

This I Believe is an international project
engaging people in writing, sharing, and discussing the core values
and beliefs that guide their daily lives.



www.thisibelieve.org

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This I Believe: An invitation to people from all walks of life

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This I Believe is based a popular 1950s radio series of the same name hosted by acclaimed journalist Edward R. Murrow. Each day, Americans gathered by their radios to hear compelling essays from the likes of Eleanor Roosevelt, Jackie Robinson, Helen Keller, and Harry Truman, as well as corporate leaders, cab drivers, scientists, and housewives—anyone willing to distill into a few minutes the guiding principles by which they lived.

Since 2005, the revival of *This I Believe* has featured essays by prominent Americans such as Colin Powell, Gloria Steinem, Bill Gates, Robert Fulghum, and Yo-Yo Ma, as well as those of everyday citizens, including students, artists, scientists, writers, politicians, and even an astronaut.

A forum for thoughtful discourse

The *This I Believe* essay-writing exercise has been used in coffee houses, adult literacy programs, writer's groups, hospices, hospitals, diversity training, houses of worship, retirement homes, and prisons.

Libraries, colleges, newspapers, and public radio stations have been inspired to create their own local versions of our series.

And teachers and students across the world have widely embraced *This I Believe* as a personal essay writing assignment.

Get involved!

Tens of thousands of people have accepted our invitation to write their own statements of personal belief. Perhaps you, too, will be inspired to set pen to paper and finish the thought, "This I believe..."

Please see the following page for some tips on how to write your own *This I Believe* essay.

How to Write Your Own This I Believe Essay

We invite you to contribute to this project by writing and submitting your own statement of personal belief. We understand how challenging this is—it requires intense self-examination, and many find it difficult to begin. To guide you through this process, we offer these suggestions:

Tell a story: Be specific. Take your belief out of the ether and ground it in the events of your life. Your story need not be heart-warming or gut-wrenching—it can even be funny—but it should be *real*. Consider moments when your belief was formed, tested, or changed. Make sure your story ties to the essence of your daily life philosophy and to the shaping of your beliefs.

Be brief: Your statement should be between 350 and 500 words. The shorter length forces you to focus on the belief that is central to your life.

Name your belief: If you can't name it in a sentence or two, your essay might not be about belief. Rather than writing a list, consider focusing on one core belief.

Be positive: Say what you *do* believe, not what you *don't* believe. Avoid statements of religious dogma, preaching, or editorializing.

Be personal: Make your essay about you; speak in the first person. Try reading your essay aloud to yourself several times, and each time edit it and simplify it until you find the words, tone, and story that truly echo your belief and the way you speak.

Please submit your completed essay to the *This I Believe* project, by visiting the website: www.thisibelieve.org.

