

## **George Mason University's Moment of Obligation**

What is at the root of your passion for social change? One student during each class will share a “moment of obligation,” a story about an experience that committed you to doing something to address a problem that you care about. The story (no more than 5-7 minutes) will illustrate how your life experiences have inspired and motivated you to become passionate about this particular social issue. Students will sign up to present each week at the beginning of the semester. Students will be able to utilize a Be Bold worksheet to help them create their story.





5. **Now think about these decisions as possible *moments of obligation*. Does that change the way you see them? If so, in what ways?**
  
6. **Describe your most significant *moment of obligation*. How do you know it was a *moment of obligation*?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
7. **As you think about a possible role for yourself in creating social change, think about what inspires/draws/moves you. How might that link to your career or your next job?**

### **iii. Larger Than Life: Gall to Think Big**

When you have the *gall to think big*, you aren't afraid to go for it. Big problems in the world don't scare you. Rather, they motivate you. You are confident, solution oriented, and strategic as you tackle large issues. You operate beyond others' expectations of you and rely on your own internal compass to drive you forward. Most important, you understand that you are part of something larger than yourself. Answering these questions will help you think of your career as a way to take on big issues and problems about which you care deeply.

1. **Which social movements, from today or from any point in history, resonate the most with you? Why? Have you been involved in any work that you would define as part of a social movement?**





5. **What are a few issues in your community or our world that frustrate you? For example, maybe you don't understand why a certain system is so inefficient, or perhaps you wonder why something is the way it is when it could be so much better.**
  
6. **Choose one of the issues you identified in the last question and outline the current approaches being used to address it. Brainstorm one or two new ways you might go about attacking and even solving that problem.**
  
7. **This month, practice skepticism regularly. When you look at an issue or a problem, try to understand what's really going on and why things remain the way they are. Challenge yourself to ask "why" questions every day and see what you learn. Note how your approach to problems changes after you complete this exercise.**

#### **v. Visioning: Seeing Possibilities**

*Seeing possibilities* first requires that you not walk away from or past a problem. Once you are committed to working on that problem, use your imagination to create solutions and envision what a world free of that problem would look like. At its core, *seeing possibilities* is about having hope and turning hope into action by developing your own personal vision of change in the world. Work in the nonprofit sector can be very challenging. There is always more to be done. The tasks can seem endless and frustrating and the change incremental. But nonprofit work can also be exhilarating and fulfilling. It allows you to be involved in the important issues of the day and make a significant difference in the world. *Seeing possibilities* is the reason you get up

every morning and the reason we all believe in a better tomorrow. Here are some questions to explore.

- 1. Look back at what you have written thus far. Now answer: What do you wish for yourself, your community (however you define it), and the world? Include your thoughts on your professional career.**
  
- 2. Lay out the steps you need to take in order to achieve your professional vision.**
  
- 3. It takes most of us a lot of time to figure out what really captures our attention. Make a list of five experiences you will pursue in the next year to explore what your long-term focus might be.**
  
- 4. When historians write your biography, what do you want them to say about you? For what do you want to be remembered?**

**vi. Dare to Live Boldly**



