Questionnaire 1: What is your worldview?

Use James W. Sire's set of eight questions to work on your own ideas. Choose the response (A–F) which comes closest to your current thinking, and then see Resource 2.4 online to check out a possible interpretation.

Questions	Some possible answers	Your choice
1. What is really real?	**A.** Material things we can touch or see, objects, possessions. Nothing else. **B.** Competition, struggle, hatred – these are the realities that truly shape our lives. **C.** The power and love of God, who creates and enlivens the universe. **D.** The material world, and that's enough for us to make a good life with our own wisdom. **E.** Mysterious, hard to know – but so what? Float free through life and be open to the spiritual. **F.** The ultimate reality lies behind all we see or sense. Its power is seen in the spiritual forces that shape life.	
2. What is the nature of the world around us?	**A.** It's best seen as a machine which runs by itself. **B.** It's a pointless and meaningless blip in an accidental universe. **C.** The world is God's creation, given in love to humanity as our home. **D.** It's a brilliant expression of the universal laws of cosmology, chance and evolution. **E.** It's a wonderful place to be born, even if the arguments about its purpose can't be settled. **F.** The material world comes out of the mind of the Ultimate, circles endlessly, and will return to its beginning.	
3. What is a human being?	**A.** Humans are a collection of biochemical elements without clear purpose, but very precious to each other. **B.** We're a random product of an accidental universe, without any higher purpose. **C.** We are children of God, created for a life of love. **D.** We're a remarkably evolved and evolving product of natural selection and the survival of the fittest. **E.** We are spiritual beings having a human experience. **F.** A spark of the divine flame living in a body that's temporary – but the spark never goes out.	
4. What happens when you die?	**A.** We will never know about life after death until it happens to us. **B.** We die and rot – what else could happen to a pointless being? **C.** We'll find ourselves directly in God's benevolent presence – some call this heaven. **D.** We continue in the memories of those who love us. Our material bodies return to the biological ground of the earth – where they started. We don't need to be scared of this. **E.** I don't know exactly, but all sorts of spiritual possibilities are out there. **F.** The divine spark leaves the body like worn-out clothes and then finds a new body to enliven.	
5. Why is it possible to know anything at all?	**A.** We have scientific skills, highly evolved, and the ability to work things out rationally. **B.** It isn't possible – and we don't know anything really. Knowledge is just an illusion, like all the 'good things' we are persuaded to believe in. **C.** We are created rational and live in a rational universe. God made the laws of the universe so we could work out what is true. **D.** The human brain has evolved in conditions where knowledge has survival value: we learn because it makes life easier. **E.** I don't know why human knowledge is possible. Maybe a great force behind our lives makes it like this. **F.** Through spiritual discipline and training, true knowledge can be discerned by the wise.	
6. How do we know what is right and wrong?	**A.** Thinking hard about happiness for others as well as for ourselves. **B.** We don't! 'Right' is just whatever the powerful people try to make the rest of us do for them. **C.** God is the source of the Good. Through our conscience, God shows us how to treat others with love. **D.** Humanity is the guide to ethics – we can tell from human relations, and from people's responses to our behaviour, what is good and right. **E.** Everyone can find a good path for themselves by being compassionate towards to their own feelings and the feelings of those they are close to. **F.** Live harmlessly, love the truth, do your duty – is this so difficult?	
7. What is the meaning of human history?	**A.** We exist to take in life's pleasures, to avoid life's pains, to think hard about the good and then do it. **B.** History is meaningless. As Shakespeare put it, life is a tale told by an idiot, signifying nothing. **C.** Life's purpose is to sing the song God gives you to sing, and sing it well, as part of God's overarching plan. **D.** Humans should always aim to do the greatest good for the happiness of the greatest number. **E.** There is no master plan. Everyone is unique. We can all find our own star to follow without making up a big 'meaning of life' for everyone else. **F.** We exist many times. We should take every chance to free the self from desires, free the ego from attachments, and look for liberation!	
8. What are my personal commitments in my own life?	**A.** I'm committed to thinking things through and doing what makes sense with my own life. **B.** It's important to accept that life doesn't actually make sense. Rage against the machine! **C.** God guides and directs humans wisely: I'm committed to trying to follow God's path. **D.** I'm committed to a future without religious superstition, and I hope reason will get us there! **E.** I'm wary of big commitments. I think I'd like to live by noticing myself floating in the tide. **F.** If you do good, then good will follow you. I'm committed to creating the best karma I can.	

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