

Twenty Questions Exercise

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In 2020 our annual Cascadia quest has morphed into a question: how do I honor and fulfill my intention when I cannot physically get to the Skalitude valley under the sacred mountain? In these circumstances, each one of you must now switch focus from an outer journey to an inner one—which is where the depth of questioning happens, anyway.

In that spirit, we want to offer this exercise as a way to carry your intention onward through the art of asking questions. It's a writing exercise, maybe put it in the journal you were going to bring on the quest.

Step 1: In a paragraph or less write down your Intention for the quest. (It's okay to edit this into whatever clarity you have now.) Write as a declarative statement: **My intention for questioning is...**

Step 2: Directly below this statement vertically list the numbers 1-20. Then set a timer for seven minutes and ask yourself 20 questions about your intention: don't censor, just access random thoughts as quickly as you can write them down. For example:

1. How is my intention evolving?
2. If I can't go to the mountain, how do I bring the mountain to me?
3. What do I want to receive or offer from questioning?
4. What am I afraid of? Excited about? Longing for?
5. What allies do I have to support me now?
6. Etc. -keep going: let yourself be creative, out of the box thinking. (It's not essential that you get exactly 20 questions. This is about exercising the questioning capacity of the mind and accessing the most creative questions.)

Step 3: In your life, you have been asked to identify "who sends you/who receives you." Ask that person, or people, who had already agreed to hold you on the actual quest if they will witness your *questioning quest*. At an appropriate time, read them your Intention and ask them to come up with five original questions for you. Don't share your questions with them, just add theirs to the list you have: it's like gathering flowers and making a bouquet of questions.

Step 4: HARVEST the list. Put all of the questions—yours and others—in one list. Circle all of the questions that "jump out" as dynamic. Since you can only work with a few questions at a time, look at your circled list and chose the three that are the most intriguing to you. (You can work the whole list—just not all at once!) Write out those 3 questions on sticky notes and then post them around your home—on the mirror, the refrigerator, , whatever will bring them to your mind. Respond to them in the coming days. Write outside in Nature as much as you can.

The quest/ions are a guide for continuing on your journey.