

Aptitude Test for Crew Membership on Spaceship Earth

The Earth has been referred to as a spaceship because in a very real sense, it is. And as you might imagine, it has **passengers** along for the ride (the vast majority of us), and a **crew** comprised of two types of members; **functional and decorative**.

The functional members feed everybody and do what they can to keep the ship in good working condition, while the leaders steer the ship's course through what Albert Einstein called spacetime.

This quiz is designed to gauge your aptitude for functional crew membership. Your task is to designate in the blank space provided the best two-letter code that matches each of the activities listed.

“DC” (Damage Control - Minimizing the ecological harm being done),
“RM” (Remediation - Undoing the harm done to the best practical extent),
“MN” (Maintenance - keeping soil, water, and wildlife in good condition),
“UG” (Upgrade - enhancing the yield of flora, fauna, and fungi),
“LB” (Less Bad - a permanently reduced ecologically unsound behavior),
“XX” (Bad - increase or maintain ecologically unsound behavior).

Example: . UG Planting trees native to a region.

Hint: except for “XX”, each of these are indicative of environmental stewardship - leaving our place in as good as or in better shape than we found it, however, only the first four listed are deemed ‘regenerative’, or having an expected net-positive impact.

1. Discard vegetable table scraps onto the soil of a garden
2. Put solar panels on the roof of your house
3. Join a carpool
4. Help eradicate an invasive plant or animal species
5. Cleaning up an oil spill at the beach
6. Setting your pet dog or cat free into the wild
7. Recycle plastic food and beverage containers
8. Organizing a campaign to stop pollution discharge into a river
9. Build berms and swales on the slope of a watershed
10. Park the car and ride a bicycle to work
11. Switch to LED lighting in your home
12. Sell your house and buy a Tiny Home
13. Donate to Greenpeace for their eco-litigation work
14. Help build a pond using shovels, wheelbarrows and a backhoe
15. Remove trash from a creek bed
16. Replace your lawn with natural landscaping
17. Volunteer time at an organic vegetable farm
18. Build a rainwater storage tank to irrigate a food forest
19. Use goats for weed control in a hay meadow
20. Explain to children that they're a key part of an ecosystem
21. Use cats to control household pests (unpoisoned mice and roaches)
22. Speak out about a local polluter at a city council meeting
23. Use Roundup to kill weeds in the yard
24. Isolate yourself in an off-grid cabin as a prepper
25. Feed wild animals as a token of friendship

Now go back and circle the item numbers that would most likely take more than an hour or more to accomplish. Yes, it's time invested, but it's also an investment of energy as well since it takes energy (calories) to keep us alive. This is our time / energy spent.

When we use the term 'spending' we're usually talking about time, energy or money. We trade, i.e. spend or exchange something we have, a surplus, for something we want or need. Supply and demand - simple economics.

And while we're speaking of economics, energy, and money, we mustn't forget that our man-made economy is a subset of the larger Natural one. And the regenerative, energy-based economy, the crew's energy output is an emerging subset of both. Listed below are the answers to the items I had in mind as I wrote them.

DC: 8, 13, 22

RM: 4, 5, 15

MN: 1, 17, 19, 20, 21

UG: 9, 14, 15, 16, 18, 20

LB: 2, 3, 7, 10, 11, 12, 24

XX: 6, 23, 25

Do you agree? Whether you do or not is less important than your getting a feel for the subtle distinction between spaceship passengers, however frugal, and functional crew membership.

If you agree with 20 out of 25, (80%) then I'd say you have a strong aptitude for it. And if so, you might be interested in participating in a project described in a companion piece I wrote to go along with this one.

It's about measuring the energy spent on regenerative human efforts into a tradable numerical commodity called **Regenerative Energy Tokens** (RETs). They're a bit like cryptocurrency and a bit like carbon credits, only better because, as their name implies, they have a regenerative pedigree.

Collectively, our species is extracting resources faster than Nature can replenish them. I don't think it's a human nature thing, but a human system thing. And our systems can be tweaked; that's what the companion paper is about. If you're curious, you can check it out [here](#).

Meanwhile, thanks for taking the quiz.

Elton Hammock

ehammock50@gmail.com

Austin, TX : Sept., 2025