

Life's Intentions Exercise

Please note: This exercise is excerpted from Maria Nemeth's book, "The Energy of Money"

Your Life's Intentions are your greatest personal treasure. You can discover a few or hundreds of life's intentions. It's up to you. But no matter how many you list, you will have a rich experience of yourself when you see them.

You will need your notebook and about 40 minutes for this exercise. You can do it all at once, or in parts. Just make sure each segment is at least 20 minutes long, and that you can work in a quiet, undisturbed place.

STEP 1

First you're going to enter your mind. Pretend that you have found a magic lamp. As you rub it, a genie appears and offers to give you anything you want. All the time, money, and talent that you need is yours for the asking.

On a clean piece of paper lists all the things that you've always wanted to do or have in life. Right down whatever comes to mind. You have all the freedom in the world. You will not be held to this list. It can be pure fantasy, not necessarily based on the reality of your current circumstances. This is just to get out of your mind and onto a piece of paper everything that has captured your interest over the years. Write it down, even if what you want to have seems outrageous. In fact, the more audacious you are, the better. Just make sure it is something you really want. The list may look like this:

- have a new car
- writing a best-selling novel
- owning a home
- directing a motion picture
- learning how to scuba dive
- going on a picture taking Safari to Africa
- swimming with dolphins
- having a new wardrobe
- taking the kids to Disney World
- raising \$1 million for the community food locker
- running a marathon
- going on a trip around the world
- having enough money for your daughter's education
- taking art lessons

STEP 2

Look at each item. Ask yourself: why do I want this? What desire would satisfy? When you discover the underlying reason for your choice, write it down on a separate piece of paper. Put these answers in the form of "to be"; for example, you may want to take your kids to Disney World because it would satisfy your desire to be a good parent. Write "to be a good parent." Similarly, write a best-selling novel would make it possible for you to be a well respected author, so write "to be a well respected author."

You may discover that the reason you want to become a pediatric physician is to "to be a healer of children." Or traveling to Africa or around the world may satisfy your desire "to be an adventurer."

Remember, putting items on your list doesn't commit you to action doing these things. It's a way to get to know the desires that influence each of your choices. When you complete this phase of the process, you will have a list of your life's intentions. Put the list aside for the moment and go on.

STEP 3

For the next phase of this exercise, imagine a group of your friends, family members, and coworkers at a party honoring you on your 85th birthday. Everyone is there, still alive and in good health. So are you. A group of these people have prepared an acknowledgment of you, describing all you have done in your life. They are about to read what they have written. You will be taking notes on what they say, so have your pen and notebook ready.

STEP 4

Read the list of who is there at this party to honor you. Put their names down: husband, wife, children, teachers, colleagues, friends, parents, coworkers, bosses, ministers, students, neighbors, committee members, aunts, uncles, cousins.

Picture each person getting up and speaking about you. What do you hope, in your heart of hearts, that they would say about you? Boil what they say down to two or three sentences.

STEP 5

Distill to its essence what the people at your gathering say about you, preceded by the words "to be." For example "to be a good friend, to be humorous, to be kindhearted." Or "to be a great mom and to be an adventurer." You may have to use your creativity to turn the words of your imaginary gathering into "to be" statements. Stick with it. Add these phrases to the list you began earlier.

STEP 6

At the conclusion of this process, you will have a list of "to be" statements.

Look at them. This is the fun part. Which ones do you really want to be true of you? Circle them. Never mind if you don't feel you have fulfilled any of them lately, or ever, for that matter. Do you want "to be an artist" or "to be a healer"? Give yourself the gift of choosing what sings to your heart. Transfer everything you have circled to the list of intentions you created in the first part of this exercise.

You now have a preliminary catalog of your life's intentions. I ask that you live with it for at least one week. During this time, go back to the list and notice how you feel when you read it. After a week, you may add or subtract any item you wish. After all, it is your list!

You may find that doing this work is both emotionally satisfying and challenging. Many people feel the same way. You are taking a different view of yourself in your life...you will likely notice a bittersweet reaction when you encounter the life's intentions that you have not yet manifested in your life. This discomfort is a signal that you are on the right path. Our work is specifically designed to assist you in bringing your life's intentions from the metaphysical (ideas) into the physical world.

Take yourself and your life's intentions seriously. They are your reasons for being on the hero's journey. If it is difficult to see this in yourself, ask your friends or loved ones to help. They may see these life's intentions in you long before you're able to see them.

Your... life's intentions offer you a clear map to the kinds of actions and achievements that will bring you to the most joy.... when you let yourself be pulled by virtue, and by the juice of the life's intentions that hold your deepest desires, you draw energy from your core and find endless source of comfort and courage.

###

Here is an example of how a completed Life's Intentions list might look:

- To be physically fit and healthy
- To be financially successful and independent.
- To be an advocate
- To be a loving family member
- To be a loving mate
- To be a contribution to others
- To be a steward of the planet
- To be an adventurer
- To be spiritually developing
- To be a servant to those whose needs are greater than my own