

A watercolor illustration of the Earth, showing continents in shades of green, yellow, and brown, and oceans in various shades of blue. The background is a textured, mottled purple and blue. The text is centered over the globe.

# **How-to guide For making your world a better place**

## Overview

The nature of the human experience is that our lives are full of problems.

Problems come in many sizes ranging from worrying thoughts to world-changing events that alter the course of your life. Some problems may be nothing more than an annoyance, while others threaten our very existence.

While you can overcome many problems without much thought, others will leave you bogged down due to their size or complexity. In addition, the more significant problems might even impact your emotional or mental self.

This guide is for people who want to help improve their world, yet don't know where to get started. Perhaps the problems are overwhelming, complex, or contentious.

Whatever the reason for being stuck, just know that it's normal to find yourself stuck and unsure how to help.

Being an agent of change starts with choosing your impact.

This how-to guide will help you design your impact. In doing so, you will find yourself less overwhelmed or anxious, clear on what and why you will take the actions you do, and tenacious in getting it done.

At the end of this guide is a worksheet to help you design the impact you want to have. The guide will take you through a six-step process for designing your impact:

**I**ntentions: What's your aim or goal?

**M**indfulness: What are you aware of in you?

**P**erspiration: What are you willing to do for this?

**A**ction: What's actions can and will you take?

**C**ommitment: What will keep you moving forward?

**T** rue to you: Which of your qualities will help you in this work?

Find a quiet place to sit down and design your impact when you're ready. You might also invite others to join you as I know we're better together.



## Intentions

Every day, whether you know it or not, you set intentions and follow through on them. Some intentions may be as simple as intending to get out of bed when the alarm first rings. Others may seem more significant such as doing an excellent job during the presentation you're giving at work today.

Your intentions can be in your conscious or unconscious thoughts. Conscious intentions become a thought you're aware of and may even require some reflection to establish. Unconscious intentions don't need any conscious thought and may seem to happen by default. However, those unconscious intentions are likely the result of a habit or behaviour you've formed.

Regardless of whether they're conscious or not, though, everything you do is guided by your intentions. Big or small, easy or hard, conscious or unconscious.

Your intentions run your life.

Simply put, intentions are your answer to the question, "What do I want?"

When it comes to impacting our chaotic world, you will do the things that bring you joy and fulfillment by making your intentions conscious.

To start establishing your intentions, spend some time uncovering your answer to the question, "What do I want?" Then, keep asking yourself, "Why do I want that?"

You'll know when you find the right intention as you will feel the resonance it creates in you.



If you find your intention overwhelming, then ask yourself, "What's one small part of that I intend to help make better?"

Resist the urge to decide what you're going to *do* at this point, as jumping ahead will only move your intentions into the unconscious.

As with all of these steps, write your answers in your journal or somewhere you can refer back to them.

## Mindfulness

The people who have the most significant impact on solving problems do so with mindfulness. They're aware of their mindsets and intentions, spot the fears that cause them to freeze and know what ignites their passion for improving their world.

Mindfulness is often associated with practices such as meditation. If you find yourself churning on a thought or problem, meditation can help you clarify what's important to you.



Meditation can be as simple as pausing for a few minutes. Put your feet flat on the floor and focus on your breath going in and out of your body. You could also stare out a window while just breathing.

Mindfulness, though, is about far more than meditation.

Mindfulness is simply being aware of your thoughts.

Take a few minutes to clear your mind. Then, start by asking yourself the question, "What are my intentions sparking in me?"

In your awareness, you might find:

- Something that you're unwilling to compromise on
- A fear that is holding you back
- An excuse for not doing anything about this problem

Whatever you notice, don't make it right or wrong; just write it down your answers. Your awareness will empower you to choose your path forward.

## Perspiration

You are constantly impacting the world around you, regardless of whether or not you take action.

Sometimes, a problem requires you to make a considerable effort to achieve your intentions. Other times, though, the best thing you could do is nothing.

Before moving to act, start by deciding what effort you want to put towards the problem.

Ask yourself questions such as:

- Do I want to take responsibility for working on this problem?
- Is this my problem to work on?
- How much effort can and will I invest in this problem?



## Action

You've been building the foundation for having an impact until this point. The foundation is in you, and with it in your conscious thoughts, it's time to design the actions you can and will take.

In defining your actions, don't forget to refer back to your intentions, what you're mindful of, and what perspiration you're willing to invest.

Alone, or with someone else's help, spend the time to define the actions that will propel you forward:

- Brainstorm a list of actions you could take
- Prioritize the list based on what will align with the foundation you've defined
- Then pick one of them that you're going to start working on today

When you choose the actions that align with the foundation you've established, you're far more likely to have the impact you want to have.

## Commitment

The best plans survive until you start taking action. That's when you're going to bump into problems, resistance, or your doubts.

Take, for example, if you decide to go door-to-door collecting donations. The reality is that not everyone will want to support what you're doing. It can be discouraging and might have you wanting to give up before you've met your intentions.

It's your commitment to what you're doing that will keep you moving forward when things get tough, problems emerge, or you start doubting yourself.

Identify what you need to keep you committed to meeting your intentions:

- A friend to cheer you on or hold you accountable?
- A calendar entry to keep you on track?
- A post-it on your monitor to remind you just how resilient you are?

Whatever works for you, please put it in place to ensure that you keep moving forward in a discouraging moment.

## True to you

Choosing to go out into the world and have an impact can be one of the most challenging and rewarding things you'll do this year.

Through all of it, though, never lose sight of the good person you are.

Using the worksheet at the end of this guide, identify three qualities about you that you don't want to lose sight of during this time. You might include qualities such as:

- I care about the safety and well-being of all people
- I'm humble and don't care about public recognition
- I have a big heart and love helping others

Don't be afraid to claim what you know to be true.

As you move forward, come back to this list to remind yourself of who you are. Then, go back to having the impact I know you will.



## Summary

The world is full of big problems such as war, political and economic uncertainty, and climate change. Given the enormity of so many of these problems, it's easy to become discouraged and overwhelmed with thoughts such as, "How can I solve climate change?"

Imagine a world, though, in which everyone chooses to make one small impact on a problem every day.

There are nearly 8 billion people in the world today. That means there are nearly 8 billion ways the world can get better every day.

What is the impact you want to have today?

