

# 'My life is my message' Questionnaire

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MAHATMA GANDHI WAS ONCE ASKED BY A REPORTER, "WHAT IS YOUR MESSAGE?" HE RESPONDED, "MY LIFE IS MY MESSAGE." EACH OF OUR LIVES IS A MESSAGE, TOO.

WHILE WHAT YOU SAY AS A TEACHER IS IMPORTANT, WHO YOU ARE AS A PERSON, AND HOW MUCH YOU MODEL COMPASSION AND RESPECT, WILL BE THE BIGGEST MESSAGE YOU CAN BRING TO YOUR STUDENTS AND AUDIENCES. AS WILLIAM EMERY CHANNING ONCE SAID, "MAY YOUR LIFE PREACH MORE LOUDLY THAN YOUR WORDS."

WITH THAT SAID, THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONNAIRE GIVES YOU THE OPPORTUNITY TO REFLECT UPON YOUR LIFE AND PUT INTO WORDS THE CONCRETE GOALS YOU HAVE FOR MODELING YOUR MESSAGE AS A HUMANE EDUCATOR. YOU WILL THINK ABOUT THE QUALITIES AND VALUES THAT ARE MOST IMPORTANT TO YOU, AND CONSIDER WAYS IN WHICH YOU LIVE ACCORDINGLY, AS WELL AS THE WAYS YOU WOULD LIKE TO BETTER EMBODY THOSE VALUES. THIS IS YOUR CHANCE TO REALLY EXPLORE YOUR DREAMS FOR LIVING A MORE NONVIOLENT, PEACEFUL LIFE, CONSIDER WHAT HOLDS YOU BACK, AND TO MAKE SOME COMMITMENTS TO YOURSELF. TAP INTO YOUR DEEPEST WISDOM AND YOUR MOST ARDENT HOPES FOR YOURSELF, YOUR FAMILY, YOUR STUDENTS, AND THE WORLD WE ALL SHARE.

THERE ARE THREE PARTS TO EACH QUESTION: A) WHAT YOU CURRENTLY DO; B) WHAT YOU WANT TO LEARN AND DO; AND C) WHAT STEPS YOU WILL TAKE TO DO THIS. THE PURPOSE OF THIS THREE STEPPED APPROACH IS TO HELP YOU A) IDENTIFY WAYS YOU ARE ALREADY LIVING ACCORDING TO YOUR VALUES; B) EXPLORE WHAT YOU CAN DO TO LIVE BETTER; C) HELP MAKE TANGIBLE PLANS FOR ACHIEVING YOUR GOALS. IN B) YOU WILL CLARIFY WHAT YOU NEED TO LEARN, WHILE IN C) YOU'LL WRITE DOWN THE STEPS YOU WILL TAKE TO FOLLOW THROUGH, WITH CONCRETE AND MANAGEABLE PLANS FOR YOURSELF. KEEP THE STEPS IN C) STRAIGHTFORWARD TO ENCOURAGE YOURSELF TO KEEP THEM. LET'S GET STARTED!\

## **QUALITIES:**

1) THE QUALITIES, VIRTUES, OR VALUES THAT ARE MOST IMPORTANT TO ME ARE:

## **LIFE:**

2A) MY LIFE REFLECTS THESE QUALITIES FAIRLY WELL:

2B) I WOULD LIKE TO LIVE MY LIFE SO IT REFLECTS THE FOLLOWING QUALITIES MORE DEEPLY:

**2C) IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE THIS GOAL, I WILL TAKE THE FOLLOWING STEPS:**

**FAMILY:**

**3A) WITH MY FAMILY AND FRIENDS, I MODEL THE FOLLOWING QUALITIES:**

**3B) I WOULD LIKE TO MODEL THE FOLLOWING QUALITIES MORE CONSCIOUSLY WITH MY FAMILY AND FRIENDS:**

**3C) IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE THIS GOAL, I WILL TAKE THE FOLLOWING STEPS:**

**HEALTH:**

**4A) IN RELATIONSHIP TO MY HEALTH, (PHYSICAL, EMOTIONAL, INTELLECTUAL, SPIRITUAL) I TAKE CARE OF MYSELF IN THE FOLLOWING WAYS:**

**4B) I WOULD LIKE TO LEARN/DO THE FOLLOWING TO IMPROVE MY HEALTH:**

**4C) I WILL TAKE THE FOLLOWING STEPS TO IMPROVE MY HEALTH:**

**COMMUNITY**

**5A) IN MY INTERACTIONS OUTSIDE MY HOME AND IN THE COMMUNITY, MY ATTITUDES, BEHAVIORS, AND RELATIONSHIPS REFLECT THE FOLLOWING QUALITIES AND VIRTUES:**

**5B) I WOULD LIKE TO LEARN/DO THE FOLLOWING TO IMPROVE MY ATTITUDES, BEHAVIORS, AND RELATIONSHIPS:**

**5C) I WILL TAKE THE FOLLOWING STEPS TO IMPROVE MY ATTITUDES, BEHAVIORS, AND RELATIONSHIPS:**

**ACTIVISM:**

6A) IN RELATION TO ACTIVISM AND VOLUNTEERING, I DO THE FOLLOWING:

6B) I WOULD LIKE TO HELP AND VOLUNTEER MORE IN THE FOLLOWING WAYS:

6C) I WILL TAKE THE FOLLOWING STEPS IN ORDER TO HELP OTHERS THROUGH ACTIVISM AND VOLUNTEERISM:

**CHARITY:**

7A) IN RELATION TO CHARITABLE GIVING AND SHARING MY RESOURCES, I CONTRIBUTE IN THE FOLLOWING WAYS:

7B) I WOULD LIKE TO CONTRIBUTE MORE IN THE FOLLOWING WAYS:

7C) I WILL TAKE THE FOLLOWING STEPS TO CONTRIBUTE MORE:

**PURCHASES:**

8A) IN RELATION TO PEOPLE WHO PRODUCE AND SUPPLY THE PRODUCTS AND SERVICES I USE, I CURRENTLY MAKE THE FOLLOWING CHOICES TO PREVENT OTHERS FROM SUFFERING OR BEING EXPLOITED:

8B) IN RELATION TO PEOPLE WHO PRODUCE AND SUPPLY THE PRODUCTS AND SERVICES I USE, I NEED TO LEARN ABOUT THE FOLLOWING IN ORDER TO MAKE CHOICES THAT BETTER REFLECT REVERENCE, RESPECT, AND RESPONSIBILITY:

8C) I WILL TAKE THE FOLLOWING STEPS TO LEARN, THINK CRITICALLY, AND MAKE MORE HUMANE CHOICES IN RELATION TO OTHERS:

**ANIMAL LIFE:**

9A) IN RELATION TO OTHER SPECIES (WILDLIFE AND THOSE USED FOR FOOD AND CLOTHING, IN PRODUCT TESTING, IN SHELTERS, ETC.) I CURRENTLY MAKE THE FOLLOWING CHOICES TO MINIMIZE SUFFERING AND EXPLOITATION:

9B) IN RELATION TO OTHER SPECIES, I NEED TO LEARN THE FOLLOWING IN ORDER TO MAKE CHOICES THAT BETTER REFLECT REVERENCE, RESPECT, AND RESPONSIBILITY:

9C) I WILL TAKE THE FOLLOWING STEPS TO LEARN, THINK CRITICALLY, AND MAKE MORE HUMANE CHOICES IN RELATION TO OTHER SPECIES:

**ENVIRONMENT:**

10A) IN RELATION TO THE ENVIRONMENT (AIR, WATER, LAND, SOIL, FORESTS, RAINFORESTS, NATURAL RESOURCES, ETC. I CURRENTLY MAKE THE FOLLOWING CHOICES TO LIVE AND ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY LIFE:

10B) I NEED TO LEARN ABOUT THE FOLLOWING IN ORDER TO MAKE CHOICES THAT BETTER REFLECT REVERENCE, RESPECT, AND RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE ENVIRONMENT:

10C) I WILL TAKE THE FOLLOWING STEPS TO LEARN, THINK CRITICALLY, AND MAKE MORE HUMANE CHOICES IN RELATION TO THE ENVIRONMENT:

**REFLECTION:**

11) IN ORDER TO TURN MY INTENTIONS INTO PRACTICAL CHANGES, I WILL USE THE FOLLOWING METHODS TO SUPPORT AND DISCIPLINE MYSELF (THIS SUPPORT CAN BE INTERNAL, SUCH AS STARTING A MEDITATION PRACTICE, OR EXTERNAL, SUCH AS TAKING A CLASS OR CREATING A SUPPORT GROUP):

12) IMAGINE A WORLD 40 YEARS FROM NOW IN WHICH THE PROBLEMS WE FACE TODAY HAVE BEEN SOLVED. A CHILD VISITS YOU AND ASKS, “ WHAT ROLE DID YOU PLAY TO HELP MAKE THE WORLD BETTER? WHAT WILL YOU SAY TO THIS CHILD?