

SOURCE OF VITALITY - EXERCISE HANDOUT

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

The below reflections and questions are inspired by the work of Richard E. Boyatzis. They are best completed over a period of time with sharing and periods of silence and integration between one exercise/question and the next.

Feel free to go through them and choose the one that resonates the most with your current experience and needs. Note down your answers in your personal journal. Reviewing them after some time and repeating the exercises is useful. With time, as you go build up your answers on the below reflections, you will notice emerging themes and patterns that provide insights on where you find purpose and vitality in your leadership work and personal life.

1. Which are the experiences in your life that had the greatest impact on you? How did they shape who you are?
2. Who have been the most influential people in your life?
 - Which qualities do you most admire in these individuals?
 - What qualities have you gained (or desire to gain) from them?
3. Thinking back over the past 5 years, what projects brought vitality and purpose to your life?
 - Who were you working with?
 - What was the nature of the project?
4. Spend some time identifying 4 or 5 examples where you have had personal success in recent years. (Your accomplishments could be at work, in your community, at home, etc).
 - What activities and accomplishments would you consider of greatest worth in your life?
 - Write them down then try to identify the common threads linking the examples together.
5. What activities and tasks are you currently doing in your life that genuinely energize you?
 - What are you currently doing in your work that you like?
 - What commonalities do you notice?
6. Make a list of the talents and skills you possess that are most important to you (add to this list the strengths that you may take for granted). Once your list is complete, share it with someone and ask them to add new elements you may have missed. Which of these skills create the most joy and energy in your life and the lives of others?
7. List 25 or more things you'd like to do or experience before you die.
 - Don't censor yourself. The longer the list the better.
 - What themes emerge from your brainstorming?

8. List the **key roles** you currently play in your life (consider all areas, think of your roles as a manager perhaps, or as a student, a friend, a sibling, a son/daughter, a partner, a member in a prayer group, an employee, a citizen in your country and so on... Once you have listed your key roles, write down in bullet points (one or two ideas per role) who you want to be in each of those roles.

- Think about the impact you currently have on others in each of those roles, and the impressions you may have made?
- What impression do you want to leave?

9. What would you wish to have as your **legacy** in life? In other words, what will remain or continue as a result of you having lived and worked all of these years?

10. At your funeral, some gets up and gives a **eulogy** that makes you feel wholehearted and proud.

- What key elements do you want to be highlighted in this speech?
- What would you like your memoirs to be called? What would you like your tombstone to say?

Often we want to be somewhere other than where we are, or even to be someone other than who we are. We tend to compare ourselves constantly with others and wonder why we are not as rich, as intelligent, as simple, as generous, or as saintly as they are. Such comparisons make us feel guilty, ashamed, or jealous. It is very important to realize that our vocation is hidden in where we are and who we are. We are unique human beings, each with a call to realize in life what nobody else can, and to realize it in the concrete context of the here and now. We will never find our vocations by trying to figure out whether we are better or worse than others. We are good enough to do what we are called to do.

Henri Nouwen

Meeting with my 30 year-old self

Methodology: Fast Forward into the Future

It is 30 years from today. You are about to visualize an encounter with your wiser future self 30 years from now.

The below prompts are suggested to help you prepare for this meeting and guide the visualization. Take some time to read them before the exercise.

When you are ready, pull up a chair, take a relaxed posture, close your eyes, and enjoy the encounter.

Prompts to guide the visualization

Use your imagination to visualize the details of this encounter, imagining your own maturity and growth into your best self. In the visualization, take the time to visualize the scenery in details by engaging all your senses.

- Where do you imagine this encounter taking place? What is the setting around you?
- Imagine you are seeing yourself in the distance, coming closer.
- What do you look like in 30 years from now? Imagine your face, eyes, smile, hands and other features.
- How would you describe your posture, your walk, your pace, your overall presence? What impression do you leave?

As your future self is getting closer, what questions do you want to ask? This is a chance for a conversation about things that are important to you. Some of the questions you could ask your future self:

- How do you look at the world and life now in a way that is different from the way that you saw these things in the past?
- What matters most to you?
- How do you deal with change?
- What is your attitude towards the unknown or uncertainty?
- What is making you live with integrity? What deep and core values are you honoring?
- What do you care about?
- What kind of work are you enjoying? What are your major responsibilities? What difference are you making? How are you spending your time?
- If there is any type of advice your future self could offer you in terms of leadership. What is it? Are there any other questions you would like to ask?

Once this 15 minute meditation conversation has come to an end, express your gratitude and trust that you can return to your highest future self any time you wish.

Take note on a small sheet of paper of the insights and wisdom that have emerged from your conversation.

- As a general impression, what can you say about the person you just met?
- What can you note down about this person?
- What insight or advice do you keep from your encounter?

Once the exercise is completed: Share your experience with the person beside you or with a friend.