

Partnership Attitude Self-Assessment

Assess your own attitudes in relation to domination and partnership.

Oneness of all existence

1. The Earth and everything in/on/above it is part of a single, self-regulating whole, which maintains itself through processes of cognition and communication. It is a living system that is constantly evolving, adjusting, and changing. The same is true of the entire universe.

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2. All that exists on Earth, including humanity, is part of a single interconnected, interdependent system which I, following Lovelock, Margulis and Sahtouris, refer to as Gaia, but which can also be called Nature.

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3. Human beings are part of Gaia/Nature, neither superior nor inferior to other life forms.

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4. No human being is separate and independent of other people or other beings. We are all interrelated and interdependent.

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5. My "individual self" is a small yet essential part of the "larger self" which is Gaia/Nature.

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6. My goal is to harmonize my individual self-interest and expression with that of the greater holon of Earth/Gaia/Nature.

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"Human nature"

7. People are by original nature kind and generous, and want to be useful and helpful.

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8. People do cruel things out of woundedness, ignorance, or lack of awareness, not innate meanness.

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9. Partnership is one of the most prevalent dynamics in all of Nature. Competition, domination, and violence exist but are not primary characteristics of Earth life.

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Sex, gender, society, and spirit

10. Women and men are natural allies, not “opposites.”

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11. Violence is not an inevitable part of human nature, nor of male nature.

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12. “Masculinity” and “femininity” are socially constructed and defined, not innate biological or psychological traits.

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13. The only biologically sex-determined roles are sperm donor, wet nurse, and birthgiver.

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14. Gender is an important concern for women and men, equally.

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15. The way a culture shapes the relationship between women and men is a model for all forms of relationship between categories of beings: adult/child, racial groups, social classes, human/animal, human/Earth.

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16. Human societies, like animal societies, took different organizational paths as they evolved: some oriented more toward partnership, others toward domination.

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17. Patriarchy is a relatively brief aberration in the many thousands of years of human existence.

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18. “The Creator” was conceived by the earliest human societies as female.

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19. Woman, sexuality, and spirituality were originally interlinked and inseparable, and the primary social value was giving and nurturing life and pleasure.

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20. Male-dominated monotheism, with its focus on dominator values, has led to cultures focused on control and fear of punishment or death.

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Power, privilege, and the "isms"

21. Race is a “mind-made” category. So is gender.

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22. Diversity is to be celebrated and encouraged rather than feared and suppressed.

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23. All of us are affected by “isms” whether we dominate others or are dominated by them.

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24. I, like every human, am a unique blend of privilege and disadvantage on the many continua of “isms.”

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25. Each of us has within us the capacity to do great good or great harm.

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26. Each of us has understandable and valid reasons – based in our cultural and family learning and individual experience – for the way we think and behave.

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Language, communication, and consciousness

27. Our consciousness reflects, is shaped, and constrained by our language and symbol systems.

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28. Mass consciousness can only evolve as quickly as language evolves. Most people can only think about concepts they have words for.

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29. We learn how to be, though the myths of our culture and the constraints of our language.

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30. Our conceptual systems and ways of communicating are based on metaphors that reflect our culture's view of power (either dominator or partnership oriented).

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31. All our society's institutions (religious, economic, social, educational) reflect this basic orientation toward either domination or partnership.

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32. Culture, consciousness, and language can all be changed (though not easily).

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Partnership is a survival need

33. The survival of humanity and many other forms of life on Earth depends on a shift away from domination toward partnership on all levels.

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34. Through conscious choices, human beings can further the partnership-oriented tendencies of evolution.

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