

## Lesson 9: The Mission

### PURPOSE

To help students to pursue a mission of excellence and to respect human dignity in their lives.

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of the lesson, students will be able to:

1. Understand their lives as a long-term mission to strive for excellence and to respect human dignity.
2. Recognize their personal mission more easily.

### VOCABULARY

- Mission: one's purpose or higher goal

### MATERIALS & RESOURCES

- The Mission Statement
- [Video](#) lecture "Finding a purpose in your life" Robert Quinn
- Interim Quiz 2

### PROCEDURE

**Step 1:** Review the previous lesson. Highlight some of the things that constitute heroism, recall the definition of heroism and the example of Mahatma Gandhi as a person who embodied heroism of self-determination. Conclude by highlighting the important traits of heroism.

**Step 2:** Remind students that one of the most important "ingredients" necessary for becoming a hero is having a mission, a motivating purpose, or a reason "why" behind everything one does. Explain that, in this lesson, the class will explore more of what this mission entails.

Show the [video](#) lecture "Finding a purpose in your life" by Robert Quinn to introduce the topic. Ask students to write down their key takeaways after watching the video. Begin the discussion with the students by asking them to share what they consider the most important ideas.

Ask the following questions to facilitate the discussion:

- » Does everyone have a mission?
- » Is there a type of a common mission that everyone shares?
- » Why is having a mission important?

Explain that our common mission in studying this curriculum is to respect the human dignity of ourselves and others, as we strive for excellence. Explain that each person also has a personal mission, which helps them to find their own reasons why they make the choices they make. Understanding our meaning and purpose in life is essential to giving up short term satisfactions or enduring hardship for the sake of our pursuit of excellence.

Write the definition of a mission on the board:

**Mission:** one's purpose or a higher goal

**Step 3:** Continue by asking how each person can discover their mission. After gathering initial insights from students, explain that in order to discover one's personal mission, it is helpful to answer the following questions:

- » Who am I? What are my strengths and weaknesses? What do I enjoy doing?
- » Who do I want to become? What are my life goals? How can I help others or contribute to solving the problems of the world?
- » How can I get where I want to be? What habits of excellence am I missing to get there?
- » What are the obstacles I will likely face? What will keep me going after I fall?

In this class, the students will craft their own personal mission statement. A mission statement is an inspiring statement, usually one or two sentences long, which can guide one's actions and answer the question why one does what they do.

Some examples of personal mission statements:

“To do well by doing good while supporting and elevating those around me.” – Scott Shuda, Chairman of Infusystem, Inc.

“I shall not fear anyone on Earth. I shall fear only God. I shall not bear ill will 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.” – Mahatma Gandhi

“To be a teacher. And to be known for inspiring my students to be more than they thought they could be.” – Oprah Winfrey

### **FOLLOW-UP & HOMEWORK**

Ask the students to Fill in [Interim Quiz 2](#) at home and bring it to the next class. Let them know that solving the Interim Quiz will help them in the Final Quiz, which will be administered during the final class.

**The Mission Statement**

a) Who am I?

My strengths are:  
My weaknesses are:  
I enjoy doing:  
I consider important:

b) Who do I want to become?

In 10 years, I would like to be:  
My life goals are:  
I can help others by:  
My talents which can help the world are:

c) How can I become what I want?

To get where I want to be in the future, I need to:  
Habit of excellence I need to develop:  
Obstacles I will likely face:  
A person who can help me:

**Personal Mission Statement:**

**Interim Quiz 2****A. True/false questions**

1. T/F There is a common mission all humans have.
2. T/F Habits of excellence are inherited.
3. T/F True friendship aims at enjoyment.
4. T/F To become a hero, it is not a problem to fall occasionally if we get up afterwards.
5. T/F The Clapham Circle supported slavery.
6. T/F If I spend time with someone because I can get something from that person, that's a friendship of utility.

**B. Essay Questions**

7. What is the difference between friendship of utility and friendship of excellence?

8. What is satyagraha?

**C. For each answer, make a correct question.**

*For example, if the answer is "The first letter of the alphabet", the question is "What is the letter A?". Or, if the answer is "A paste or gel used in conjunction with a toothbrush to help clean and maintain the aesthetics and health of teeth", the correct question is "What is toothpaste?"*

9. Behaviors acquired through regular practice which help us achieve excellence as persons
10. The Stanford University test which shows that delaying gratification in children leads to bigger success in their adult life.

11. An Indian lawyer, anti-colonialist, and political ethicist, who led a nonviolent civil resistance movement to lead the campaign for India's independence from British Rule.

**D. Multiple choice questions. There can be more than one correct answer.**

12. If I grow in courage, my wisdom will have the tendency to:
- a) Grow
  - b) Stay the same
  - c) Shrink
  - d) There is no correlation between them
13. Which of the following is among Aristotle's three types of friendship:
- a) Friendship of greatness
  - b) Friendship of heroism
  - c) Friendship of excellence
  - d) Friendship of respecting human dignity
14. Satyagraha is not:
- a) Passive resistance
  - b) Pure soul-force
  - c) Conquering the adversary with love
  - d) Inflicting violence on others
15. How many days does it take to develop a new habit?
- a) 7
  - b) 14
  - c) 30
  - d) 100
16. Which of the following is not a habit of excellence:
- a) Wisdom
  - b) Humility
  - c) Knowing all the latest gossip
  - d) Watching fun TV shows a lot
17. To take charge of our emotions and behaviors, in order to strive for human excellence is called:
- a) Self-denial
  - b) Self-determination
  - c) Self-insistence
  - d) Self-empowerment
18. Heroes are:
- a) Born as exceptional
  - b) Not easily found
  - c) Persistent in what they do
  - d) Oriented towards self-fulfillment

**Interim Quiz 2 - Answer Key**

1. T
2. F – they are acquired through practice and learning.
3. F – true friendship aims at excellence.
4. T
5. F – it was opposed to slavery.
6. T
7. Friendship of utility happens when we are being friends with someone to gain some advantage from them. This is the lowest type of friendship, where disagreements happen very easily and it is very unstable. Friendship of excellence happens when friends are pursuing excellence for themselves and the other. In it we always respect the dignity of the other, and don't merely use him or her for our advantage or for our pleasure. It is more lasting than the other types of friendship. Friends' authentic wellbeing is our primary concern. It is what we call a true friendship.
8. Satyagraha is not a physical force. A satyagrahi does not inflict pain on the adversary; he does not seek his destruction. A satyagrahi never resorts to firearms. In the use of satyagraha, there is no ill will whatever. Satyagraha is pure soul-force...The soul is informed with knowledge. In it burns the flame of love. If someone gives us pain through ignorance, we shall win him through love. 'Non-violence is the supreme dharma' is the proof of this power of love. Non-violence is a dormant state. In the waking state, it is love. Ruled by love, the world goes on... We are alive solely because of love. Satyagraha brings good both to the satyagrahi and his adversary.
9. What are habits of excellence?
10. What is the Marshmallow test?
11. Who is Mohandas (Mahatma) Gandhi?
12. a
13. c
14. a and d
15. c
16. c and d
17. b
18. b and c – Heroes are not born but made. They are oriented towards helping others, not primarily their own self-fulfillment.