

Creating Your Own Personal Mission Statement

Before you begin planning all the things you want to be and do in your life, there's only one thing you should know: what matters to you! If you can become clear about what you value, you will be able to use this as a guiding principle for all the major decisions and choices of your life. This activity guides you through a process to gain clarity about your values and helps you construct your own personal mission statement.

Please go through this activity in order as each section prepares you for the next.

What Do You Value?

Think about the things that are most important to you. The words listed below may help stimulate your thinking. Things that are important to you are values. They are powerful motivators that influence our choices, habits and lifestyles.

Health
Financial security
Possessions
Free time
Family
Friends
Learning
Happiness
Relationships
Lifestyle
Personal Growth

Contribution
Development of talents
Life purpose
Diversity
Effort
Frugality
Generosity
Justice
Order
Productivity
Security

Sincerity
Truth
Wealth
Work
Peace of mind
Fame
Spiritual fulfillment
Life travel
Sense of accomplishment
Respect
Altruism

A. Choose up to six words from the list of values above or from others that matter to you.

- | | |
|----------|----------|
| 1. _____ | 4. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 5. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 6. _____ |

Aligning Your Values with Principles

The more closely our values align with our principles, the more effective we will be.

As you just learned, values are the things that are important to us. Principles, on the other hand, are guidelines for human conduct that are proven to have enduring, permanent value. If our values do not align with our principles, they may prevent us from producing the results we seek in our lives.

The “Law of the Farm” teaches that a successful harvest must be preceded by timely planting and on-going care (watering, weeding, etc.). A similar principle applies in our lives. Things we value take time and nourishment. There’s no “quick fix” for health, lasting relationships in a marriage, family or elsewhere. If we neglect them now, we can’t expect positive results later.

For many people, words like the ones listed below represent principles. Think about your life. Which principles have impacted you directly? Are there any principles that you particularly value or to which you want to more closely align in your life?

| | | |
|---------------|---------------|-----------------|
| Empowerment | Human Dignity | Potential |
| Encouragement | Humility | Quality |
| Excellence | Honesty | Service |
| Fairness | Integrity | Trustworthiness |
| Growth | Patience | |

B. Choose four words of your own or from the list above.

| | |
|----------|----------|
| 1. _____ | 3. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 4. _____ |

The Influence of Others

If you carefully consider the lives of people who have been influential to you, you will often find that their lives were aligned with principles. Identify one or two people who have been a positive influence in your life. (These people may or may not be aware of their influence on you). Examples of influential people follow below.

| | | |
|---------|-------------------|----------|
| Parent | Historical Figure | Leader |
| Teacher | Friend | Relative |

C. Write the names of two people below.

| | |
|----------|----------|
| 1. _____ | 2. _____ |
|----------|----------|

What do you admire about them?

| | | |
|---------------|--------------------|--------------|
| Ambitious | Forgiving | Responsible |
| Balanced | Fun | Selfless |
| Caring | Giving | Self-reliant |
| Committed | Industrious | Sensitive |
| Compassionate | Loyal | Thankful |
| Courageous | Moral | Tolerant |
| Creative | Organized | Trustful |
| Dependable | Patient | Trustworthy |
| Educated | Powerful | Wise |
| Enthusiastic | Principle-centered | Witty |
| Fair | Proactive | |
| Faithful | Respectful | |

List up to six words that describe what you admire about those you chose.

| | |
|----|----|
| 1. | 4. |
| 2. | 5. |
| 3. | 6. |

Develop Your Character

The qualities that you admire about these people are various aspects of their character. It is what distinguishes them as who they are.

You have the opportunity to develop your character to be as admirable as is the character of the people you admire. As you work through these mission building exercises, carefully consider your own character and your vision for your life, and begin formulating a plan that will start moving you in the direction you want to go.

Everyone has strengths and talents that enable them to do certain things and to make a contribution in life. Consider your strengths and talents—those that others recognize in you, as well as any strengths that others may not see.

| | | |
|----------------|---------------|---------------|
| Adaptable | Generous | Practical |
| Articulate | Grateful | Reliable |
| Artistic | Hard-working | Sincere |
| Athletic | Imaginative | Skillful |
| Clever | Insightful | A speaker |
| A communicator | Intelligent | Spiritual |
| Confident | Kind | A teacher |
| Dexterous | A leader | Trustworthy |
| Diplomatic | Open-minded | Understanding |
| Energetic | Optimistic | A visionary |
| Entertaining | A philosopher | A writer |

D. Choose up to six words of your own or from the list above.

1.

4.

2.

5.

3.

6.

Obstacles to Success

Just as you have strengths and talents that enable you to do certain things, you may have habits that prevent you from being the person you want to be.

Consider your habits and tendencies. Which ones might prevent you from realizing your mission?

Anti-social

Intolerant

Selfish

Compulsive

Introverted

Prejudice

Dishonest

Irresponsible

Tedious

Disorganized

Narrow-minded

Unaware

Distrustful

Obsessive

Uncharitable

Egotistical

Pessimistic

Uncommitted

Excessive

Pretentious

Unenthusiastic

Fearful

Prideful

Ungrateful

Impulsive

Procrastinator

Unmotivated

Inflexible

Reactive

Unreliable

Insincere

Sarcastic

Vague

E. Choose only four words of your own or from the list above.

1.

3.

2.

4.

Important Relationships

Another way to think about your life is in terms of the people who are important to you. Identify four people you consider to be significant in your life.

Spouse/partner

Family Member

Friend

Work Associate

TIP: If you are not currently engaged in a relationship listed above, you can complete this exercise by imagining the person who has filled that role in the past or someone who might fill that role in the future.

Use your imagination to visualize a celebration in your honor at some point in the future. What words would those whom you admire use to describe his or her thoughts and feelings about you on that occasion?

Select up to 3 words he or she would use to describe you.

| | | |
|---------------|--------------------|--------------|
| Ambitious | Forgiving | Responsible |
| Balanced | Fun | Selfless |
| Caring | Giving | Self-reliant |
| Committed | Industrious | Sensitive |
| Compassionate | Loyal | Thankful |
| Courageous | Moral | Tolerant |
| Creative | Organized | Truthful |
| Dependable | Patient | Trustworthy |
| Educated | Powerful | Wise |
| Enthusiastic | Principle-centered | Witty |
| Fair | Proactive | |
| Faithful | Respectful | |

Fill in the names by letter. In F, write your companion's name. In G, write your family member's name. In H, write your friend's name. In I, write your work associate's name.

F. _____ says I'm:

G. _____ says I'm:

H. _____ says I'm:

I. _____ says I'm:

Your Personal Mission Statement

The information you've just provided is ready to compile into a first draft of your mission statement. Remember, this is only a rough draft. Take time to review and personalize it even more. Remove, rephrase, and add thoughts or ideas with particular meaning to you. Make it inspirational! Continually work to detect and refine your mission.

To find happiness, fulfillment, and value in living I will:

REMEMBER what's important in life is (fill in the values of A)

LEAD a life centered around the principles of (fill in the principles of B)

REVERE admirable characteristics in others, such as (fill in the names of C)

and attempt to implement similar characteristics in my own life.

RECOGNIZE my strengths and develop talents as a person who is (fill in the answers to D)

HUMBLE myself by acknowledging that I can be (fill in the answers to E)

and by constantly string to transform my weaknesses into strengths.

ENVISION myself becoming a person who:

F. _____ thinks is _____

G. _____ thinks is _____

H. _____ thinks is _____

I. _____ thinks is _____

You will now want to take this information and draft one to two paragraphs that will serve as your personal mission statement. Once you are happy with it, make several copies and place them at home, at work, etc. You should use your mission statement to guide your actions and choices. You should also review and revise your personal mission statement every few years.