

SELF-ASSESSMENT PAPER

Purpose:

- 1) To explore the way in which your attitudes towards religion and the environment have been shaped by experience, institutions, and the people in your life;
- 3) To recognize specific religious or spiritual "messages" from your culture or your personal history which you carry in your orientation towards the environment;
- 3) To articulate the connections between these messages and your actions and behavior towards the environment.

Assignment:

- 1) Spend some time reflecting on the following questions to suggest the significant events, people, or institutions that have influenced your personal experiences and exposure to religion as they relate to the environment.

a) Significant People: How have your parents and other relatives or close friends influenced your ideas about religion and the environment? How has your particular upbringing, family history, and interaction with others affected how you think about religion/spirituality and environment issues?

b) Church: If you were raised with a religious tradition, did it promote a particular orientation or philosophy toward the environment or natural world? Did your church have services or projects related to the environment? How did you feel about your church's position on this topic?

c) School/College: Have any events at school or college been important in affecting your ethical or spiritual attitudes towards the environment, perhaps in promoting or refuting stereotypes?

d) Work: In the jobs you have held, have your co-workers or perhaps the customers affected your attitudes towards different religions or spiritual attitudes towards the natural world? Have you experienced situations of conflict with people of different opinions from you? How did you address the conflict?

- 2) Choose 3-5 significant events, "messages", or key people to discuss in depth. Consider the role of each event in helping to shape the attitudes you hold today. Interpret the relative importance of each aspect to you and show how these are related over time in your mind. Spend some time reflecting on these events or messages before you begin writing your paper.

- 3) Write a 6-7 page doublespaced paper summarizing what you experientially "learned" about the relationship between religion,/spirituality and the environment and how this has affected your behavior toward the natural world and other people.