

Ann Cummings

Journal Entry Week Six

GCN 615 OA

October 16, 2020

1. *When did you feel most uncomfortable? What triggered you?*

This week's subject was (and remains) difficult for me to process. I grew up with, and maintain, a rather conservative view when it comes to sexuality and sexual expression. I believe that God created man and woman to compliment one another in a marriage relationship. I also recognize that it is not that simple for most people. I do not expect others, especially outside of a Christian context, to agree with or adhere to my convictions. I would not refer a client because of their sexual orientation.

For me, the most difficult aspect of this week's conversation had to do with conversion therapy. I have known individuals whose testimony is that God delivered them from a lifestyle of homosexuality. I do not think that individuals should be forced to "convert" to heterosexuality. I do not expect every LGB individual to have a desire to change their orientation. I would agree that the Christian church has harmed many individuals through judgmental and, in some cases, hateful statements and interactions. I do, however, think that God can change and influence the desires of our hearts. He can deliver individuals from alcoholism, pornography addiction, and drug addiction. He can heal our physical bodies and deliver us from sin. I think people should have an option to seek pastoral counseling and prayer that will encourage their choice to pursue what they value as a religious conviction. I think it limits religious communities when pastors and spiritual counselors do not have the freedom to discuss this as an option for someone seeking encouragement in living out their religious convictions.

2. *When did you feel most at ease? How did you become more comfortable?*

I was more comfortable in our small group discussions. It is encouraging to hear how others are working through this subject. We discussed ways to honor God by loving people.

3. *How can you use this emotional and mental information to transform you during this course?*

I will use this as an opportunity to strengthen my relationship with God. I want to honor Him in my interactions with others. I want to love those that He brings to me. I do not have to convince others that I am right or that my way is best. God is responsible for drawing people to repentance, not me. It is His kindness and His Holy Spirit that draws us, not hateful rhetoric, and judgmental attitudes. I want to be used as an expression of His kindness and His love.