

Bulletin for Personal Mission Statement

Business

Chalice Lighting

We gather in the glow of the light that burns at the center of our circle.

And we wonder:

What is holy?

The flame? Light itself? What it holds?

And we ask:

What is at the center, the very center of the flame?

What is at the center, the very center of this circle?

What is at the center, the very center of each of us?

Mary Morell

Sharing of Joys and Concerns

Silence – holding each other in silent support

Shared Readings

Make no mistake: I fell into (my great work) not out of kindness or a sense of mission. I did it out of frustration and anger and depression. I sometimes joke that I had a choice between becoming an alcoholic or a humanitarian. I'm a lousy drinker, so I became a humanitarian. *David Levinson*

I want to be thoroughly used up when I die. . . . Life is no 'brief candle' to me. It is a sort of splendid torch which I have got hold of for a moment, and I want to make it burn as brightly as possible before handing it on to future generations. *George Bernard Shaw*

As times change and we change and our responsibilities in a changing culture change, we are called to let go sometimes of past prophetic calls and to immerse ourselves in new ones. *Matthew Fox*

The secret is in pushing your individual courage horizons so you can control your fear, contain your doubts, and find room to stretch, grow and lead the life you've always wanted to live. *Doug Hall*

Everyone has his own specific vocation or mission in life; everyone must carry out a concrete assignment that demands fulfillment. Therein he cannot be replaced, nor can his life be repeated. Thus, everyone's task is unique as is his specific opportunity to implement it. *Viktor Frankl*

Just sheer life cannot be said to have a purpose, because look at all the different purposes it has all over the place. But each incarnation, you might say, has a potentiality, and the mission of life is to live that potentiality. How do you do it? My answer is, "Follow your bliss." *Joseph Campbell*

Deep Sharing/Deep Listening

Round 1

Share your personal mission statement. If you haven't created one, share a few sentences about where you are in the process or your feelings about such a statement.

Round 2

Share more deeply your views and experiences of creating a personal mission statement as a result of your exploration of the preparation materials.

Round 3

As time allows, share additional thoughts on a personal mission statement or reflect on what others have shared.

Closing Activity

Closing Words

As our time together comes to a close, we give thanks for one another, for the chance to share our lives, and to renew our spirits in the company of friends. May we go forth enriched by our gathering, committed to living life fully, to loving life with more passion, and to supporting one another.

From Gatherings by Tony Bushman and Bill Hamilton-Holway

Song

The Covenant

I commit myself:

- to come to meetings when I possibly can, knowing that my presence is important to the group
- to let the leader know if I will be absent or need to quit
- to share with the leader the responsibility for good group process by watching how much time I take to speak and noticing what is going on for others
- to do the reading and thinking about the topic ahead of time
- to not gossip about what is shared in the group, and tell only my own story to others
- to honor the safety of the group by listening to what others share with an open heart
- to refrain from cross-talk, judging, or giving advice
- to share as deeply as I can when it is my turn.

Facilitator Notes for Personal Mission Statement

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Mary Morell

Sharing of Joys and Concerns (each person about 2 minutes)

Silence – holding each other in silent support (3 minutes)

Shared Readings

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Deep Sharing/Deep Listening

In the rounds of deep sharing and deep listening, pay close attention to the time allotted each person to ensure that all get to share at least once. In Round 1, go first to model. Mention that it's ok not to have created a personal mission statement, and that people can instead share their thoughts about a mission statement or what they felt about the process.

Round 1 (each person about 2 minutes)

Share your personal mission statement. If you haven't created one, share a few sentences about where you are in the process or your feelings about such a statement.

Round 2 (each person about 5 minutes)

Share more deeply thoughts and experiences of creating a personal mission statement as a result of your exploration of the preparation materials.

Round 3

As time allows, share additional thoughts on a personal mission statement or reflect on what others have shared.

Closing Activity

Ask each person to share a word or phrase to describe how they are feeling.

Closing Words

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Preparation for Personal Mission Statement

Tell me, what is it you plan to do
With your one wild and precious life?

Mary Oliver

In this covenant group session you will explore writing a Personal Mission Statement. The word “mission” is familiar to most of us from religious or military missions—our church, for example, has a “Mission Covenant” that is printed in every order of service. In organizational management, the term “mission statement” is used for a brief statement of an organization’s core purpose, competencies, and values. It may seem odd to apply the idea of a mission statement to an individual, but the process of writing a mission statement can help you identify your core values and talents—the unique characteristics you bring to your goals in life and the roles you fulfill.

In *Utne Magazine*, Nina Utne asked Robert Gass, a teacher and spiritual activist, “How do we know what to do? How do we know what matters?” He replied, “We don’t! But still we choose to engage. Each of us is here for a purpose. Not an idea, not something we invent, but something we discover. If each of us answers this unique call, somehow it will all get done. For some of us, our purpose might express itself through standing up against racism or sexism. For others, it’s about caring for a family. We may live our purpose through community service, through art, or through business.”

Stephen Covey, author of *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*, says that writing a personal mission statement will be “one of the most powerful and significant things you will ever do to take leadership of your life. In it you will identify who you want to be, what you want to do, for whom, and the legacy you want to leave.” The process of writing, says Covey, “changes you because it forces you to think through your priorities deeply, carefully, and to align your behavior with your beliefs.”

The place God calls you to is the place where your deep gladness and the world’s deep hunger meet.
Frederick Buechner

It did not really matter what we expected from life, but rather what life expected from us. We needed to stop asking about the meaning of life, and instead to think of ourselves as those who were being questioned by life—daily and hourly. *Viktor Frankl*

There may be times when your mission is influenced by uncontrollable circumstances, but you can always control your attention and your attitude. *Isaiah Hankel*

Create a Personal Mission Statement

Use the worksheet on the next page to create a personal mission statement. You will share your mission statement—or your thoughts and feelings about the process—at the group session.

Questions to Ponder

1. Did you find the process of working on a personal mission statement useful and meaningful, or did it seem artificial or reductive?
2. Do you think we each have a special purpose in life, or do you think we live according to the circumstances in which we find ourselves?
3. How has your view of your purpose changed over the course of your life?

Personal Mission Worksheet

1. **Reflect on who you are.** Think about the values you find most important, your roles in life, your gifts and talents, and the activities you prefer. Use the descriptions on the right as starting points and write 3 – 5 words in each section. If it is difficult to describe yourself, bring to mind a few persons you admire. First, think of what you admire about them. Then think of how they would describe you.

Values that I find most important ...	environment, children, family, immigration, education, justice, substance abuse, mental health, art, music, fitness, business, books, equality, relationships, health, poverty, gender issues, spiritual growth, aging, peace, my work, beauty, daily life, adventure, science, simplicity ... <i>others?</i>
Roles that are most important to you ...	Life roles may be part of a mission, whether we have actively chosen roles or accepted them and made them part of ourselves. Role examples include friend, parent, teacher, spouse or partner, caregiver, worker in _____, leader in _____, student of _____ <i>others?</i>
Gifts, talents, characteristics. I am ...	artistic, creative, generous, courageous, calm, expressive, reflective, adventurous, skeptical, fair, loving, musical, spontaneous, ironic, honest, intelligent, trustworthy, humble, fun-loving, organized, supportive, empathetic, curious, loving, analytical, accepting, persistent ... <i>others?</i>
Activities I like to do ...	teaching, caring for, cooking, talking, listening, storytelling, cooperating, performing, imagining, mentoring, persuading, making something, leading, discussing, observing, being active, meditating, writing, acting, working with my hands, analyzing, gardening ... <i>others?</i>

2. **Reflect on the words you have chosen.** Do you see patterns or connections?

3. **Build a Personal Mission Statement.** One way to begin is to combine your commitment to values or roles with the talents or personal qualities you bring and the kinds of activities that call to you. Use some words you have chosen to fill in the blanks below. You can write one mission statement about your most important values or roles, or you can use extra paper and write more.

In my commitment to [values or roles] _____

I will use my gifts and talents of being _____

as I pursue activities in _____

Current situations where I can pursue this mission: _____

4. **Reflect on your mission statement[s].** The result of the sentence-building exercise might sound a little forced. If you wish, work on the mission statement so that it makes more sense to you.