

A LETTER TO YOUR GREAT-GRANDCHILDREN ACTION ACTIVITY

INTENT

The purpose of this letter is to “pass a torch” to your great-grandchildren. That torch represents the essence of what you would want them to know about you...your key values and what difference they have made to you. The hope is they might recognize some of those same values that you share, and see them in action in their own lives, just as you did in yours.

DESIRED OUTCOME

The legacy you leave through your letter to future generations of your family will be one of the greatest gifts you can give.

GROUP SIZE

One to 10 or medium size groups (Large groups depending on setting)

TIME NEEDED

15 minutes to 1 hour depending on length, depth, and breadth of letter desired.

RESOURCES

You will need paper and pen or pencil and imagination.

SET UP – FRAMING

Imagine you are writing a letter to your great-grandchildren. Think about what was meaningful in your life, what you did that was good, what you wish you could have changed.

INSTRUCTIONS

Please “speak” using your own written words. As you “speak” (write), consider the following topics in your letter(s) to their grandchildren:

1. This is who I was
2. This is what I believed in
3. This is what I stood up for
4. This is what I did
5. This is the difference I hope I made
6. This is how I wanted to be remembered
7. This is what I left my children, my grandchildren, and you

We know this will not be easy. We are asking for what some may regard as private. Share what you can.

A LETTER TO YOUR GREAT-GRANDCHILDREN ACTION ACTIVITY CONTINUED

INSTRUCTIONS CONTINUED

Remember that few people get this kind of opportunity to introduce themselves personally to their great-grandchildren. Be as honest as you can and find the positive experiences that helped form your life's meaningful values. Don't feel constrained by the direction we have given.... this is your introduction in your own voice.

One final thing: when you have finished this letter, please place a copy alongside your other important papers, so that it will become part of the "official" documentation of your life. That makes it permanent and acknowledges its value.

WHAT TO DO/NOT TO DO

DO: Allow for imagination and creativity.

DON'T DO: Rush through the writing activity or minimize time needed

THE ONLY WAY TO NOT GET THIS RIGHT IS TO NOT DO IT

DEBRIEF

1. What did you learn or discover about yourself?
2. What value and benefit will this letter provide to your great-grandchildren?
3. What does it mean to you to know that you have written this letter?
4. Who else do you know that could benefit from this type of letter?
5. Describe the importance to you of including this type of letter with your other important documents and the importance for your family now and for future generations.
6. Are there other life experiences, life lessons, some things that matter most to you that you can write to them about? Does anyone want to share?

GENERAL QUESTIONS

1. Describe how your family, group or team can benefit from this letter writing experience.
2. What can you learn about other family, group or team members using this activity?

UNDERSTANDING QUESTIONS

Reminder for Facilitator: to elicit deeper responses consider asking each participant the following:

1. What was important about this writing activity?
2. What value did this writing activity provide the family, group or team?
3. What are some of the benefits provided to individual participants, and the family, group or team as a whole?
4. What do you appreciate about this writing activity?
5. What benefit do you see for the family, group or team to include this writing activity when adding new members or repeating it every 2-3 years?