



INSTITUTE FOR
HUMANE EDUCATION

A Better World, A Meaningful Life

A month-long distance learning course for people who want to put their vision for a better world into practice.

Sample Exercises

What Are Your Best Qualities?

Introspection: What are your best qualities and skills? What do you have to offer that can make a difference for others? In the MOGO Questionnaire in *Most Good, Least Harm* (p. 163), as well as in the chapter “Activism, Volunteerism, Democracy” (p. 131), you are asked similar questions. They can be difficult to answer. Often we are not aware of our best qualities and skills because they come so effortlessly that we do not even realize they are special. If you find yourself struggling with this question, ask a loved one for insight. Your best qualities and skills are the starting place for making MOGO choices and finding the best ways to contribute to the issues you wrote about in Day 2, so it's important to recognize and direct them toward the creation of a more meaningful life for yourself and a better world for all.

Take a Personal Inventory: Part 1

Inquiry: Watch *The Story of Stuff* (www.storyofstuff.com). Then take an inventory of your kitchen, bathroom, and closet. Ask yourself questions about the foods, personal care and cleaning products, and clothing and shoes you see before you. What do you know about how they were produced and about the effects of their production on people, animals, and the environment? What do you know about the resources used in their production? About any potential health consequences (positive and negative) and/or suffering they caused to people and/or animals? Please visit the websites listed in the resources section of *Most Good, Least Harm* (p. 177) or in the links at www.HumaneEducation.org/weblinks to learn more, and visit www.responsibleshopper.org to learn about some popular products. After your investigation write down or discuss with a loved one what you learned, how you feel knowing this new information, and how this information may affect your choices and behaviors.

Deeply Assess the News

Inquiry & Integrity: Listen to, watch, or read a source of news today, and when you learn about a problem, inquire deeply into it. Begin by noting any bias in the news, and seek out your own answers to the questions that arise in your mind. You may want to refer to Key 3 (p. 31) in *Most Good, Least Harm* for examples of ways to think deeply about an issue. What are underlying causes of the problem? What solutions haven't been tried? How is this problem connected to other problems, requiring complex thinking for meaningful and lasting solutions? Raise these questions with friends, family, at a senior center, religious education group, in a classroom, etc., and write down ideas for solving the problem. Share your ideas and choose one to implement.