spoke too specifically about public policy; in this case going around those lay leaders on the scene who could rightly claim, even before Vatican II (1962-1965), to represent the church.

Cunningham moved to Pittsburgh in 1959 with his late wife Rita. For 49 years one or more of their ten children lived in their house, making room at times for exchange students from University College of Dublin.

Nonetheless, Cunningham had time for a public life. His first job there was with a housing development group. For 40 years he also taught at University of Pittsburgh School of Social Work. He wrote four books and

contributed several journal articles. Later he was a founder of Pittsburgh Neighborhood Alliance, a community organization. He was also a founder of Race and Reconciliation Group (St. Paul's, 108 N. Dithridge St., Pittsburgh, PA 15213), supported pro-life and volunteered in a living wage campaign. Oh yes, and he was a ward committeeman for 15 years and a director of the Home Rule Government Study Commission.

Cunningham contributed articles to INITIATIVES' predecessor publication, *New City*. "The neighborhood is not out of style," he wrote. Cities are different in our post-industrial era. But far from obsolete, they are "teeming with life." The city will regenerate; not through the effort of government alone or business alone. Cities rebuild by drawing upon parishioners, neighbors and shops that still have "the strong sense of local place."

Happenings

Opus: Art of Work (500 College Dr. Wheaton, IL 60187; www.wheaton.edu/BGCE/training-ministries/vocation) will have its "launch week" January 27-31, 2015, celebrating "economic work as an essential part of an overall witness to the goodness of God."

Catholic Social Ministry Gathering (3211 Fourth St. NE, Washington, DC 20017; www.catholicsocialministrygathering.org) will be held February 7-10, 2015. Its sponsors include several offices within the U.S. bishops' conference plus Catholic Charities, Catholic Relief Services and others. As in previous years, the Catholic Labor Network (1500 Jefferson Dr., Port Arthur, TX 77642; www.catholiclabor.org) will caucus at the gathering; specifically February 7, 2015 from 9 A.M. to Noon.

NCL joins the Center for Social Concerns (224 Geddes Hall, Notre Dame, IN 46556; www.centerforsocialconcerns.nd.edu) in sponsoring "Joy and Hope," a March 22-24, 2015 conference about Vatican II (1962-1965) during its 50th anniversary. NCL will host a caucus at Legends sometime during the conference; consider joining us.

"Dorothy Day (1897-1980) and the Church" is a May 13-15, 2015 conference at University of St. Francis (2701 Spring St., Fort Wayne, IN 46808; www.dorothyday.sf.edu). Robert Ellsberg is among the speakers. He is the editor of *Dorothy Day: Selected Writings* (Orbis Books [2005, updated from 1992], PO Box 308, Maryknoll, NY 10545; \$24).

LeaderworX (24 Rossa Ave., Lawrenceville, NJ 08648; www.faithjustice.org) is a formation experience for young adults. They reflect on short assignments at, for example, a day program for developmentally disabled or a soup kitchen. Accepted applicants get a stipend. The dates are early June 2015 to early August 2015 or two-week plunges, one beginning on 6/7/15, the other on 6/28/15.

There are over 200 Catholic colleges and 14 two-year Catholic colleges in our country. Yet how many of their graduates have Catholic magazines or newsletters mailed to their homes through adulthood? The comparatively low circulation of these publications accounts in part for the tenuous ties many have to their faith.

So blessings to *Commonweal* (475 Riverside Dr. #405, New York, NY 10115; www.commonwealmagazine.org) for celebrating 90 years of publication. Its guiding principle, say its editors, is that "democracy and Catholicism need not be antagonists." By *democracy* the editors do not mean anything reduced to "merely materialistic understandings of human life and purpose." Our freedom ultimately depends "on the commitment of all of us to the institutions of democratic governance, not merely the pursuit of personal ambitions or the exercise of individual rights."

Blessings too to *National Catholic Reporter* (115 E. Armour Blvd., Kansas City, MO 64111; www.ncronline.org), celebrating 50 years of publication. Its 11/6/14 issue contains 60 commemoration pages that reprint items from 1964-2014. There is also an anniversary book: *The National Catholic Reporter at Fifty* by Arthur Jones (Rowan & Littlefield [2014], 4501 Forbes Blvd. #200, Lanham, MD 20706; \$30).

If neither of these appeals to your family, there are thankfully a couple other Catholic weekly newspapers, at least one other weekly magazine and several monthlies. Which opens a door for a

commercial: INITIATIVES' only support comes from its readers; no subsidy from any official Church entity. INITIATIVES focuses exclusively on the outward-looking theme of Vatican II (1962-1965): that the church is the people of God at work—on the job, around the home and in the community. In 37 years INITIATIVES has never been delinquent paying its printer, its mail house or the post office. With 1,000 new readers, however, INITIATIVES could discard its anxiety over bills and could increase its frequency. Please send along the postal address of four friends who will then get this acclaimed newsletter **for free** for one year.

The Pastoral Center (106 Water St. W., St. Paul, MN 55107; www.pastoralcenter.com/work.html) has a new *Spirituality of Work Small Group Guide*. Produced in cooperation with National Center for the Laity, this e-resource is specific to each of six occupations plus a mixed-occupational guide.

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Visit the *Working Catholic* blog on *Catholic Labor Network* (www.catholiclabor.com) hosted by John O'Grady or on *Faith and Labor Movement* (www.faithandlabor.blogspot.com) hosted by Bill Lange.

Thanks to Fr. Sinclair Oubre (Catholic Labor Network, 1500 Jefferson Dr., Port Arthur, TX 77624) for hosting NCL's website (www.catholiclabor.org/NCL.htm), which now includes 100 back issues of INITIATIVES.

The National Center for the Laity's board is Chuck DiSalvo, Tom Donnelly, Bill Droel, John Hazard, Caroline Hopkinson, Frosty Pipal, Terry Mambu Rasch and Lauren Sukal.

Pope Francis is fond of telling audiences that God can surprise us. He may have gotten that theme from Fr. Gerard W. Hughes, SJ (1924-2014), author of *God of Surprises* (Eerdman's [1985], 2140 Oak Industrial Dr. NE, Grand Rapids, MI 49505; \$18)

The Tablet (1 King St. Cloisters, Clifton Walk, London W60QZ, England; 10/25/14) interviewed Hughes shortly before his death. "Most of what passes for *spirituality* [today] is actually, in a subtle way, destructive," says Hughes. "Faithful and good people are completely sold on it... *Just trust*, they are told. Trust in what? Just trust in what I am telling you, is the message. The teaching is all instructions. There is very little attempt to encourage people to listen to their own experiences."

"Listen to your own experience," Hughes advises. You might not need "a quiet space [or] silence... Just do it in your own way." Mostly avoid the spiritual advice industry which is "like scattering confetti in front of an express train that is coming to squash you in a tunnel."