

The Personal Journey

Life is a Journey
Full of Choices

None of us can coast to a mountain top. We must work, struggle, and climb. The same is true for having a great life. We won't get there by accident or without effort. If we make good choices along life's path, we are likely to have a successful journey.

Are you ready to hike?

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★ Enjoy today.

In the hike of life, we can focus on the obstacles along the trail or the beauty that surrounds us. Those who find the beauty in daily life travel well.

What beauty have you experienced today?

★ Find the gems in your past.

Anyone who wants to find a gem must be willing to search for it. Likewise, we find treasures in our life stories when we are willing to dig through challenges and disappointments to find them. Those who find and cherish the gems in their past are those who live the best lives.

What are some of the gems you have found along life's path?

★ Look forward to tomorrow.

People who are excited and hopeful about the future are likely to have better journeys. Hikers who look for and expect to find good things usually do find good things. Who knows what great things will happen tomorrow!

When anxiety and fear tempt you, how will you stay hopeful about life's possibilities?

★ Use your strengths.

Each person has strengths and weaknesses. The greatest joy and progress come from using our strengths while managing our weaknesses. We discover our strengths by noticing what we love to do—those things that challenge us and get us so engaged that we lose track of time.

*What are your greatest strengths?
How will you use them?*



Choose to serve.

When we focus primarily on ourselves, our view of the world is narrow and limited. As we turn more energy and attention to helping others, the meaning and satisfaction of our own lives expand. There are countless places and ways we can serve others.

What will you do to make the world a better place?



Choose to grow.

Growth is the surest sign of progress in life. Seeking new ideas, experiences, and projects helps us grow and enjoy our journey.

How will you cultivate personal growth?



Don't forget your compass!

Each of us is equipped with a personal compass—or conscience—to guide us along life's journey. Conscience is the peaceful voice inside of us that invites us to be compassionate, kind, and honorable. When we ignore the compass, we get lost. When we use our compass well, our journey will be richer and more meaningful.

How will you better follow your compass?

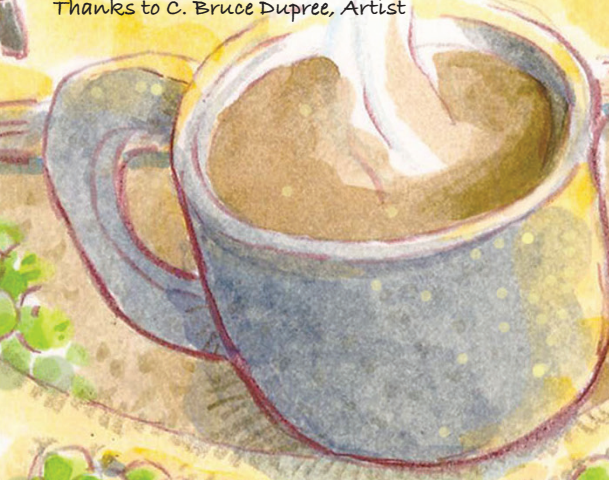
You'll be making many choices along your personal journey. Use this trail map to make better choices. Have a great journey!



Learn more to help you on your personal journey by clicking on The Personal Journey link at www.arfamilies.org, visiting your local county extension agent, talking with wise fellow travelers, or reading a good book on traveling successfully through life, such as:

- Martin E. P. Seligman's *Authentic Happiness* (2002, Free Press).
- Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi's *Finding Flow* (1997, Basic Books).
- C. Terry Warner's *Bonds That Make Us Free: Healing Our Relationships, Coming to Ourselves* (2001, Shadow Mountain).
- Redford and Virginia Williams' *Anger Kills: 17 Strategies for Controlling the Hostility that Can Harm Your Health* (1993, Harper).
- David D. Burns' *The Feeling Good Handbook* (1990, Plume).

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Thanks to Steven A. Dennis, Traci Johnston, Sherry Jones, Lindsey Smith, Katy Randall, and Jennie Hubbard, Contributors
Thanks to C. Bruce Dupree, Artist



FCS-454
Printed by University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service Printing Services.
This material is based upon work supported by the Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, under Agreement No. 2002-41520-01378.

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