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"Love life, engage in it, give it all you've got."

Maya Angelou

1. STEPS TO LIFE MASTERY

This book gives you the tools to help you look at yourself. It will help you see who you really are. It will help you find what you want from life. **Freedom** is the chance to live in the world. It is also how to enjoy your life. It will help you get what you want and help others. Freedom is directly related to **Responsibility**. The more responsible you are in life, the more freedom you have. *The Steps to Life Mastery* chart shows you how the book is organized.

STEPS TO LIFE MASTERY

STEPS	RESPONSIBILITIES
1. RESPONSIBILITY TAKE CHARGE OF YOUR LIFE	A. UNDERSTAND YOUR HISTORY B. BECOME READY TO CHANGE
2. INTEGRITY EXPRESS YOUR REAL SELF	C. BE HONEST, TRUSTING AND TRUSTWORTHY D. PRACTICE CREATING HARMONY
3. AWARENESS CREATE A FOUNDATION FOR GROWTH	E. LEARN COMMUNICATION SKILLS F. UNDERSTAND YOUR LIFE ELEMENTS
4. TOOLS LEARN LIFE SKILLS	G. AVOID SELF-DEFEATING BEHAVIOR H. APPLY SKILLS TO SOLVE YOUR PROBLEMS
5. MASTERY DEVELOP PERSONAL GOALS AND ACTION PLANS	I. DEVELOP A LIFE MASTERY GOAL AND PLAN J. DEVELOP A PROBLEM RESOLUTION GOAL AND PLAN
6. CONNECTION MAINTAIN POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS	K. DEVELOP YOUR SUPPORT SYSTEM L. IDENTIFY IMPORTANT ROLES IN YOUR LIFE
7. RESILIENCE COPE WITH LIFE CHALLENGES	M. UNDERSTAND AND COPE WITH CHANGE AND LOSS N. APPLY THE WELL-BEING FORMULA TO YOUR LIFE
8. SERVICE HELP OTHERS	O. LEARN TO HELP EFFECTIVELY P. PROVIDE SERVICE TO OTHERS

When we went to school, no one spent any time on helping students find their Real Self. We also didn't spend time on developing **Social Responsibility**. You had to figure this out on your own. Well, many of us spent our teens and 20s trying to figure this out. We all spend time trying to figure out what happiness is. That was OK then, because most of us made it through. But some of us didn't make it. Some of us got lost along the way. We've learned a lot. We all want to know who we really are. Where we fit into life. That's what we want to share with you. We've found an easier way to figure these things out. That's why you should take this class this semester. This class may help you stay on an easier path in life.

You see, all of us want to be happy. But we really don't understand what being happy means. We search for how to find it for ourselves. We find happiness moment by moment. We really want to be accepted for who we are. We want to be loved. We also want to do what we think we are supposed to do. Sometimes we do things just to see how they make us feel. We do things without thinking. Every time you do things without thinking, you place yourself in harm's way. If you follow the directions in this book, you may find happiness for yourself. No one can tell you what is right for you. Only you can find it. Some of us make life harder than it has to be. Hopefully you will not do that. If you do, well, good luck.

We want to explain the Steps to Life Mastery. These steps will help you decide for yourself how you fit into the world. Your decisions will guide you. When you make bad decisions, bad things happen. When you make good decisions, good things happen. Sometimes neither the bad consequences nor the happiness are instant. However, one or the other comes each time you make a decision. When you have the facts, you can choose the right direction for you.

DEVELOPING YOUR CHARACTER STRENGTHS

Life can be difficult, that's just the way it is. Life makes you constantly grow and learn. This book shows you how to develop your Character Strengths. Just like staying in physical shape, you have to work on your Character Strengths. It is perfectly OK and normal to get discouraged at times. You will also feel unhappy when sad or bad things happen. Later in the class, you will learn how to deal with these hard times. Even bad times and sad times teach us things about life. Everything gives us a chance to learn.

CLASS OBJECTIVES

- 1. Understand the Steps to Life Mastery.**
- 2. Respect others' privacy and confidentiality.**
- 3. Become aware of your Real Self and life purpose.**
- 4. Carry out weekly action steps to improve yourself.**
- 5. Understand your beliefs, attitudes and reactions.**
- 6. Change negative beliefs that don't serve your interests.**
- 7. Create positive relationships.**
- 8. Learn skills for coping with life challenges.**
- 9. Practice leadership, teaching and helping others.**
- 10. Provide service to others.**

CREATING CLASS RULES

Your teacher will follow the rules of the school district in terms of privacy. This means class privacy does not apply to situations involving concern about suicide, threats of harm to others, child abuse, or doing things to hurt yourself. In these situations, the teacher will tell your parents and other authorities. Your teacher will tell other teachers and administrators about your progress in class. He or she won't talk about private details of your life.

A rule everyone must follow is respecting others' privacy. Don't repeat anything someone else says or does in class outside this room. Privacy means, "When you leave, do not repeat whom you see here, or what you hear here." Talk about why this is important, and then promise to keep things said in the class private. Remember, everyone here has gone through different kinds of experiences. **Write below two rules you think will make the class safe and fun.**

- 1.
- 2.

Share and discuss what you have written and agree on rules as a class. Then, your teacher will give the class a poster board and markers. The class can write down and post these rules. Whenever a new student comes into the class, explain the class rules to him or her.

Put your name in the front of your book. During class, you will complete a number of required tasks. They are explained to you as we go along. A list of exercises and testimonies for the class is at the front of your workbook. You must complete all of the tasks to get class credit.