

Nobody's right action:

Nobody's right work:

Nobody's right effort:

Nobody's right mindfulness:

Nobody's right concentration:

4. When you examine the Noble Eightfold Path, are there any areas that stand out to you as places you could improve? If so, write them below. Then, write a small step you can take today to set your feet back on the path.

5. Fill in the blanks below with thoughts on these prompts:

I know I can deal with change in more positive ways because I:

The Nobody Bible Exercises

I can end a bit of life's suffering today if I:

Your own meditation:

The Book of Moses

1. The Biblical history of Judaism is amazingly complex. But really, a lot happens in the Bible in just a few pages. Can you think of a time in your life where everything sort of happened at once and maybe overwhelmed you, yet you came out a better person?
2. God wiped out the corruptions of the earth with a massive flood, but he let new life spring forth. Is there something or someone in your life you need to wash away so you can move on?
3. Moses protested and protested when God asked him to return to Egypt on a special mission. In the end, Moses went. What is something you've been resisting that could be quite good for you?

The Nobody Bible Exercises

Nobody's Commandment 8 -- You shall not steal:

Nobody's Commandment 9 -- You shall not bear false witness:

Nobody's Commandment 10 -- You shall not covet your neighbor's property:

Your own meditation:

The Book of Confucius

1. When your home or social life turns into a bunch of warring states, what is one (or more) way(s) you act, or can act, to restore balance?
2. When you are stressed, or living too much in one side of yin or yang, how do you get back to your center?
3. Confucius identified Five Great Relationships. Which ones do you consider the most influential in your life, and why? Who are the influential friends and mentors in your life?

4. Look again at the Confucian virtues. Which ones do you embody? Is there one you'd like to develop more in the coming months and years?

5. What does it mean to you to be a gentleman or gentlewoman? What's the smallest step you can take today to reveal your inner gentleman or gentlewoman?

6. Fill in the prompts below with one action you do or thought you have that fosters the Nobody's path to greatness in the following areas:

A. The Five Great Relationships

Nobody's ruler/subject:

Nobody's parent/child:

Nobody's older sibling/younger sibling:

Nobody's husband/wife (or any loving relationship):

Nobody's friend/friend:

B. Five Virtues

Nobody ren:

Nobody shu:

3. Can you give an example of a time when you took action when maybe inaction was the better choice? How about when you didn't act when action was probably required?

4. The border guard asked Lao Tzu to write down his knowledge before he left society forever. What is a piece of knowledge you would like to leave to family, friends, and descendants?

5. Fill in the prompts below with ways that you foster the Nobody's path to allowing and receptivity in the following areas:

Nobody's Tao:

Nobody's wu-wei:

Nobody's water:

Your own meditation:

The Nobody Bible Exercises

5. Humor me and assume you do agree on some level with both commandments. Fill in the prompts below with ways you live them in your life (keeping in mind that “god” is a relative term in this book).

I show love for (my own conception of) a god or gods or the universe by:

I show love for my neighbor by:

Your own meditation:

The Book of Brahman

1. We covered a lot in this chapter. Was there one concept that really struck you? Why?

2. We talked about samsara as a wheel of rebirth born of our attachments and suffering. Is there something in your life that makes you suffer and react? If so, is there some small step you can take to start the process of eliminating it from your life?

3. Many say karma is blind. In other words, it just...is. Have you ever done or said something and wished you could take it back? Did you make amends for it? If not, can you? Would you?

4. Atman and Brahman are intense concepts. Do you agree that the soul in you is a piece of the greater soul? Do you think people are all connected somehow? Can you give an example of this connection from your own life?

5. Fill in the blanks below with ways you think about or do the following. How do they operate in your life?

Nobody's Atman and Brahman:

Nobody's samsara and moksha:

Nobody's karma:

Nobody's bhakti yoga:

Nobody's karma yoga:

The Nobody Bible Exercises

Nobody's jnana yoga:

Nobody's raja yoga:

Your own meditation:

The Book of Muhammad

6. Muhammad initially wasn't sure what his visions were. Luckily, his supportive wife and friends helped him out. Have you had a contact with a higher power? An intuition that came true? What was it like?

7. Islam is about submission, or submitting to a higher power. Has there been a time in your life when you just totally surrendered to a situation? To your higher power? Do you need to?

Your own meditation:

The Book of Spirit

1. Have you ever said, “I’m more spiritual than religious”? If so, what does that phrase mean to you? What is “spiritual”?
2. Do you have a spiritual or religious practice that you created or that goes against the “norm” for your community? How did it develop? Do others accept it?
3. Is finding your “center” important to you? Whether or not you believe in a soul makes little difference. A boat has an anchor. A tetherball has a...tether—even when it is batted around like hell, it stays close to the pole. What are some activities you can pursue, or do pursue—such as yoga, journaling, meditation, or exercise—that might keep you a little more grounded and stable in a world of change and occasional hardship?

The Nobody Bible Exercises

4. Fill in the prompts below with examples of how you heal in the everyday and how you find that inner connection every day. Remember, your connections are your business, and it is up to you to decide how to personalize them.

Nobody's world and self-healing:

Nobody's connection to the inner self in the everyday:

Your own meditation:

The Book of Socrates

1. Do you have friends who don't share your religious or spiritual views? If you do, how do those relationships enhance your life?
2. Have you ever had a strange thing happen like what happened to my father and me? If so, did that experience have an impact on you?

3. What do you think of Socrates? Was he an arrogant and reckless pest or a man of integrity who was right to call out others on their ignorance?

4. How do you examine your life on a regular basis? What makes your life worth living?

5. Fill in the prompts below with your thoughts on some of these great thoughts:

A Nobody knows that the only thing s/he knows is that s/he knows nothing:

A Nobody knows that the unexamined life is not a life worth living:

A Nobody knows that a good act or being virtuous is a reward in itself:

Your own meditation:

The Book of You

The name of my great life masterpiece is:

I. I'm _____ and this is my personal masterpiece of me.

II. In the beginning, there was me. I don't remember much of my past before I was alive, and I can't say that I predict the future with 100 percent accuracy. I live my life according to principles gleaned from years of being alive. The most important influences in my life have been:

III. I live. I breathe. I am. I believe in the good life. To me, the good life is (Book of Beginnings, Question 2):

IV. As for "religion" and "spirituality"? I define these words as I see fit. I may follow a religious or spiritual pathway. I may not. For me, these two words are defined as follows (Book of Beginnings, Question 4 & Book of Spirit, Question 1):

If I am a person for whom God, god, gods, spirituality, or religion does not guide my life, I choose a different path. If you ask me what that path is, I might tell you this:

V. I've gotten this far in life in spite of myself, yet, very much on purpose. I have my own contemporary views on great teachings of the past. Examples? (Book of Socrates, Question 5):

My view on: the only thing I know is that I know nothing:

My view on: the unexamined life is not a life worth living:

My view on: a good deed or virtue as a reward in itself:

VI. I know things change. I know nothing really ever stays the same. But I've learned to adjust to the changes in my life. Here are some examples (Book of Buddha, Question 1):

As for "suffering," I know about it because I'm human. I also know how I define it and how I handle it. This is how I've learned to define and engage suffering (Book of Buddha, Question 2):

The Noble Eightfold Path is a guide for living. I may or may not be Buddhist, and I may not be perfect, but I have set my feet upon this path in my own way. Here's how I do it (Book of Buddha, Question 3):

My right understanding:

My right intention:

My right speech:

My right action:

My right work:

My right effort:

My right mindfulness:

My right concentration:

Armed with the understanding that I do follow some, or all, of these eight steps, I know I can bring positive change to the world and end a little of the world's suffering. I do this by (Book of Buddha, Question 5):

VII. There are a few special things in this life for which I would make great sacrifice. They are (Book of Jesus, Question 1):

There is simplicity in this life—simplicity that shows us the clearest roads to our goals. I know that being decent doesn't mean being complicated. I have a few simple principles that guide my life. These are principles that motivate me to do the good I do in the world. Some of these guiding principles are (Book of Jesus, Question 2):

Jesus taught us to love the idea of god (whatever that is for me) and to love one's neighbor. These were the Two Great Commandments. I have my own conception of the "divine" or the "ultimate," and I have my own conception of what it means to be a good neighbor. I show my love for the *ultimate* by (Book of Jesus, Question 5):

I show love for my *neighbors* by (Book of Jesus, Question 5):

If I had to pick Two Great Commandments to guide my life, they would be (Book of Jesus, Question 4):

1.

2.

VIII. I understand the concept of yin and yang in my own way. In other words, I know the feeling of balance, and I know what balances me. Even if balance is not the state of all my days and all my thoughts, I have had balance in my life. When my life gets out of balance, here are some ways I act to restore it (Book of Confucius, Question 1):

I have had some great mentors and relationships in my life, and there are figures to whom I look for guidance—people who have taught me something about life or love. I will list some of them, including what they have taught me (Book of Confucius, Question 3):

I know what it means to be a gentleman or gentlewoman. Here is my understanding of the term and how I try to embody it (Book of Confucius, Question 5):

Confucius taught that a harmonious society was based on the Five Great Relationships. I understand that those concepts aren't just for ancient China. They work for me as well, even if they are not an exact fit. Here is how I see them at work in my life (Book of Confucius, Question 6A):

My ruler/subject:

My parent/child:

My older sibling/younger sibling:

My husband/wife (or any loving relationship):

My friend/friend:

I also understand the role of Confucian virtue. I may not play the flute or write calligraphy, but I have my own ways of expressing these values. They are (Book of Confucius, Question 6B):

My ren:

My shu:

My li:

My xiao:

My wen:

IX. I see the complementary dichotomy between yin and yang—between passive and active, cool and warm. I know that I embody two sides within me. I know I am a person of balance, and I respect both ways. The following are some ways I honor my need for quiet and simplicity in my life (Book of Lao Tzu, Question 2):

We all arrived at this moment by virtue of those who have gone before. I may or may not have descendants, and I may or may not have people who want to remember me. Nevertheless, I have wisdom. What follows is some of the wisdom I have learned that I would want to leave for future generations (Book of Lao Tzu, Question 4):

Three main concepts and symbols in Taoism include the Tao, wu-wei, and water. One is the way of life, one means to take actionless action, and the other represents going with the flow of life. I have my own concrete thoughts on how these elusive concepts operate in my life. What follows is my own understanding (Book of Lao Tzu, Question 5):

My Tao:

My wu-wei:

My water:

X. Moses guided his people through the desert to a promised land. In fact, it was a guiding promise that kept the people strong. It was Moses's leadership that held the people together. I also have leadership qualities that assist me. I've led. Really. Below is a short list of examples (Book of Moses, Question 5):

I know that there are things in my life I need to wash away so that I can grow stronger and reduce my anxiety. Without necessarily naming names, what follows are examples of situations or people that I need to wash out while I float away in my ark (wait, isn't that Noah?) (Book of Moses, Question 2):

The Ten Commandments are ethical precepts meant to guide us. Whether or not I believe the hand of some god is behind them, when I read them, I see their relevance to the modern world (or not). Here is my take on these ten chiseled rules (Book of Moses, Question 6):

My Commandment 1 -- Have no other gods before me:

My Commandment 2 -- You shall not make an idol:

The Nobody Bible Exercises

My Commandment 3 -- Don't misuse God's name:

My Commandment 4 -- Remember the sabbath day and keep it holy:

My Commandment 5 -- Honor your mother and father:

My Commandment 6 -- You shall not kill:

My Commandment 7 -- You shall not commit adultery:

My Commandment 8 -- You shall not steal:

My Commandment 9 -- You shall not bear false witness:

My Commandment 10 -- You shall not covet your neighbor's property:

XI. Suffering (this again?!) is a concept that shows up in more than one religion. It is a wheel upon which we spin until we find release. I want release from suffering. What follows is an example of something in my life that brings suffering, as well as one small, positive step to help me stop the wheel (Book of Brahman, Question 2):

Karma is also a common theme in the play of life—from reaping what we sow, to having actions revisit us in another life. I haven't always been a perfect person. Below is an example of a time when I may have fallen short (dang!), as well as an example of a time when I made amends (yay!) (Book of Brahman, Question 3):

Hinduism is full of interesting concepts, including the idea that our individual soul (Atman) is actually part of something much bigger (Brahman). There are consequences for our actions (karma) that determine our suffering (samsara) or release (moksha). Furthermore, there are pathways (yogas) that can yoke our carts to the path of escape from suffering. I have my own understanding of these complex ideas. Here they are (Book of Brahman, Question 5):

My Atman and Brahman:

My samsara and moksha:

My karma:

My bhakti yoga:

My karma (yoga):

My jnana yoga:

My raja yoga:

XII. We live in a world of possibilities, where I am the measure of my personal experience. Intuitions, messages, and coincidences are everywhere, whether or not we believe they come from any divine source. I have my own examples of times when I was struck by something quite out of the ordinary. Here are my thoughts on that (Book of Muhammad, Question 1):

I understand the concept of “submission” in my own way. Maybe it’s about surrender. At one time or another, we have all been forced to give in and accept something or someone. What follows are examples of times when I simply had to lay down my ego and go with a situation. Also included is an example of a place in my life where I need to do that now (Book of Muhammad, Question 2):

Self-sacrifice can mean sacrificing the ego to ask for help. It also means providing help at personal cost or giving up things we love for the benefit of another. It means maintaining an internal and external cleanliness that shines in the light of the sun. What follows are my understandings of some key concepts of sacrifice (Book of Muhammad, Question 5):

My prayer:

My charity:

My fasting:

My purity:

XIII. There need not be God or gods to have inner harmony. Both formal or informal rituals can help me discover the personal core of peace and balance. I know I can create my own way of being in the world—a way that brings me comfort. What follows are examples of activities (or inactivity) I can add to my daily regimen to help me maintain personal balance and stability (Book of Spirit, Question 3):

We all have obligations to fellow travelers and to ourselves. Below are ways that I help to heal the world, heal myself, and try to connect with what is true and real for me each day (Book of Spirit, Question 4):

My world and self-healing:

My connection to the inner self in the everyday:

XIV. I know not everyone will agree with me all the time. I know that my views on religion, spirituality, and personal growth as I define them (or exclude them) won't always be in line with every person. In the end, I know what I feel and I know what I've experienced. I examine my life and know what makes me tick. What follows are some ideas on my life motivations, and why I think mine is a life worth living (Book of Socrates, Question 4):

When I am confronted about my beliefs in a negative way, called "silly," or meet someone who chooses screaming and arguing instead of rich dialogue, I will remain calm and open. Here's how I can handle that situation, in order to maintain my sanity in a world of conflict:

XV. I may have teachers, mentors, books, poems, art, music, or other inspiring things in my life. These are where I turn when I need to find that sweet breath of inspiration. Below are examples of what brings me joy or strength when I need it:

XVI. Finally, I know that throughout my life there will be ups and downs, challenges and joys. What follows is a phrase of my own creation that I can use to guide me when the light grows dim or the road seems long. Or it is an affirmation of gratitude that can carry me even further when the winds of blessing are already blowing at my back. It is drawn from my knowledge of the world, my knowledge of myself, and the knowledge that I have my own mastery of some of the world's most important and influential concepts. It is mine to share or hold as I see fit: