

RESTRAINT ONE:

*Harmlessness (Ahimsa)*

Notes

**Live the Eternal Way (program textbook)**

Read pages 97-105

***Living the Eternal Way*, Chapter Seven:**

**Cultivating the Virtues—Harmlessness**

**1. Harmlessness and Your Relationship to Yourself**

Commit to noticing and set aside attempts at self-criticism as a spiritual practice. Strive for progress and inner peace, not perfection and outer approval. Write down any understanding you gain about self-criticism.

**2. Harmlessness and Your Relationship to Your Body**

Inventory your relationship to your body. Write down some ways that harmlessness practice would help your health and fitness.

### 3. Harmlessness and Your Relationship to Others

Be aware of your thoughts and actions toward others. Focus on positive and helpful speaking and let go of any urge to criticize or gossip. Write down any insights about your relationship to others.

### 4. Harmlessness and Your Relationship to the Planet

Be aware of the choices of your lifestyle. How do these choices affect life on our planet? Reflect on your current choices in the following areas and write down their impact.

Choices	Impact
Food	
Work/Career	
Transportation	
Shopping	
Waste and trash	
Living environment	

## 5. Harmlessness and Your Relationship to Your Inner Environment

An important aspect of the practice is to inquire into the motives and intentions behind harmful thoughts and behaviors. If the deep causes and underlying beliefs are not addressed, the behaviors will keep returning in ever-new variations.

Take some time this month when you notice a tendency toward being harmful to pray, contemplate, and inquire into the source of the urges. Helpful questions can be:

- *What am I really feeling?*
- *Do I have a personal need that requires my acknowledgment?*
- *What is the greater learning or higher truth in this situation?*

Through prayer, we ask for the truth of the situation to be revealed and offer God our willingness to change. Write about any clearer understanding that comes to you as you explore this process.

6. Change what you can and pray for assistance to change what you have been unable to change, to bring you into true harmlessness with yourself, others, and our world.