

LIFE PATHS EXERCISE

In this exercise, you will chart out three different possible life paths.

- I. **First Path:** What is your current or “default life”? If you just continued on your normal trajectory, what would you do?
- II. **Second Path:** What is your “back-up plan”? If the first path was no longer an option, what would you do?
- III. **Third Path:** What is your “wild card plan”? If the first two paths were unavailable, and financial and social status issues no longer mattered, what would you do?

Name each path with a creative 5-10 word title. Then explain:

- **What** is the path? What will you literally do, and where? How will you carry it out?
- **Why** this path? What stands out or makes you excited? How does it connect to your strengths and interests?

You will then rate the paths on a scale of 1-10 for each of the following criteria. Explain briefly as well.

- **Flow:** How excited does this path make you? How much energy and enthusiasm do you feel as you reflect on this plan?
- **Values:** How well does this path align with your values? How does it connect to your wider understanding of meaning and life?
- **Purpose:** How much of a sense of meaning and mission does this path give you? How well does it match your gifts with the needs of the world?

N.B.: This is meant to be a helpful brainstorming exercise, not an evaluation or judgement on which path is “best” or “the right choice.” Each person has many possible paths to a good life. This exercise can help jump-start a more creative and nuanced perspective on your career choices.

LIFE PATH 1: YOUR CURRENT PLAN

Title: _____

<p>What is the plan? What will you literally do, and where? How will you carry it out?</p>	<p>Why this plan? What stands out or makes you excited? How does it connect to your strengths and interests?</p>

<u>Alignment Criteria</u>	<u>Rating (0-10)</u>	<u>Explanation</u>
<p>Flow: How excited does this plan make you? How much energy and enthusiasm do you feel as you reflect on this plan?</p>		
<p>Values: How well does this path align with your values? How does it connect to your wider understanding of meaning and life?</p>		
<p>Purpose: How much of a sense of meaning and mission does this path give you? How well does it match your gifts with the needs of the world?</p>		



LIFE PATH 2: YOUR BACK-UP PLAN

Title: _____

<p>What is the plan? What will you literally do, and where? How will you carry it out?</p>	<p>Why this plan? What stands out or makes you excited? How does it connect to your strengths and interests?</p>

<u>Alignment Criteria</u>	<u>Rating (0-10)</u>	<u>Explanation</u>
<p>Flow: How excited does this plan make you? How much energy and enthusiasm do you feel as you reflect on this plan?</p>		
<p>Values: How well does this path align with your values? How does it connect to your wider understanding of meaning and life?</p>		
<p>Purpose: How much of a sense of meaning and mission does this path give you? How well does it match your gifts with the needs of the world?</p>		

LIFE PATH 3: YOUR WILD CARD PLAN

Title: _____

<p>What is the plan? What will you literally do, and where? How will you carry it out?</p>	<p>Why this plan? What stands out or makes you excited? How does it connect to your strengths and interests?</p>

<u>Alignment Criteria</u>	<u>Rating (0-10)</u>	<u>Explanation</u>
<p>Flow: How excited does this plan make you? How much energy and enthusiasm do you feel as you reflect on this plan?</p>		
<p>Values: How well does this path align with your values? How does it connect to your wider understanding of meaning and life?</p>		
<p>Purpose: How much of a sense of meaning and mission does this path give you? How well does it match your gifts with the needs of the world?</p>		

REFLECTION

After charting out all three life paths, take some time to reflect on the process. Answer any or all of the below questions. We recommend sharing your ideas with friends and family as well.

- What plan excites you the most? Which one drains or bores you to think about?
- What traits do the paths have in common?
- What obstacles would you face in the different paths, and how could you overcome them?
- How can you test these paths out?
- How could you adapt parts of these paths into your current life, or into the other paths?
- Reflect in general on the exercise. What have you learned?