



LEGACY

Some of the most important decisions in life are made by default because people do not realize their options. Instead of directing life they often passively allow life to happen to them by not planning and acting. They may not learn to consider alternatives and to look ahead to see where their current behavior may lead them. Later in life, they may find themselves shipwrecked or becalmed in stagnant waters and look back with regret, "If only I had known ..." Hindsight is often very clear, but it is always an afterthought. Take time now to engage in this important planning and visioning. Think about how to live a healthy and fulfilling life, how to recognize options, make confident decisions, and overcome obstacles.

*From Charting Your Course:
A Lifelong Guide to Health and Compassion
Sally Coleman and David S. Anderson
University of Notre Dame Press, 1998*

LIFE HEALTH PYRAMID



**Charting Your Course: A Life-Long Guide to Health and Compassion © 1998*

See Legacy of Life information at:

www.legacy.gmu.edu

This includes background materials, resources, & worksheets



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LEGACY OF LIFE

Creating Healthy Futures

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L I F E
H E A L T H
P R I N C I P L E S

WHAT LEGACY
WILL YOU LEAVE?

LEGACY OF LIFE

Webster defines Legacy as “something received from an ancestor or predecessor or from the past” It also means how someone is remembered, and what contributions they made while they were alive.

LEGACY OF LIFE is designed to assist individuals direct energies in a somewhat organized and planned way.

LEGACY OF LIFE focuses on your accomplishments and your achievements so they are remembered. While you cannot fully control your legacy and how you are remembered, you are more likely to achieve the desired results if you seek them, than if you move through life without direction or purpose.

Throughout your lives, each person has encountered a wide variety of people. Most are brief, some are long-term and some are intense. Some are more meaningful than others. Whether brief or long-term, many have resulted in memories. Some of these memories are more positive than others; however, each of the memories results in some impact upon you. Are the memories of these individuals what the other person intended? For those who made a lasting impression, this view may be shared by you and others, and can represent their legacy.

The essence of '**LEGACY OF LIFE**' is making decisions at various points throughout your life about what legacy you want to leave for others. That is, how you want to be remembered. Being planful with your **LEGACY OF LIFE** can be done in a variety of ways. Consider the following:

1. Think about your legacy.
2. Record it - write it down in a journal or special place, or prepare a vocal recording.
3. Share it with others, if you're comfortable doing so – share it as what you really want, or as what you are considering, and see what others think.
4. Review it on a regular basis – do a self-audit to assess if you're on track.
5. Revise it as necessary.

LIFE HEALTH PRINCIPLES

What does it mean to live a holistic, healthy life? These seven principles can serve as convictions or planning guides. Originally conceived as a framework for addressing the root causes underlying drug and alcohol abuse, these principles have evolved into a framework of their own; they serve as the foundation for loving and caring relationships with yourself and others.

The 7 Principles Include:

- **Optimism** represents a life-perspective about yourself, about how you view yourself within the context of the world around you. Optimism represents a 'can do' spirit; optimism is the necessary hope and belief that your decisions do make a difference. Optimism can be modified for specific situations and even modified over time.
- **Values**, which are drawn from your upbringing, your family values, your life experiences, and interactions with those influential to you. What is important is to learn what these are and to help your various life activities and responsibilities be consistent with your own values. In addition, values are very often closely linked with religion and spirituality.
- **Self-care** is a broadly defined area, implying the importance of self-responsibility for the wide range of personal decisions. These decisions focus upon numerous behaviors over which you have tremendous influence. These include stress management, time management, alcohol and drug use, sleep nutrition, and exercise.
- **Relationship Health** promotes quality interaction with others, including family members, friends, and significant others. Relationships extend to your work, school and community settings. Ultimately, it is reasonable to seek quality human interactions, so that you treat others with respect and dignity. Relationships are not limited to others – a vitally important relationship is that which you have with yourself. It is important to respect yourself and treat yourself well.
- **Community Health** enhances the quality of group interactions, including formal and less formal groups. What is important in any community setting is that members feel welcome and valued. Individuals may belong to multiple communities. On a college campus, students gain much experience and exposure through getting involved on campus, as well as participation in social activities.
- **Nature** increases your understanding of the important role you play within the larger context of the natural world. It is also important to maximize your respect for the natural world, whether through recycling or reduced waste of natural products.
- **Service** identifies approaches for volunteering, sharing your gifts, and 'giving back.' Service provides your skills and resources to those who would benefit from them. Service includes volunteering your time and energy, and it involves the pro bono activities with which you become involved. It's your community work, your mentoring of others, your involvement with the faith community or service organizations, and your time providing guidance to others.

LEGACY
OF
LIFE

These seven principles become an overarching framework that is both comprehensive and manageable. As you attend to each of these throughout your daily walks of life, you may grow and you may improve yourselves. These seven principles provide both the depth and breadth of perspective and also can be interpreted in various ways by each person.



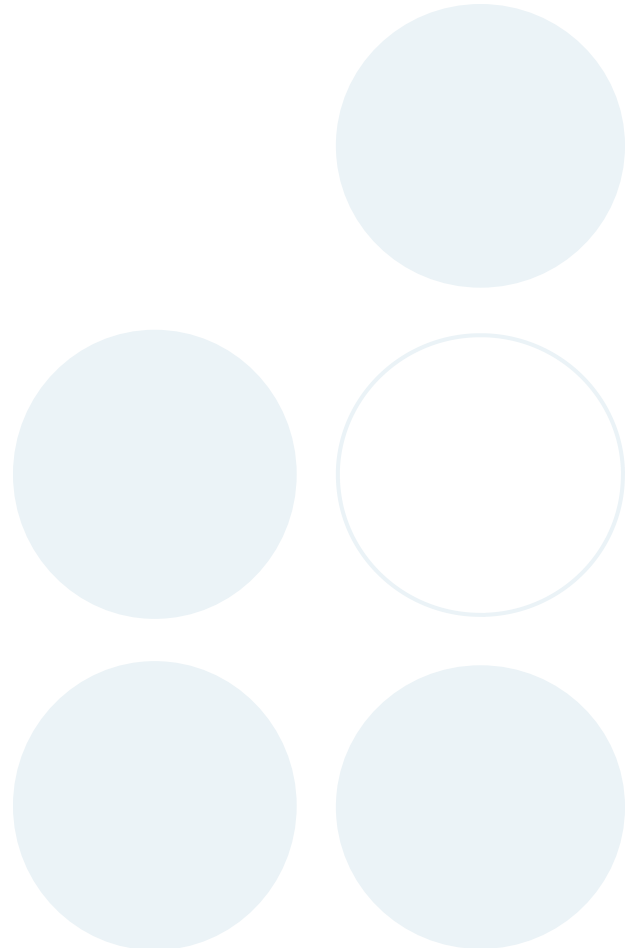
Legacy of Life

A Letter to You from Others: Today and Tomorrow

Ask others to write a letter to you, focusing on what they think your legacy will be. They can write one letter or two separate letters. One may focus on how they see your legacy now; how will you be remembered, based on you up to the present time. The other may focus on how they see you in the future, whether you stay on your current path or make some adjustments.

Today

Tomorrow



Legacy of Life
A Wellness Perspective



Think about your legacy for any or all of the following categories. Select those that are most appropriate for you, and record what you want as your legacy.

Intellectual

Physical

Emotional

Social

Occupational

Spiritual



Legacy of Life
Perspectives Based on Audience

Think about your legacy for any or all of the following groups or audiences. Select those most appropriate for you, and identify your legacy for those selected. These legacies may be different for the various groups selected.

Family of Origin

Personal Family


Community

Work

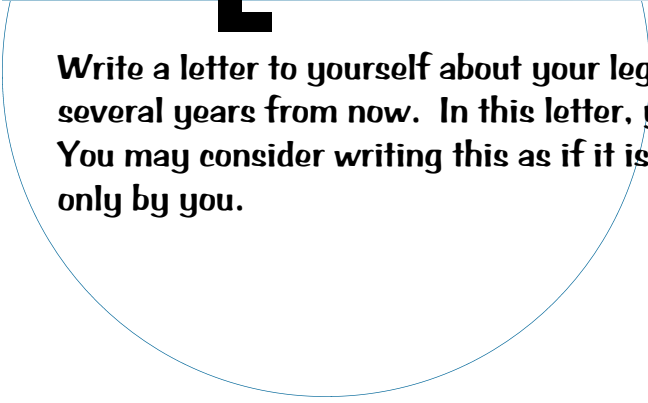
Service

Global (state, national, world)





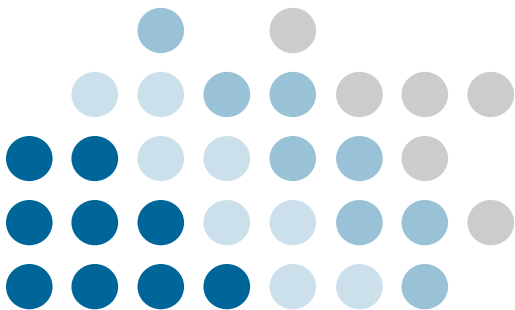
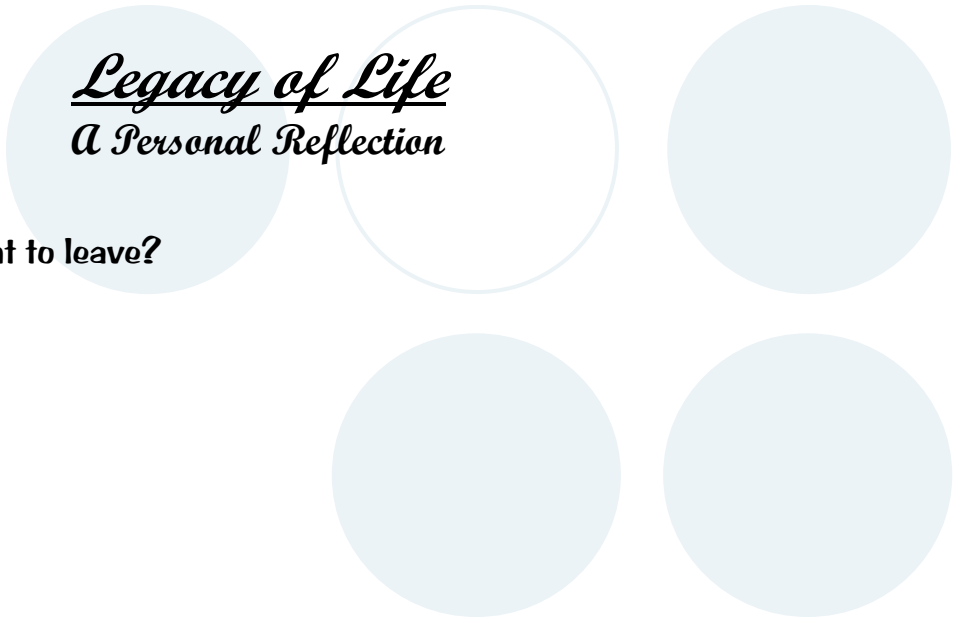
Legacy of Life
A Letter to Yourself



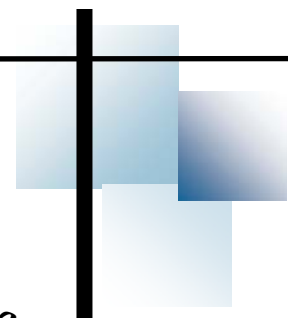
Write a letter to yourself about your legacy. Write it as if you were going to read it several years from now. In this letter, you are the sender and you are the receiver. You may consider writing this as if it is going into a confidential journal, to be read only by you.

Legacy of Life
A Personal Reflection

What legacy do you want to leave?



Legacy of Life
Reflections Based on End of Life



If your life were to end within one year, what legacy would you like to leave?

If your life were to end in five years, what legacy would you like to leave?

If your life were to end in ten years, what legacy would you like to leave?

If your life were to end in twenty years or more, what legacy would you like to leave?



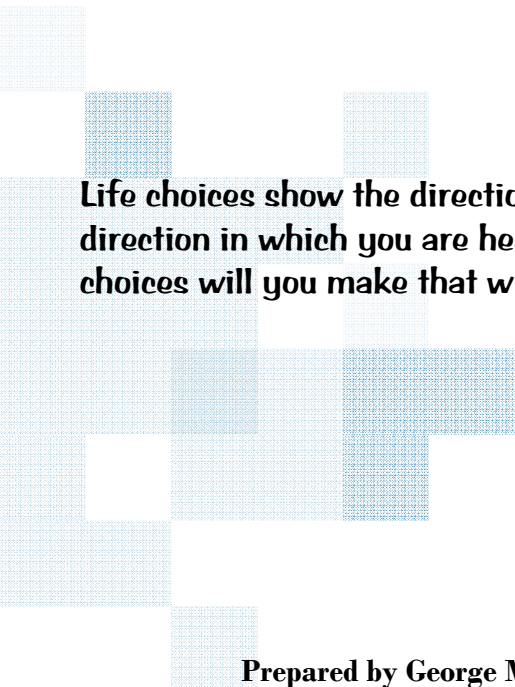


Legacy of Life
Reflections Based on Time

Where do you see yourself in one year? What legacy of yourself will you leave behind in a years time?

What legacy will you leave 5 years from today?

In ten years time where do you expect your life path to lead? What choices will you make today that will impact you ten years from now?



Life choices show the direction your life will go, just as a compass can show you the direction in which you are heading. Where do you see yourself in twenty years.? What choices will you make that will eventually lead to your legacy twenty years from now?