

# Wise Action Weekly Practice Guides

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The central concern with practicing Wise Action is the intention not to harm. These exercises are designed to help you investigate your intentions and what does or doesn't support them. Questions asked have no "right answer" except what's true for you.

## Week 1 – Role of Ethics

- 1) Get familiar with your sense of integrity. Your conscience may be uncomfortable about past events, but how comfortable are you now with your intentions and ability to abide by them?
- 2) Explore your connections with others: individuals, groups, communities, etc. Notice where you feel at ease in dealing with others, and where you have discomfort.
- 3) Consider the importance of all levels of safety for you and others. What intentions do you have about acting to help yourself and others feel safe?

## Week 2 – Not Physically Harming

- 1) Consider instances when you have killed animals (including insects) or caused them to be killed. How do you feel about it? Do your feelings differ with different species? Do you feel there are justifications in some situations? Examine them in light of the interconnection of all beings and your sense of integrity. Note your observations in your journal.
- 2) Do you have thoughts, wishes, or impulses toward others that would cause physical harm if acted upon? Do you have fantasies about revenge or animosity toward others? Note them and what restrains you from acting on such mental activity.
- 3) Explore your intentions around the use of force in various situations.
- 4) Practice compassion for yourself and all others who are directly or indirectly affected by violence.

## Week 3 – Not Taking What Is Not Given

- 1) How do you define "taking what isn't given?" What about using an app you haven't paid for? Or taking fruit sitting near the sidewalk under a neighbor's tree? Or accepting the benefit of a cashier's mistake? You may want to note your definition in your journal.
- 2) Reflect on any situations where you might take what hasn't been given. What motivates those impulses? What beliefs support them? How do you feel about such conduct?
- 3) Spend two days practicing this precept as thoroughly as you possibly can, in all situations, such as at work, or driving, or being a guest.
- 4) Next, spend two days practicing generosity at every opportunity you can find. Give time, things, compliments, the benefit of the doubt, and other acts of kindness.
- 5) Compare the practice of abstaining from taking what is not given to the practice of generosity. How are the challenges and benefits of each similar or different?

## Week 4 – Not Engaging in Sexual Misconduct

- 1) How do you define “sexual misconduct?” What about flirting without considering how it may affect others, or watching an attractive stranger while your partner is present, or fantasizing about sexual situations, etc.? Note your definition in your journal.
- 2) If you have impulses to act in ways that fit your definition of sexual misconduct, what views of yours encourage those impulses?
- 3) During this week, spend some time bringing a heightened sense of respect to anyone you have sexual feelings or thoughts about, whether or not you’re in a committed relationship with them. Devote time, perhaps two sessions of meditation, to practicing loving-kindness toward them. What effect does this respect and loving-kindness have on your sexual desires and thoughts, and on your relationship with them?