

Activity

#7

Writing Your Personal Mission Statement

A personal mission statement answers the questions “Who am I?” and “What type of person do I want to become?” Your mission is the way you carry yourself, the way you act, your attitude, your grace, and your style.

In order to choose your direction (who you will become), you need to set a certain course from your launch pad (Who you are today). All space ships need guiding points in order to correct the voyage of the ship while it travels. Did you realize the space shuttle is off course 80% of the time? But through a series of correction, re-correction, and more corrections, it is able to arrive at the precise location.

Writing a mission statement challenges you to focus on your character — how you want to be, what you value, and your core principles. Because each individual is totally unique, your mission statement will reflect your uniqueness. Your mission statement will become the foundation for major decisions in your life, as well as for the little decisions that constantly guide you. It will call you to act on purpose because you will have inner stability, a solid changeless core inside of you. It is the key to the ability to change, grow, love, and live. It is the changeless sense of who you are, how you interact with the world, and what you want to remain.

You will not write this today. It takes days, weeks, and perhaps years. However, if you start today, your journey will not be as long.

A mission statement:

1 shows the best parts of you;
1 tells the direction that you plan to move in;
1 gives others insight into the deepest part of yourself;
1 expresses your own creativity;
1 integrates POISE (the Physical, Occupational, Intellectual, Social, Spiritual, and Emotional parts of yourself;)
1 guides you in the individual roles you play in your life;
1 inspires you to move in the direction you choose.

Ten years from today:

What kind of clothes will you wear? What will your clothes say about who you are?
What kind of things will you think about? What will you be interested in?
What will your friends say about you?
What will you say about your friends?
What will they say about you at the place you work?
Will your high school classmates say that you've changed? In what ways?
What does the place in which you live look like?
What does it say about who you are and what you value?
What personal characteristics will you be most proud of?

More questions to ponder:

What would I like to accomplish in my life?
What kind of person would I like to become?
What are my greatest strengths and attributes?
How do I want people to remember me?
Who are the people who have made the biggest positive impact upon my life? Why?
List the 5 most important things in your life.
Who is doing the kind of work that you would most want to do? What do you think their life is like?

How do you start?

It is quite simple. You start by writing either I will or I am at the beginning of a sentence. Then, reviewing your answers to the questions above, you write a sentence or two describing the person you will become, the behaviors you will adopt, and the dreams you will fulfill.

Here are some examples of statements that you could include in a **"Mission Statement"**:

I will:

Succeed at home.

Be honest.

Be courteous to people.

Hear both sides before judging.
Obtain counsel of others.
Defend those who are absent.
Or

I am a person who:

Doesn't speak ill behind another's back.
Develops at least one new skill per year.
Maintains a positive attitude.
Keeps a sense of humor.
Is orderly in person and in work.
Does not fear mistakes.
Listens twice as much as I speak.
Exercises wisdom in what I choose to eat,
read, see, and do in my personal time.

Putting your words on paper.

A mission statement usually begins with the words **I am a person who** or **I will**. It is a declaration written for yourself. This declaration clearly explains where you are going and why you are going there. Often times young people ask "Can I share my mission statement with others?" The answer is, "Of course you can." However, you probably will not need to tell it to anyone. People will be able to figure it out, just by watching your behaviors; the interactions you have with others and the choices you make.

Your mission statement will be a declaration of your best self. It may sound something like the ones presented below.

Samples of Personal Mission Statements

Anonymous Alaskan Adult

I will view living as precious and will enhance its value by striving to discover my capabilities and to actualize my potentialities. I will be problemcentered rather than self-centered and use stress as positive motivation for constructive action.

I will celebrate the dreamers and thinkers of this world (the likes of Don Quixote and Daedleus) and remember that the quest is life-long, purposeful, and ridiculous.

I will add value to people, projects, priorities to which I commit. I will empower the individual and make a contribution to this world; one life, one event, at a time.

I will not waste time; the substance of life. I will live a life of self-direction, self-sufficiency, and selfcontrol; fully realizing that if I do not direct my life, some one else will try.

I will breathe unpolluted air, create and appreciate music and beauty, maintain and use my body, stretch my boundaries, fight for what is right rather than what is to my advantage or expedient,

acknowledge excellence, and reward risk taking.

I will seek and participate in invigorating/unusual experiences and passionately relate the stories to others. I will listen more than I speak, plan more than I remember, build more than I destroy, and celebrate others more than I am celebrated.

I will live cooperatively with people; off the trail, but on the path. I will live simply, practice being comfortable in uncomfortable situations, and evaluate what goes into my head, stomach, and heart. I will experiment upon myself in order to constantly challenge my frame of reference through substantive intellectual encounters.

I will continuously explore my relationship to my wife, my culture, my earth, and my higher power. I will roll/row with the ebb and flow of life; explore, explode, rest, pray and evolve.

I will laugh from the belly often and hard. I will live deeply, from my core; neither fearing the unknown nor the unknowable. Rather than discussing whether the glass is half empty or half full, I will always work to fill the glass. I will be a dispenser of positive energy and enthusiasm.

I will live a life filled with noise, color, passion, joy, sorrow, laughter, movement, and rest. I will live a life that, when I review its substance before my death, would make a fascinating biography or an energizing movie.

Mahatma Gandhi

Let the first act of every morning be to make the following resolve for the day:

I shall not fear anyone on earth.

I shall fear only God.

I shall not bear ill toward anyone.

I shall not submit to injustice from anyone.

I shall conquer untruth by truth.

And in resisting untruth, I shall put up with all suffering.

Anonymous Alaskan High School Student

I will be a concerned and informed citizen. I will not spend money foolishly. I will listen quietly to friends and colleagues. I will continue to have considerable energy and drive. I will remain enthusiastic about life. I will keep my sense of humor. I will continue to be a good communicator. I will endeavor to exercise and keep my body in good shape and stay away from fatty foods. I will enjoy life to the max by traveling and enjoying new experiences.

Now that you see where we are going, in the space

provided below, write a brief mission statement. Of course, this will be a rough draft. You will want to spend some time improving and refining it – this process may take you years. Once you have it written, I encourage you to make several copies, even frame one of them. After you make several copies, all you need to do is follow three simple steps.

Step 1: In the morning, as soon as you get out of bed, read your mission statement to yourself and make a commitment to uphold it throughout the day.

Step 2: At night, before you go to bed, read your mission statement again. Remember all the things you did to uphold your personal mission. You will only focus on the positive and carry those thoughts with you into your sleep. (You will not waste any time remembering what you did not do.)

Step 3: Repeat steps one and two, every day, until you have aligned all your thoughts and actions to your personal mission. (This may take weeks, months, or even longer.)

A psychologist named Denis Waitley wrote “Since the mind is a specific biocomputer, it needs specific instructions and directions. The reason most people never reach their goals is that they don’t define them, learn about them, or ever seriously consider them as believable or achievable. Winners can tell you where they are going, what they plan to do along the way, and who will be sharing the adventure with them.”

By reading and rereading your mission statement, you are programming your biocomputer. You are programming it the way you want to, so that outside influences, like media, advertising, and peers will exert less control over you. The goal of this whole exercise is to have you take charge of who you are and who you will become. As you travel through life, you can either choose to behave and make decisions according to your personal mission statement or not. What is important is that you are intentionally making a choice. You are doing what you are doing, “On purpose.” You can’t do things on purpose, if you don’t know what your purpose is.