NOTA bio for Dan Goetz

Dan Goetz believes in the sanctity of fragile love and finite life. He believes that he and others are obliged to figure out the world on their own as best they can and that the way we behave as a result of that investigation is our real and practiced religion.

He grew up a Roman Catholic and took a deep dive into religion as a seminary student in high school and two years of college. Studying sociology, anthropology, and public administration at undergraduate and graduate levels, his work career became a lifelong practicum in these areas.

His study of and immersion in religion and governance have been as varied as the travels of working career, first as a rural development volunteer in West Africa, followed by local government management positions in the U.S. South, and then as an international consultant and researcher in local self-government.

Project assignments with one of the U.S.’s largest independent research institutes allowed him to see much of the world—West, Central and North Africa; Southern and Southeast Asia; Central America; Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union--not as a tourist but as part of teams dedicated to improving basic local government services.

He relished examining and comparing governance norms and institutions of the countries that he worked in and the religious traditions and practices—Islam, Orthodox Christianity, Buddhism, Hindu, Animism-- of friends and colleagues along the way.  In retirement he remains an optimistic skeptic, lover of language, and cultural explorer.  He’s currently focused on learning to listen more intently to others and to the natural world.