LEAD 636 Initial Discussion Posts by Janine Lim
This file is copyrighted (2010) and a part of my Leadership Portfolio found at http://www.janinelim.com/leadportfolio. It is shared for your learning use only.

Week 1: Why might these particular questions (Sire's 7) be useful in explaining one's worldview?

Worldview as a Window
I've always thought of a worldview as a window. It's how we see the world. The words "view" and "world" in worldview are not by accident. Our worldview affects what we see and what we don't see. When you look out the bay window in your living room (if you have one), you don't notice the glass. It's just there. You don't even think about it. You don't talk about it either (unless it's dirty, but that spoils the metaphor!!). The frame around the window makes it so that you don't see certain things. Some things are just obvious - so obvious you don't notice it - and others just aren't in the picture at all. Sire (2004) suggests that the assumption is there and so basic "that most of us don't even know we are assuming it" (p. 19). Just like the glass in the window. The only time we notice it is when we interact with someone who has a different kind of a window. Then the differences become apparent.

Respect for Others' Windows
I appreciated Sire's emphasis on page 21 that we must have a clear understanding that others have different worldviews. I would add that we must respect those worldviews, even if we "know" they are "wrong". Without respect it is impossible to have a constructive dialogue with someone. This respect for other worldviews and a determination to know and understand another's perspective is an important value to me. Stevenson and Haberman (2009) warn against attacking the motives of those who question or critic our theory of human nature, and hint that it may be better to be comfortable with some "unanswerables" in our own worldview than being defensive about conflicting evidence or data. They challenge us to "mutual dialogue, mutual listening, and understanding" (p. 7).

Worldview as Story
I really like the suggestion that our worldview is a story - an overarching narrative that explains our existence and meaning. I look forward to reading more of Sire on this concept.

Why are Sire's questions useful?
Without some questions, how do you even know the window exists? The questions help us get a start on grasping an understanding of our own worldview. I don't know enough yet to have an opinion on whether these questions are better than others. I look forward to comments from the rest of you on this.... I do like how Stevenson and Haberman (2009) suggest that this theory of human nature should have both a diagnosis and a prescription.

I look forward to continued dialogue with each of you!

-Janine

Sire, J. (2004). Naming the elephant: Worldview as a concept. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic.

Stevenson, L., & Haberman, D. (2009). Ten theories of human nature. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Week 2: Post a response to George Knight's explanation on the central meaning of learning/education and discuss the broader view of education. What does learning look like in your world / discipline / field? As a leader, in what way are you also an educator?

From the reading this week, I was intrigued by Knight's discussion of Learning, Education, and Training, with schooling crossing paths for each of these.

What is Learning?
I like the idea of learning as the large circle (graphic on page 11), but I tried to think of some life experiences where a person isn't learning. I couldn't really think of anything. Can you? I think even simple things like sitting in your chair watching your cat, or making and eating food, or chatting with a friend - one is still learning something. Maybe not really paying attention to what they are learning - but still learning. I'm not sure that I subscribe to the idea of learning as producing "new or changed behavior". Does learning always change your behavior? It sounds kind of behaviorist to me. It could also change your attitudes (or even modify your worldview)... which may eventually change your behavior but maybe not right away. Reinforcement is learning right? If I'm breathing in deep and being quiet - am I learning? I'm learning to pay attention to my breathe and my to listen and pay attention to the sounds around me. To quiet my busyness and be still. That's still learning right? What do you think? Am I crazy here? Does it sound too "new age" for a Christian? :)

Animal Training
I have to say I was shocked, even almost offended, by Knight's comment - "training can take place on the animal level" (p. 11). In educational technology we do a lot of training - or we call it that. Email training. What does that imply? That an animal could do it? Or that we're just "training" a set of behaviors? It drives me crazy when people want to learn something step by step - and I want them to learn the concept - so they can apply it in different situations. Is that because they are coming for "training" and what I want to teach is something else? "education?" "learning"?

What about Professional Developmemt?
Educational service agencies tend to offer workshops etc. for teachers. That's where I work. We call it professional development (PD) - although some are trying to move towards the term professional learning. I wonder if it fits somewhere between education and training in the chart. What do the rest of you think?

Learning in my Field
My specific field is educational technology, but the wider field is K12 teaching and learning. Learning in educational technology has taken a huge turn in the last 5 years. With the advent of Web 2.0, social networking, blogs, wikis, collaborative tools such as GoogleDocs, people are starting to use an intriguing term - PLN - personal learning network. You can learn more about it here.

My PLN includes reading a collection of almost 100 blogs in my RSS reader, 5-6 educational technology blogs, subscribing to a small cadre of close videoconferencing colleagues on Twitter, communicating daily with VC buddies on Skype (about 6-8 main people), several email newsletters, and the people who comment on my blog. My PLN is at hand for learning, asking questions, giving tips, responding to questions.

In the Leadership program, my PLN includes the people in my classes, my faculty, and my regional group. Several of my leadership buddies are available via email and Skype chat for when I get in need. I found this especially helpful during stats!

Now, guess, do you think I believe in the social construction of knowledge??

Leader Educator

How am I an educator as a leader? I would say that I'm a leader because I'm an educator. My leadership is not based on traditional power or position; instead it's because I've become an expert in my field. And how did I become an expert? by sharing knowledge - in many different ways. Sharing resources, creating resources, creating tools, offering workshops, presentations, online courses, providing support, etc. All these things, in my opinion, are educator roles at the heart....

I look forward to your responses!

Janine

Week 3: Post comments and reflections on various aspects of this approach to knowing both in general and specifically as they relate to your emerging worldview. Consider how this model relates to your experience/view of learning in the Leadership program. Using Freed's epistemological model, share an example of how you have come to know the core belief or value you hold about leadership. (Discuss the same core belief that you mentioned in the PreWeek.) Refer to specific elements in Freed's model. Reflect on the process whereby you as a leader came to "know" what you know. Share your ideas with your forum.

I found the reading for this week very interesting and challenging.

Freed's Epistemological Model: Comments and Reflections
I really like how the model starts with the picture of a person and includes several different kinds of knowing - through revelation, reason, intuition, senses, and authority. I

like that each one is included. I think it's really important, for example, that my faith and belief in Christ is informed by all of these sources - revelation through studying God's word, reason by thinking through and comparing text with text, intuition and senses in my prayer life and personal relationship with Jesus, and authority by hearing the word preached, listening to other Christians I respect. All of these sources of knowing I receive through my experience and dialogue with others. The experience and dialogue balance each other because I'm not just alone in my own experience; I have other Christians to keep me accountable and to learn from their experience.

In the second picture of the model, I see a community of people. I notice that some people have red for a couple sources of knowledge. I realize (and believe) that we all "know" in different ways - and that some of the sources of knowledge are more "comfy" to some of us than others. But in a community of learning, we can balance out and teach each other.

In the third picture of the model, I realize that my culture and the world I live in affects how I perceive the various sources of knowledge. My language affects my ability to know (think of how the Inuit have so many words for snow). Theories and methods affect my learning too - although this part of the model is more fuzzy for me.

Connections to my worldview
The story that creates the foundation to my worldview is very much based in revelation. However, it is also based in my experience and dialogue with others as I've learned about this story of creation and redemption. I think I probably could/should make more connections, but maybe will be able to better after I hear from more of you.

My view of learning in the leadership program
Freed's model emphasizes the dialogue and experience through which the knowledge is filtered. This is a fitting picture of what the Leadership program is doing for me - knowledge - from mostly reason and authority, is coming through my experience, polished and filtered by reflection and discussion/dialogue with others, and becoming part of my knowing.

How I've come to know my core value
The core value I wrote about earlier was service. I see leadership as a way to serve others. How did I come to know this? Hmmm. By experiencing the servant leadership of others. By others modeling and pulling me into service so that it became part of who I am. Before I started the leadership program I didn't know what servant leadership was. As I have been reading and learning, my understanding of service / servant leadership has expanded. I've brought in new ideas and connected them to my experiences and previous knowledge. Some of my knowledge about service and leadership change, some ideas were thrown away, others modified.... I would have to say though at the core, I came to know this value by experience, with dialogue and reason/authority helping to shape my understanding of the experience.

Some Questions

The readings left some questions in my mind.

- I would like to list some examples of knowledge that isn't about objects. I'm having a bit of a brain block at the moment. It seems that what I think of it still in some way connected to an object. What knowledge can you think of that isn't about an object? Is software an object? Is the Internet an object? Is love knowledge?
- Is reality really objective?

Really looking forward to hearing YOUR thoughts!

Janine

Week 4: Post a reaction to the position Sire takes on which comes first (epistemology or ontology). Can you find any examples of the epistemology – ontology tension in your own experience as a learner, leader, thinker, worker, etc?

How does Alaby's study on the Leadership program describe the philosophical underpinnings of the program? What are some characteristics of the program in practice that are obvious expressions of the program's basic assumptions? Are there other philosophical underpinnings in the program that don't connect with your experience of the program so far? How is the Leadership program trying to alter some traditional ways of knowledge acquisition? Why might this be useful for your learning and leadership?

As usual, the reading stretched me again!

Sire on the chicken (ontology) or the egg (epistemology)

I was very intrigued by Sire's thoughts on ontology before epistemology. It made me think of Job 11:7: "Canst thou by searching find out God? canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?" I hadn't really thought about which should come first, and before reading this chapter, I would have said epistemology would come first - you have to know how you know before you can know. But then as I read Sire, I could instantly see the dangers to my faith in starting with epistemology. I am still trying to understand pretheoretical and presuppositional. I wonder if because my faith is such a bedrock to who I am, I didn't even think of it first, but in reality it's first because it's my assumption and I don't even realize that I start there.... Is that pretheoretical or presuppositional? I'm still trying to digest these words.

Interestingly, when I went to Google to find the reference in Job, I discovered that one of Job's friends said this. And I thought his friends were basically wrong in what they said. Hmm. I'm thinking now of John 5:39-40 Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me. And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life. We could even bring our rationality to the Bible and not gain the understanding we should if we don't have Jesus as the source of life and His Spirit to teach us.

I really can't think of any examples of the ontology/epistemology tension in my own experience - but maybe as I hear yours I'll think of something.

Alaby's study

Alaby's study makes a lot of detailed connections! Some characteristics of the program that I noticed are:

* regional groups - as a way to connect us to sustained social constructivist learning
* a seriously strong belief in tying theory into practice through the way we demonstrate competency - job-embedded
* teachers as facilitators and co-learners

I can't think of any other philosophical underpinnings that don't connect with my experience, but maybe I'll think of some as I hear more of the discussion this week.

Traditional ways of knowledge acquisition are lectures and exams; instead in the leadership program we have community and application of knowledge to our experience... instead of just acquiring knowledge (and yes we still are doing/getting that), we're applying it in our experience at work etc.

I see this as useful because I get really bored with just lectures and knowledge that I can't see any application to my life. So this method engages me much more indepth with the learning, instead of just getting it, memorizing it, and spitting it back without actually changing anything in my life & practice.

Looking forward to another lively week with group 1! :)

Note: Bible references from the KJV.

Week 5: Post your conclusions: How would the fundamental purpose of education be portrayed by the following contemporary theories of education?* Essentialism, Progressivism, Perennialism, Multiculturalism, Constructivism, and Behaviorism. Explain how the various theories intersected with your past educational experiences (in family, school, church, occupation, recreation, etc).

It was interesting to see aspects of many of the philosophies of education in my previous schooling and current work. Other philosophies I saw no connection at all.

Purpose of Education

To start with, here’s my view on the purpose of education for the different philosophies.

* Progressivism: To release the creative energy of children so they can express themselves (Knight, 2006, p. 105).

* Humanism: To create an environment where children can be free from free, competition, and can grow individually.
* Perennialism: To fill student's minds with the best ideas and thoughts from the past (Knight, 2006, p. 115).
* Essentialism: To provide students with basic essential skills and help them achieve master in traditional disciplines (http://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/Social_and_Cultural_Foundations_of_American_Education/Chapter_1/Why_are_they_important_to_education%3F_3)
* Multiculturalism: To help students hear the stories of other cultures, and to redress the wrongs done by exclusion and domination.
* Constructivism: To teach students how to learn, how to construct their own knowledge of the world.
* Behaviorism: To program students to act in behaviorally efficient, economic, precise, and objective ways.

I also looked at these philosophies:

* Futurism: The purpose is to teach students to learn so they can be prepared for a future that we cannot envision.
* Home Schooling: The purpose is to meet the unique learning needs of the child and the beliefs about learning of the parent.

Connections With My Educational Experiences

My early elementary education was fairly traditional, with a focus on order in the classroom, following the rules, and the teacher as the giver of knowledge (mostly behaviorist with some essentialism and Adventist education principles).

In the middle school years, I did coursework from Home Study International, some of which was done under the instruction of my aunt with a few other missionary kids. I believe this was the beginning of my exposure to "project based learning" (progressivism) with the real-world application of knowledge, and some constructivism in doing projects that "create" and "organize" knowledge.

During my academy years, I loved biology, chemistry, geometry and algebra. I soaked up the memorization of facts, with learning being hard work, discipline and drill (essentialism). I was hooked on the thrill of conquering knowledge.

In my senior year, I experienced a very unique religion class that was called Christian Nurture. The first semester was very project oriented / student directed. We put on a week of prayer, did preaching, wrote plays and skits to represent our beliefs etc. The second semester was an experiment in wide open learning, and I soaked it up with a huge binder full of individualized learning. I believe this class made a huge impact in my spirituality and faith, and also in my belief that constructivism can be safely applied to our study of the Bible, as long as it is Holy Spirit guided constructivism. I couldn't have articulated it then, but ever since, I've wanted to be able to teach Bible in a way that

students could experience the same digging, discussing, and praying and learning that happened among mostly young people in the founding of the Adventist church. In this way, they could internalize their beliefs and really "own" them because they searched them out for themselves (like the Bereans).

This final year of academy laid the foundation for soaking up learning in college. I never saw myself as doing busy work for a grade. I just loved the learning. I think this was more an attitude on my end than the philosophy of education of my instructors. I did experience a lot of lecturing.

I have noticed since, in my work in educational technology, threads of reconstructionism in the keynote speeches of educational technology proponents. It seems most of the keynote speakers tend to say the world is in crisis, jobs are going overseas, therefore you should use this technology or do more real-world learning that uses technology. Usually the speeches don't take it as far as education changing society. It's more like futurism where we don't know what kind of jobs students will have when they get out of school; therefore we must teach students how to learn, how to respond to change, how to make choices (Knight, 2006, p. 129).

I have not experienced any type of education that is trying to free the oppressed or change the power structure (at least not that I noticed!).

I have come to really detest behaviorism in it's extreme forms; although I realize learning facts is important. The extreme idea of conditioning students, programming them, or behavioral engineering is really disturbing to me. I realize that structure is important in the classroom, but choice, freedom, and respect of the individual are very very important to me. In my own instruction, mostly for teachers to learn to use educational technology, I try to set up experiences where they can learn, and learn how to learn. I hate it when they want to learn the steps without the concept (which seems behaviorist to me). I want teachers to connect their new learning with their prior experiences, their expertise on learning, and to construct their own understanding of the best way to use technology with their unique student needs and their own beliefs about teaching and learning.

So as I wrote this, I realized that my constructivist / project-based learning experiences laid the foundation for my beliefs and practices about learning.

I look forward to hearing your ideas on the purposes of education and the connections to your past educational experiences!

Janine

Week 7: In the appropriate Discussion section of Desire2Learn, we'd like you to present or portray yourself as if you were the philosopher that you have read about and answer Sire's Seven Questions. Anything you say either proactively or reactively in this section should be in the voice of the person you studied. BE Plato or Sartre or Darwin as assigned…

I, Sartre, sat in a little French cafe late this evening and wrote a few answers to Sire's questions.

1. What is prime reality- the really real?

* God does not exist except in the fact that we all fundamentally have a religious instinct to be God in the sense that we want to be perfectly complete and self-justifying. (p. 181 & 194, fourth edition)

* We are all free to make choices or not to make choices which determines our essence. We have a responsibility to make choices.

* There is a pre-reflective consciousness and a reflective consciousness. (p. 181, fourth edition). All consciousness is "positional" consciousness of something distinct from the object. Pre-reflective consciousness exists at the same time because a person can immediately answer a question that he has not consciously thought about earlier.

Example: A hungry person may notice three apples on the table and begin cutting one to eat. If asked what he is doing, he can immediately answer I am cutting an apple even though he has not consciously thought about the act of cutting the apple before.

2. What is the nature of external reality, that is, the world around us?
Some of the world around us in inanimate or non-conscious, and some of the world around us (the humans) are conscious. I never thought about the consciousness of animals.

3. What is a human being?

There is no such thing as human nature for there to be any theories about (p.181, fourth edition).

A human being is a unified reality – a consciousness which is human reality in contrast to inanimate, nonconscious reality (p.180). We are not created for any particular purpose by anyone or anything. We simply exist by no choice of our own and we have to decide what to make of ourselves, so each human being creates his or her own "essence" (p. 182, fourth edition).

4. What happens to persons at death?

Existence ends at death and nothing happens after that.

5. Why is it possible to know anything at all?
We can know because we exist. We can know because we are conscious.

6. How do we know what is right and wrong?

Earlier in my life, I thought that the only foundation for our values lies in our own choices; there is no external or objective justification for our values, projects, or the way of life one chooses to live (p. 181, fourth edition). Later as I thought about the oppressed, the workers under capitalism, and the people in third countries, I realized the importance of ensuring freedom for all. We conceive of ethical obligations as what "ought" to exist, and "pure ethics" would strive towards that goal (p. 198, fifth edition). That's part of the anguish of having to make choices, of having the responsibility of making choices.

7. What is the meaning of human history?

The proper goal of human history is the "true ethic" (to aim for what ought to exist). History is moving forward with people becoming more aware of "this ideal".

"Todo what we can to work toward a worldwide society in which all people have equal opportunity to exercise their freedom." (p. 195, fourth edition) (with joint editing by Pam and Janine)

Week 8: Your philosopher's advice to the Leadership faculty and advice to Barak Obama on what he should focus on (from your philosopher viewpoint).

Dear President Obama,

Congratulations on your new position as president of the United States. I hope you will forgive this intrusion on your individual freedom and responsibility to choose. As you know, I believe that no one can say for another what choice is the best one. However, I would like to suggest some ways that you can use your responsible choice. As you read, please keep in mind that I respect your freedom to choose the ways to serve the people in your great land across the ocean.

I know from your campaign that you are concerned about the oppressed. You want to do something about the "social conditions that restrict freedom" (Stevenson, 2008, p. 197). You stated in your campaign the need to help the people on "main street" who are oppressed and exploited by the capitalists on "wall street." Thank you for this emphasis and your evident desire to do something about these social conditions that make it difficult for people to achieve full development and fulfillment as they seek and make meaning in their existence.

Since personal freedom and responsibility to choose are so foundational in my view, I would not presume to tell you exactly how you should achieve these goals. But I admire your ability to speak and inspire the people. You must continue to inspire them to define their existence, to improve it freely, to use their freedom to change themselves for the better. Do not allow them to blame anything else for their situation, but encourage each one to use their freedom, to make decisions. You began this work in the call to service to the community on Dr. Martin Luther King's birthday. You encouraged people to choose

to better their situation, to work towards their view of what "ought" to be. Continue these speeches; they emphasize the importance of defining our existence as seems best to each one of us. Encourage people to join organized "pledged groups committed to social and political change" and to try to achieve concrete freedom for the oppressed.

Yes, we can work to achieve more freedom for the oppressed.
Yes, we can work so that all have equal ability to choose their life.
Yes, we can strive towards achieving human life as it should be: "integral humanity", freely developed and fulfilled.
Yes, we can work towards being more self-aware.
Yes, we can use our freedom to change ourselves for the better!
Yes, we can work towards a society where everyone can exercise their freedom equally.

I wish you the best in the next four years. The anguish of personal responsibility to choose will weigh heavily upon you. Don't defer your decisions to others or blame the results on others. Accept the full reality of humanity's condition, "condemned to be free", required to choose without meaning or purpose.

You are free. We are all free. Therefore, choose. Choose the ways to lead and bring equal freedom to all people.

In sympathy and respect,

Sartre, emailed from an Internet cafe in Paris. Typist, Janine.

Week 9: A response to the following questions: As this class prepare to close in a week, briefly share your insights about dialogue and the concept of a constructivist epistemology as you have experienced it in this class. Write up a self-assessment on your abilities related to the practice of dialogue based on the piece from Senge. Also, based on Freed's "Four Mental Models of Bulletin Board Posting," what is your most common mode: posting, questions, reflecting or dialoguing. Why do you think this is so?

Reflecting on Dialogue

Well, I can't believe we're here almost done already! It seems like this class has flown by and we've only scratched the surface of the content.

The constructivist method of learning is very comfortable for me, and so I enjoyed the discussion and especially the "wise guys" simulation. I appreciated that the "wise guys" part was online and not face to face / real time, as I found that I was studying a lot to figure out how to respond in my character. I think that this exercise helped me learn the content much better as I was able to see not just the basic beliefs/summary of each philosophy, but how they interacted with each other and agreed or disagreed. Speaking in my character made me refer to the text more often than some of the other assignments, and so deepened my knowledge.

I was able to post at least five times a week, and usually spread out through the week. I found (as usual for me) the discussion board addicting and I checked it often twice a day except when I was traveling. I know that I tend to ask a lot of questions in the discussion board, but mostly because I'm used to teaching online and that's my way to get the students to elaborate more on their opinions. I think I usually got a response with my questions, so that was closer to dialoguing. I feel that I didn't "add" to what my classmates said so much - it's harder for me to build on and add more with my experiences or metaphors. I found that usually I was impressed with how they stated it and so didn't know how I could add to it. I sampled one week of my posts to see how I did on using names - I think I could improve here, but did use names some. I did ask for clarification, share experiences and affirm others. Still I feel that I could improve in reflecting, extending the conversation, and using names.

I think that this mode of interacting in the discussion is easy for me because I've been teaching online since 1999 and my classes are built around discussion of readings and discussion that requires application. So the experiences in this class were very similar to how I structure my own online courses.

It has been a joy to learn with all of you, my classmates. I deeply respect your wisdom and contributions and am so glad that I can learn with you throughout the leadership program!!

Janine

Stories and Questions and Metanarratives

In chapter 5, Sire reviews his 7 questions under the scrutiny of several other philosopher-reviewers. This was interesting to read, and I agree with him that his 7 questions hold up pretty well and are mostly covered by the questions asked by others. But where chapter 5 really got interesting was with the idea of a worldview as a way of life. I think this is where the rubber meets the road, and where the variations in worldview amongst people claiming the same worldview really come to life.

As Sire quotes Walsh and Middleton that worldviews "are perceptual frameworks" I thought of my idea of a window at the beginning of the class. The window is a frame, a framework, which allows you to see certain things and not other things. I found the idea of a worldview/framework "of life" and "for life" an intriguing distinction - showing that we have a dream of what "ought to be" (thinking of Sartre), but also a framework to work towards that "ought".

I really like the idea of story, and it fits the Christian worldview well because we have a story. A great story. The greatest story ever told. ANd it really does provide a framework for living and a vision for life. I like it because it's less abstract and more down to earth, more to where we actually live and move and have our being.

I didn't realize, though, that postmodernism sees the Christian metanarrative as an "oppressive narrative, privileging one class of people over another" (Sire, 2004, p. 103). I really have to step out of my worldview to see how it could possibly be an oppressive narrative... but when I think of how colonialism went hand in hand with missionaries, with sometimes detrimental effects, I can see it. But I think it's only an oppressive narrative when it isn't understood.

Public and Private Worldviews

Sire's commentary on public and private worldviews was very intriguing to me. He suggests that some aspects of our worldview are common "to our immediate family, community, nation, century" and to the whole human race throughout time and space (Sire, 2004, p. 108). It makes me want to draw circles - like an ever widening venn diagram - and figure out what is the same for all of them, and what is unique in the widening circles.

When I consider how my public world has influenced my private worldview, I think of postmodernism's effect on my thinking - which I have examined in closer detail in my paper - and will continue to do so. I don't feel that I really have experienced at any stage in my life (except maybe when I was very very young), the situation where everyone around me, church, community, family all had the same worldview. Being a missionaries' kid and living and studying internationally means that for much of my life I have been around people with very much different views than my own. It continues today as I work as a Seventh-day Adventist Christian in a public school setting. I realize that I must continue strong contact with my fellow Christians so as to keep the plausability structure that supports my faith intact. If I interact too much and too often with those whose plausability structure discounts faith, my own faith will be affected. The good thing about being around those who think differently is that I don't just float along agreeing with my community and/or faith community. I am constantly challenged to re-evaluate, to choose again to believe.

Finally, I too, cling with Sire, to the idea of objective truth. It IS out there and that REALLY REAL, the God Who Is There, loves and cares for me, and you too! And that will always be (I pray) the foundation of my worldview, both public and private.

How to relate to people with different views:

I think it's really important to seek first to understand, then to be understood. This means listening, observing, asking questions. Having a basic knowledge of the various worldviews prepares us to ask intelligent and respectful questions of those who view the world differently than we do. As we come to understand where another person is coming from, we can find common ground to celebrate. As the relationship is built, then the moments will come to share our faith (Christian perspective with a requirement to "go and make disciples". The key is having that relationship built on seeking to understand the other.