



The Personal Mission Exercise:

4 Steps to a Personal Mission and You in 2 Words

What is a personal mission, and who needs one? A personal mission is a statement about your “why” ...the thing that drives you to get out of bed in the morning. It describes what you believe is most important in life, what you wish to focus on, and what you want to be known for. If you allow it to direct your thoughts and actions each day, it has the *potential* to change your life. I assembled this exercise from numerous activity guides. I added the “2 Words” feature to challenge you to boil everything down to the basics, and to provide something easy to remember for daily guidance. Perhaps this sounds too simplistic; but I challenge you to give it a try. Being missional gives you priorities. Priorities let you say “no” to non-essentials, increasing capacity. Capacity provides options that enhance life.

To my students: Consider KEEPING THIS PAPER. When you find yourself applying for a future job, having (*and referencing*) your personal mission can help you stand out from the other candidates. Many graduate school applications request a personal philosophy and/or mission statement. This can be an excellent start.

The 4 Steps:

1. Think about your **Core Beliefs and Values**. Write down 5 or 6 key words or phrases under each.

Core beliefs: What are some key things you believe?

Core values: What are some key things you value?

Overall, what really matters in life? What's most important?

2. **Hopes, Dreams, Desires, Goals:** Think about your hopes, dreams, desires, and goals. Do not limit these based on current circumstances. Jot down 2 or 3 items under each category... whatever comes into your mind. These are not commitments, but *possibilities*.

Personal:

School/Career:

Community/World:

Family/Friends:

Spiritual:

3. Leaving a Legacy: *(These questions are to help focus your thinking.)*

How would you like to be remembered? What one thing do you want people to say about you (now or after you're gone)?

What have you contributed to the world during your life so far? What do you dream of contributing in the future?

What steps can you begin to take to achieve your desired contributions, hopes, dreams, and goals?

4. Drafting Personal Mission Statement:

Review everything you've written so far. From your statements, circle or underline the words that really stand out in your mind.

You are now ready to write your Personal Mission Statement using key words and ideas from above. Don't worry about getting it perfect. Just get the basics. Include the most important ideas and words. You may refine it later; and it will evolve over time. That's okay. For now, write a brief draft—one sentence if possible. Perhaps you could begin with: I am... I believe... I aspire to... or, My mission in life is to...

You in 2 Words:

You now have a DRAFT mission. Try to quantify what it says in just one or two words. What key concept does your mission convey? What are the two most important words that could define you?

1. _____ 2. _____

The signature line below is meaningful. It conveys the seriousness of missional living. *Sign your name. Live it!*

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Final Action Step:

As you complete the exercise, ask yourself whether your friends, co-workers, and family members know these things about you. How might you begin to let them see and understand what is most important in your life? How might you share your mission in life with others? Jot ideas here. *Then do them.*

Author: Brian Raison, PhD, Ohio State University Extension (2019).

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