

## HOME RETREAT – RESPECT FOR THE SENIORS

Suggested Timetable (But do make your own)

- 11.00 Talk – Respect for the Seniors
- 11.20 Coffee break
- 11.45 Read through the talk again.
- 12.00 – 13.00 Look at Appendix 1 & 2
- 13.00 – 14.00 Lunch break
- 14.00 – 16.00 Siesta/Leisure/Gardening
- 16.00 Tea break
- 16.15 – 18.00 Choose any of Appendices 3-5
- 18.00 Vespers Live stream from the Abbey
- 18.30 Supper break
- 20.15 Compline Live stream from the Abbey

## RESPECT DUE TO THE SENIORS

Good morning, and a very warm welcome to Home Retreats. My name is Fr Christopher, and I would like to reflect with you, today, on the subject of Respect for the Seniors! May I begin with some quotations from the Rule of St Benedict:

**Now if there are any less important decisions to be made concerning the affairs of the monastery, he shall use only the counsel of the seniors, for it is written: 'Do all things with counsel, and afterward you will have nothing to regret.' RB Ch 3:12**

**Flee pride. Respect the seniors. Love the juniors RB Ch 4:69-71**

**Therefore the juniors should respect their seniors and the seniors should love their juniors. When they address one another, no one is permitted to call another by his simple name. The seniors are to call their juniors by the title 'brother', but the juniors should call their seniors 'nonnus' which means 'reverend father'. RB Ch 63:10-12**

**If, however, any brother is rebuked for the slightest reason by the abbot or any senior in any way whatsoever, and if he sees that any senior at all is even faintly perturbed at him or disturbed in any way, he should instantly prostrate on the floor at his feet to make satisfaction and remain there until the disturbance has been healed by a blessing. RB Ch 71:6-8**

These quotes, and there are others, are balanced by respect also for the Juniors. But my purpose is to suggest that Benedict **did** respect the Senior monks, and wanted them to be valued in his monastic society, not simply for their seniority, but because of their life experience and wisdom, even their holiness. My purpose is to find an excuse in these Home retreats, to reflect with you, on respect for the Seniors, both men and women, in our own Society.

Joan Chittester, a Benedictine sister, has produced a book called the Gift of Years (Growing older gracefully). I like the title. The book consists of 42 chapters, including the Introduction, in which she reflects upon many of the aspects and issues of entering this stage of life. There is an early chapter which mentions Ageism, which suggests that our Western Culture is prone to this disease – the categorisation of the 'old' when they reach a certain age, and the expectations of Society for the old, the pensioner, - and at its most polite – the Senior Citizen.

Erik Erickson, in his theory of psychosocial development, suggests 8 stages of development in which there is a need to resolve various conflicts. In this last stage, (HE DOES NOT CALL IT OLD AGE) the conflict to resolve is between Integrity, on the one hand, and Despair on the other. Robert Johnson, an analyst to be mentioned later, might call these two opposites a Paradox, and deals with paradox by holding the tension between the opposites, neither managing complete Integrity, nor falling into deep Despair. I hope we, Seniors, can find a middle way of positive living which will help us – either when we reach this stage, or through helping others of our family and friends who reach it before us. Alternatively, we can live in denial, and maintain that age does not creep up on us and we can live eternally young!

Both Robert Johnson, in a book called 'Living your Unlived Life,' and Richard Rohr in his book 'Falling Upwards', propose what they call the 'Second-half of life Journey'. Richard talks of it as a possibility, following a Crisis in one's life, while Robert Johnson suggests one way of making it happen, through memory and reflection. It is a very positive way of growing and developing in this 8<sup>th</sup> stage of life, and helps to give us a purpose. Rather than simply sliding into the grave, we have a reason for being – and indeed it is more about Being than about Doing. It is a Spiritual Journey in which we learn to face and know ourselves, and in which we come eventually to know God, more deeply and to face Him in all Truth and Integrity. His Spirit leads us through this stage, as she has done throughout our life, but perhaps we are more conscious of being led and, being humbler, we are also more willing.

What do we mean by 'Unlived Life'? Whatever culture we have been born into, choices have had to be made in order to survive, or to belong within that culture. We have chosen, or sometimes been forced, to live in a particular way, which means that we have built up an unlived life, which would have consisted of the alternative choices or freedoms. Very often we have made what we regard as very positive choices, based on Society's norms or on Creeds and religious beliefs, such as 'do not kill, or steal, or tell lies.' But sometimes they have been counter-cultural, such as the choice of a monk not to get married, or even the choice of a woman to get married because of the expectations of the time. There is a danger that we reach the evening of our lives with regrets – even the regret that we had been so conformist and culturally conditioned. In a sense, Johnson asks us to confront our Shadow and to integrate it, bring it to consciousness and accept that it completes who we are. The alternative is to deny a whole aspect of ourselves and slip further into Despair. Of course we cannot actually live our alternative choices, though some people may try to live some of them! But Johnson suggests that memory and active imagination brings us to be conscious of how we might have lived. Knowing how we **do** live, we can hold the tension between the opposites, one in each hand, and be at peace.

During our second-half of life journey, we do begin to grow in acceptance of ourselves and feel comfortable in our own skin, which is just as well, given that its outer form is getting rather wrinkly! The peace within, is the presence of God, who has come to dwell in us. The energy of earlier years in the cause of our religion, and which involved a lot of 'doing' for the Church, is giving way to being a more contemplative member of the Body of Christ. Our generation has seen unprecedented change in the Church, from Vat II, 60 years ago, to the scandals of Child abuse, exposed in our own day. We have a unique perspective, and much to contribute to a post-lockdown Spirituality and expression of Gospel values. Do not be afraid to express your view and the wisdom of years. Lockdown has exacerbated our period of reflection, which is what this 8<sup>th</sup> stage of our development is for. I will end with some words of Joan Chittester: These years involve embracing the blessings of this time and overcoming the burdens of it. This is the spiritual task of later life. It is a new stage of life. It is a time to let go of the fantasies of eternal youth and the fears of getting old and discover the beauty of what it means to age well. These years are meant to be good years. Above all, know that you are loved in your wholeness, by God, who treats you with deep respect. And love yourself. Live with self-respect, and those about you will grow in respect for you.

As last time, I have suggested a Timetable for the rest of the day, and some other material to ponder. I hope the rest of the day is fruitful for you. Thank you for listening, and God bless you.

## Appendix 1

Listen to the link and reflect on what he says: Watch here: [The First Time Ram Dass Felt Old](#)

1. Have you experienced a ‘shrinking’ when referred to as ‘old’ or an OAP, or even a Senior Citizen? Have you observed others shrink when referred to like that?
2. How positively have you approached this final stage of growth and development? How would you like to approach it?
3. How have you dealt with failures of body and increasing health issues? Have you denied them? Accepted them? Leant to compensate?
4. Have you taken advantage of pensions, bus passes, concessions and discounts, and rather enjoyed increased opportunities they provide?

Appendix 2 Read the following piece from Richard Rohr’s weekly meditations

### **Dying Before We Die** **Wednesday, July 8, 2020**

*CAC faculty member Cynthia Bourgeault addresses a fear that motivates all of us on some level—the fear of death. It is a matter of true wisdom to know how to face death wisely and courageously, which is why every religion and culture since the beginning of time has tried to “make sense” of it in some way. From her home off the coast of Maine, Cynthia shares these words, which come from the very heart of the Christian tradition.*

What is the wisdom that matters now? For me, it’s the Paschal Mystery [the passion, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus the Christ]. . . . Simply, the one who would save his life or her life will lose it and the one who’s willing to lose it, will save it. In all great religious traditions, this is the eye of the needle. Everything that’s good, everything that’s abiding, everything that’s worthy, everything that’s generative about a human being arises on the other side of our fear of death. . . . The whole tradition we’ve had of “dying before you die” sounds like martyrdom from the outside, but what you really discover is, it’s the gateway to freedom.

Jesus within our own Christian path not only tried to point toward what this new life is, but he also took us there and left us with the promise that he carries this, that he takes it on. Any one of us who summons the great courage within us to gird up our loins and die before we die are not left unaccompanied. It’s on the other edge of that that we’re really set free to courage, to compassion, and to generosity—this is where the Paschal Mystery begins to come in.

The values that are called the fruits of the Spirit by St. Paul—gentleness and peace and forbearance, compassion, love, joy—these are alchemical products that grow on the other side of the human being not afraid to die. We can find and collectively draw on those wonderful gifts. But it requires the personal willingness (as the old monks in the desert said), to “sit in your cell and ponder the hour of your death” until you’ve really worked through your system what this promise means: “Whether we live or die, we are the Lord’s” [Romans 14:8]. . . . With that, having moved from something nice you recite on Sundays to something you know in the marrow of your bones, then you walk into the planet as a vessel of love and nothing can touch you.

To the extent that we live our life from the heart now with utter integrity, death proves to be no interruption to identity. . . . Who we are is held in the love of God from before time; and as we lean into that now in life and taste it, we'll be prepared to really see death as the fullness of being and not as the lessening of it.

### References:

From Cynthia Bourgeault, "The Gateway to Freedom," *Wisdom in Times of Crisis* (Center for Action and Contemplation: 2020), faculty presentation (May 4, 2020), YouTube video, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b2gBJOCyxG4>; and

"Death Is the Fullness of Being," *Wisdom in Times of Crisis* (Center for Action and Contemplation: 2020), faculty presentation (May 6, 2020), YouTube video, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PGukuIA5lcU>.

Ponder the above and even listen to the You Tube presentation.

1. Whatever age you may be, what is your view of death?
2. What is the value Benedict sees in having 'death daily before your eyes'?

### Appendix 3

Do some Lectio Divina on any of the passages below.

Leviticus 19:32 New Revised Standard Version Catholic Edition (NRSVCE)

<sup>32</sup>You shall **rise before the aged, and defer to the old**; and you shall fear your God: I am the LORD.

Ruth 4:14-16 New Revised Standard Version Catholic Edition (NRSVCE)

<sup>14</sup>Then the women said to Naomi, "Blessed be the LORD, who has not left you this day without next-of-kin;<sup>[a]</sup> and may his name be renowned in Israel! <sup>15</sup>He shall be to you a restorer of life and **a nourisher of your old age**; for your daughter-in-law who loves you, who is more to you than seven sons, has borne him." <sup>16</sup>Then Naomi took the child and laid him in her bosom, and became his nurse.

Psalms 92:13-15 New Revised Standard Version Catholic Edition (NRSVCE)

<sup>13</sup>They are planted in the house of the LORD;  
they flourish in the courts of our God.

<sup>14</sup>**In old age they still produce fruit;  
they are always green and full of sap,**

<sup>15</sup>showing that the LORD is upright;  
he is my rock, and there is no unrighteousness in him.

Wisdom 4:7-9 New Revised Standard Version Catholic Edition (NRSVCE)

<sup>7</sup>But the righteous, though they die early, will be at rest.

<sup>8</sup>**For old age is not honoured for length of time,  
or measured by number of years;**

<sup>9</sup>but **understanding is grey hair** for anyone,  
and a **blameless life is ripe old age.**

Sirach 25:3-4 New Revised Standard Version Catholic Edition (NRSVCE)

<sup>3</sup>If you gathered nothing in your youth,  
how can you find anything in **your old age?**

<sup>4</sup>How attractive is sound judgment in the **grey-haired,**  
and for the **aged** to possess good counsel!

Isaiah 46:3-5 New Revised Standard Version Catholic Edition (NRSVCE)

<sup>3</sup>Listen to me, O house of Jacob,  
all the remnant of the house of Israel,  
who have been borne by me from your birth,  
carried from the womb;

<sup>4</sup>**even to your old age** I am he,  
even when you **turn grey** I will carry you.

I have made, and I will bear;  
I will carry and will save.

Zechariah 8:4 New Revised Standard Version Catholic Edition (NRSVCE)

<sup>4</sup>Thus says the LORD of hosts: Old men and old women shall again sit in the streets of Jerusalem, each with staff in hand because of **their great age.**

## Appendix 4

**This is my final talk in the ‘Retreat- Homeward Bound’ based on Richard Rohr’s book Falling Upward. Do read it and listen to the Testament at the end.**

### COMMUNION

Crisis is made very much easier if we are loved, and we know that we are loved. Being loved forms the bedrock on which to stand when our container is shaken and collapses. It is very much worse when our container is built on sand, and we do not know, for certain, that we are loved. I suggested in the last talk that a fall, a true shattering of the ego can be the beginning of the realisation that we are loved deeply by God. We may, of course, still refuse to turn to God again, in which case our fall has taught us nothing and we may have to fall all over again. This ‘learning nothing’ can also happen when we ‘blame’ God for our crisis. This can happen all too often when we ourselves are not to blame – and in our ‘blame culture’ God can end up as the fall-guy, the scapegoat. If, after our crisis, the question is still, ‘Why me?’ then we have not moved on in maturity or consciousness. Go back to those initiation messages, especially ‘Life is hard’ and ‘Life is not about me.’ This is really trying to say that Crises do not necessarily bring us through to the second-half of life journey. We need to be willing to be transformed.

People can and do transform. Their fall leaves them helpless. It is the helplessness in the face of the crisis situation which is transforming, because it gives us the opportunity to be ‘raised up.’ And when we are raised, we are no longer the same. Rather like Jesus, we can appear unrecognisable. In a sense, it can happen in a ‘twinkling of an eye’, but in another sense there is a journey to be made – the second-half of life journey. And that journey begins in the lowest place, the underworld, the realm of the dead. All the mythological stories involve a visit to the underworld in some form or another. We even speak of Jesus ‘descending to hell’. We like to think that this is in order to redeem even those in the underworld – which he does. But it was his own experience and journey. RR goes so far as to suggest that this ‘underworld’ experience is what most of the journey feels like, since God transforms the soul in secret and in darkness. If we were to know too much about what was happening, we would be tempted to take control of the process, or else abandon it completely. As TS Eliot puts it:

*‘Old men ought to be explorers, here and there does not matter. We must be still and still moving into another intensity, for another union, a deeper communion.’* (TS Eliot – East Coker)

RR calls this ‘deeper communion’ the real **content** of the container, that which it is meant to hold, support and foster. The fullness and freedom of the second half of life is what Homer seemed unable to describe, though he hinted at it through the words of Tiresias the prophet of Thebes, who spoke to Odysseus in the underworld. Thus in sacred story, the goal is to come **Home** after getting the protagonists to leave home in the first place! **Home** now has a whole new meaning, never before imagined. It transcends and includes the initial experience of home. Listen to this piece from the gospel:

*Peter took this up. ‘What about us?’ he asked Jesus, ‘We have left everything and followed you.’ Jesus said, ‘I tell you solemnly, there is no one who has left house, brothers, sisters, father, children or land for my sake and for the sake of the gospel who will not be repaid a hundred times over, houses, brothers, sisters, mothers, children and land - not without persecutions - now in this present time and, in the world to come, eternal life.’*

The 'hundred times over' is not something numerical but refers to the fact that the experience of this 'Home' will transcend the other.

The idea of 'home' actually has a past sense and a future sense. Either way, there is a pull towards union or communion. We began in an extraordinary union in our mother's womb and there is a psychological attraction towards that 'safe' place and situation. But even beyond it, there is a sense of the union we had in God before we were born – where we came from. That 'sense', that 'memory' is an element in our primitive consciousness. But it also forms the attraction towards the future – the deeper intensity, the union or communion in God which completes the circle, where we are going to. Putting it succinctly, in this second half of life, we know who we are, we know where we have come from and we know where we are going. The 'knowing' is not a factual knowing, but more akin to an intuitive understanding. This sense of 'home', as we said at the beginning, is a metaphor for the *soul*. So we could say that in this second half of life journey we are finding our *soul*. That word seems to suggest that we are discovering our true identity and our true purpose.

It is here that we begin to see the limits of language. There seem to be two reasons why this is so: Firstly because those of us on the second half of life journey (if we are) are precisely in the process of deepening our understanding – and from this position, it is difficult to express what is happening and where we are. Secondly, we are trying to express mystery, and that can only be done in metaphor and imagery. It seems to me that this journey is something of a spiral – whether upwards or downwards, I do not know, and, as RR has said elsewhere, it is not a completely smooth journey. As he says about the journey of the Israelites, it is two steps forward and one step back. I would like now to try and describe some characteristics of this journey from my own perspective. I hope to touch on some of what RR has to say, but it will not be in his own words or order of presentation.

I believe strongly that we are *accompanied* on this journey of life by an internal guide. Perhaps it is not until we have a level of humility, until we have experienced a fall, that we can acknowledge that guide and accompaniment. In St Benedict's steps of humility, there is one which says 'Be willing to receive direction.' On this second journey, I think we are more willing to receive direction. Benedict envisaged our guide as an external one (the Abbot), but at this stage, we find our internal guide. Christians tend to call her the Spirit of God. Certainly since our baptism and possibly before that, God's Spirit has been with us and in us. Why has it taken us so long to discover her presence? For the first half of life we have been forging our own identity, our own container and going, basically our own way. Who needed a guide? We were creating our ego and our persona. With a small growth in humility, we can now see, not only that the Spirit has been engaged throughout our life, but we needed that guidance. The journey involves the discovery of our own True Self and the Spirit of God, who alone can know the depths of God. These two are not the same, but they are so closely related that they form a 'communion', a 'conspiracy', a breathing with the Spirit. All true spirituality is a co-operating with God. We discover our 'soul' which is the abiding place of the Spirit and of our longing. We do not create our 'soul', but our 'soul' is given. Home, as we mentioned before, is a metaphor for the soul, hence we come **Home** when we find this abiding place of the Spirit and of our True Self.

The Ancients called this 'fate' or 'destiny' or the 'call of the gods' and all true mythological heroes heard this call and dared to follow it. Odysseus followed to the depth of the underworld, and there realised that his 'oar', his occupation, had become a winnowing fan, capable of helping



discern the wheat from the chaff, the essential from the inessential. This was his new journey home, because in fact he had come home. TS Eliot puts it superbly:

*With the drawing of his Love and the voice of his Calling  
We shall not cease from exploration  
And the end of all our exploring  
Will be to arrive where we started  
And know the place for the first time.*

Meanwhile, when we are engaged on this second journey, we may not know or understand what is happening. The difference with the first half of life is that we are happy with that. I do not mean complacent, or that we do not care. This ease with the not-knowing, shows both an increase in trust and in humility, and the willingness to be 'led'. When we encounter those who are searching for answers or for certainty, there is a quiet shaking of the head. There may be no answers or certainty, only deeper penetration of the mystery. We begin to realise that we belong to a much bigger picture of deep time and the whole of history and that there is unity or oneness in the culmination of that story. We get glimpses that we are one with all people and with all things – and what is extraordinary is that science is confirming this!

It is perhaps worth noting that a second half of life perspective can also question the limitations of our first half of life perspective on God, who may even seem to be a part of our container. The bigger picture suggests a 'bigger' God, who embraces the whole universe, all peoples and all religions. And this takes us on to the question of 'Heaven and Hell', which some of you might imagine this retreat to be about. RR, and I agree with him, suggests that when we discover, or recover our sense of union with the divine, most traditions have called this 'heaven', and its loss has been called 'hell'. But we forget, or do not realise, that this refers to present experiences. The True Self knows that heaven is now, and that its loss is hell – now. People who have discovered their True Self learn how to live in the big picture and that this is called by Jesus, living 'in the kingdom of God'. We practice living in heaven by letting go of our own kingdoms (our containers) and choosing union, freely, ahead of time and now. Heaven is the state of union, both here and later. There is a freedom about choosing this state of union, and no-one is in 'heaven' who doesn't want to be, and everyone is in heaven as soon as they live in union. If our notion of heaven is based on *exclusion* of any sort, we are not in heaven. The more we exclude, the more hellish our existence becomes. God excludes no-one from union, but he must allow us to exclude ourselves to maintain our freedom. Hell is a logical possibility, because, if we are truly free, we can exclude ourselves from union, maintaining separateness and superiority over community and love. Only a 'small' god can **condemn people** to hell. Our God heals, blesses and forgives even his 'enemies'.

Another characteristic of the second-half perspective is what RR calls a 'second simplicity.' I take this to mean that life appears less complicated, or perhaps, as mentioned before, we begin to trust more and are happy to be led. It fits with a step in humility, according to Benedict, which asks us *to be content with less and less*. This is not simply material baggage, but intellectual baggage as well. We cannot go on looking for answers to everything. This is not to say that we must stop learning. We go on learning forever, but this seems to me to mean expanding our horizon rather than our knowledge. This is the difference between the ego wanting to know everything for its own aggrandisement, and the person accepting the expertise of others in a spirit of trust and inclusion. Thus we become people of wonder once again, as we were in childhood, but with the added advantage of our years of experience.

RR also speaks of a 'bright sadness' or a 'sober happiness' which is felt by those in the second half of life. This says something to us about coping with paradox. It involves a holding of the tension between the opposites, and suggests growth in the imitation of Godliness within us. The tendency in first-half of life is to resolve the tension, remove one side of the paradox, or deny there is a tension. In this 'sober happiness', there is a realism about life and a realisation that there can be deeply tragic moments, and also great joy. Sometimes what appears to be a situation of sheer horror, can be transformed by self-sacrifice, or by forgiveness. One thinks primarily of the Cross, but there are instances even in quite recent human experience. There is also a coming together of the inner and the outer. Whatever the situation outside, the inner can balance it. A joy can illumine us within, even when the outer situation seems dark, and when the outer is all light, we quietly carry our pain within. This capacity to hold the paradoxical situation can be very influential on others, sometimes even more influential than passionate action for justice or opposition to evil.

Experience of our own Shadow, that part of ourselves which we do not want to be during our first-half journey, teaches us to relate to our Shadow more positively. Hence in our second journey, we may at least accept the Shadow as an integral part of our identity, and even embrace it, since it often contains much energy which can be used and transformed for good. This experience of our own Shadow helps us be more tolerant of others and of their shadow-side, and our tendency to be judgemental begins to reduce. We may even face and reform some of our prejudices and face our fears. Some of these fears may have prevented us being open and helpful to others, so another characteristic of the second journey can be an increase in our willingness to give and especially to give of ourselves. There is an excellent book called 'Field of Compassion' by Judy Cannato, which I believe meshes well with RR and his book, and in it, Judy suggests four attitudes or stances which will help us manifest a 'Field of Compassion' on earth. I have no time to elaborate on them, but they are called: 'Spaciousness – there is space in myself for you.' 'Contemplation – taking a long loving look at the real.' 'Commitment – focus and intention come together in a tangible way.' And 'Imagination – allows us to give form to the urgings of the Spirit.' If these are cultivated on our second journey, there is a chance that we will all contribute to bringing about a new level of consciousness in the world.

I feel I cannot leave this subject of our reflections without mentioning an inevitable element in the Journey, which arguably constitutes our greatest fear. This is death. If the crisis which initiated the second-half of life journey, has taught us anything, it should have taught us something about dying. Depending on the type of crisis, this might have been a near death experience or something like a diagnosis of terminal illness, and these will have brought death into focus for us. On the other hand, it might have been a significant death of ego. Either way, it may have changed our approach to our own death. Such experiences can provoke a spiritual deepening, or even start us on a spiritual quest, though we might have already realised that this second journey is indeed spiritual. It reaches into the depths of our own spirit and involves the discovery of God's Spirit within. Such a journey can ease or nullify our fear of death. Death becomes for us a pathway to Life. This is the ideal, and one hopes it will be the reality. From a personal point of view, though I do not think that the fear of death has vanished for me completely, I have been greatly helped to face death by my own father's death, by sitting with some of my brethren while they were dying, and by some experiences of death in Zimbabwe, where death is faced as a very ordinary part of life. This does not mean that people are not 'moved' by death, but certainly it is not possible to live in denial, which I think can overtake people as they near their natural end.

I want to end there, not because it is the 'end' for I believe there is no end except in God. When we have had a moment of silence, I would like to read you a Testament by an Anglican nun of

the Order of the Holy Paraclete, whose mother house is in Whitby near here, and who follow the Benedictine Rule. I was privileged to meet her several times in South Africa and to see her shortly before her death in Whitby. What she says seems to me to exemplify a soul who has come Home, who has made that Second-Half of life journey and has gone forward in the peace of Christ.

Copy link into your browser, download and play with mp3

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/p6hbyh1rb9fhqdt/AAArYxSinh5YymwxVDa17SNJa?dl=0>

## Appendix 5

At the end of his book 'Living your Unlived Life', Robert Johnson offers an exercise to assemble an Inventory of Unlived life. You will see qualities that you have lived, possibilities that may have been cast off or closed to you, potentials that you may still like to fulfil. Look for unrealised and underachieved potentials. Direct your attention to the past in an honest, reflective manner, not idealising it or judging it. State what has been true for you and what is true now.

Mark the box which most nearly reflects your response to each statement, each in turn.

### The Unlived Life Inventory.

DD = Disagree

SD= Somewhat Disagree

SA= Somewhat Agree

DA= Definitely Agree

### OUTER LIFE:

1. I get satisfaction from what I do with my life.

DD	SD	SA	DA	Score
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2. I feel at ease relating to people.

DD	SD	SA	DA	Score
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3. New situations are difficult for me. \*

DD	SD	SA	DA	Score
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4. My work life is not a good use of my talents and abilities. \*

DD	SD	SA	DA	Score
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5. I have a positive attitude towards money.

DD	SD	SA	DA	Score
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6. I do not use my time effectively. \*

DD	SD	SA	DA	Score
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7. My physical energy is good.

DD	SD	SA	DA	Score
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8. I feel overburdened with responsibility. \*

DD	SD	SA	DA	Score
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9. I do not have enough free time for recreation and relaxation. \*

DD	SD	SA	DA	Score
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10. I usually accomplish what I set out to do.

DD	SD	SA	DA	Score
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Outer life Total

#### INNER LIFE

1. I like myself as a person.

DD	SD	SA	DA	Score
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2. I have/had a loving relationship with my family of origin.

DD	SD	SA	DA	Score
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3. I often experience difficult emotional states (sadness/anxiety/anger/stress)\*

DD	SD	SA	DA	Score
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4. I feel uncomfortable when I am on my own.\*

DD	SD	SA	DA	Score
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5. I keep a balance between looking after myself and looking after others.

DD	SD	SA	DA	Score
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6. I find it difficult to concentrate and think clearly.\*

DD	SD	SA	DA	Score
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7. I am able to show my love and affection to others easily.

DD	SD	SA	DA	Score
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8. I feel dissatisfied with my personal relationship(s).\*

DD	SD	SA	DA	Score
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9. I seldom know exactly what I am feeling.\*

DD	SD	SA	DA	Score
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10. I have a positive relationship with my body.

DD	SD	SA	DA	Score
----	----	----	----	-------

Inner life Total

## DEEPER LIFE

1. I trust that I know what is best for me.

DD	SD	SA	DA	Score
----	----	----	----	-------

2. I am able to express my creativity in a number of different ways.

DD	SD	SA	DA	Score
----	----	----	----	-------

3. I am not interested in what goes on in my unconscious. \*

DD	SD	SA	DA	Score
----	----	----	----	-------

4. I do not usually listen to my intuition and inner guidance. \*

DD	SD	SA	DA	Score
----	----	----	----	-------

5. I cultivate a positive vision of the future.

DD	SD	SA	DA	Score
----	----	----	----	-------

6. I seldom pay attention to my dreams. \*

DD	SD	SA	DA	Score
----	----	----	----	-------

7. I know I am growing and developing.

DD	SD	SA	DA	Score
----	----	----	----	-------

8. I am not sure that I have the ability to heal myself. \*

DD	SD	SA	DA	Score
----	----	----	----	-------

9. I find it hard to imagine things I have never experienced. \*

DD	SD	SA	DA	Score
----	----	----	----	-------

10. I often feel connected with nature.

DD	SD	SA	DA	Score
----	----	----	----	-------

Deeper life Total

## GREATER LIFE

1. I am aware of the presence of a Higher Power (God/Life force/Dharma/Tao)

DD	SD	SA	DA	Score
----	----	----	----	-------

2. I try to practice love and compassion towards others.

DD	SD	SA	DA	Score
----	----	----	----	-------

3. I am not sure spirituality is important to me. \*

DD	SD	SA	DA	Score
----	----	----	----	-------

4. I do not believe that being alive has a greater purpose. \*

DD	SD	SA	DA	Score
----	----	----	----	-------

5. I want my life to have a positive impact on the world.

DD	SD	SA	DA	Score
----	----	----	----	-------

6. I do not have a regular spiritual practice (meditation/contemplation/prayer) \*

DD	SD	SA	DA	Score
----	----	----	----	-------

7. I spend time in activities that quiet my thoughts and feelings.

DD	SD	SA	DA	Score
----	----	----	----	-------

8. I easily get caught up in superficial activities and concerns. \*

DD	SD	SA	DA	Score
----	----	----	----	-------

9. I seldom reflect on the meaning of my life experiences. \*

DD	SD	SA	DA	Score
----	----	----	----	-------

10. I follow what is spiritually 'right' when making a major decision.

DD	SD	SA	DA	Score
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Greater Life Total.

### SCORING:

Q. 1,2,5,7,10 (without an \*), are scored: 0,1,2,3, from Disagree to Agree.

Q. 3,4,6,8,9, (marked with \*), are scored 3,2,1,0 from Disagree to Agree.

Sum the scores from each section and put the totals in the boxes below:

OUTER LIFE SCORE	
INNER LIFE SCORE	
DEEPER LIFE SCORE	
GREATER LIFE SCORE	
TOTAL SCORE	

### INTERPRETATION

1. Outer life is a dimension of external experiences and outer activity – how comfortably you approach the *doing* aspects of your life.
2. Inner life is a dimension of subjective experiences of your personal self – how you feel about yourself, your self-confidence, and your personal relationships.
3. Deeper life is the dimension of intuitive and creative experiences – how you relate to those experiences which seem outside conscious control.
4. Greater life is a dimension of the higher Self, transpersonal connection to the divine – how you relate to spirituality, core values and aspirations.
5. Your score in each section is one measure of your realisation and actualisation of potential in that dimension.
6. Your total Whole Life Inventory score (out of a possible 120) gives a measure of the development and satisfaction you are experiencing in your life at present.
7. Scores of 15 or less in any section suggest you have significantly unlived and underdeveloped potentials in that area of your life. A measure of psychic health is your ability to experience different types of awareness and shift states with facility.

8. Comparing the scores for different dimensions gives a picture of the areas of your life that are more lived, in contrast to areas that are relatively unlived. You can use the graph below to create a visual picture.

30			
28			
26			
24			
22			
20			
18			
16			
14			
12			
10			
8			
6			
4			
2			
0			
Outer life	Inner Life	Deeper life	Greater life

Reflect on which dimension of life might benefit from more attention, and notice areas in each dimension that seem to be least developed.

The Unlived Life Inventory provides you with a glimpse of your unlived life. Do read the book if you can. Consider what practical steps you can take to develop new potentials and possibilities in your life.

Enjoy!