

# CAREERS



## A Brainwise Guide to Finding Fulfillment at Work



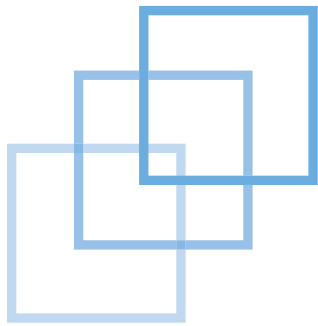
GROUP for the  
ADVANCEMENT of  
PSYCHIATRY

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## Birth → School → ... what's next?

Optimists say Life. Pessimists say Work, or perhaps death by student loans.

Your choices after graduating high school or college aren't actually that stark – you **can** strike a fulfilling balance and enjoy both life and work. Still, you face two big questions: what will you do? And how will you find your way there?

This book helps you answer those questions. We sought out and spoke at length with individuals who love their work and lead lives that deeply satisfy them. We listened to how they found their way to that good, balanced place and amplified it with key findings from psychology and neuroscience. We distilled this knowledge into its essential wisdom: seven core behaviors that lead to career satisfaction as well as emotional and psychological health.

Each chapter in this book discusses one of the behaviors that allow you to thrive – not just survive – in the world of work. Each behavior mirrors aspects of essential brain function, which truly impressed us. (As psychiatrists, of course, we have a special interest in the brain.) While this isn't a book about neuroanatomy, we do try to show you briefly why we think it's no surprise that these **specific** behaviors lead to fulfillment: your brain is **naturally wired** to do these things:

***This is not your brain – this is brain coral***

**CHANGE**

**APPRECIATE**

**RISK**

**EXPLORE**

**ENDURE**

**REFLECT**

**SACRIFICE**



PHOTO BY LASZLO S. ILYES



***Essential wisdom!***

## CHANGE

*If we don't change, we don't grow. If we don't grow, we aren't really living.*

Gail Sheehy

### ***Evolution by Inches or Revolution by Miles?***

Reflecting on your life to this point, you can certainly see that as a person you have evolved and changed substantially. You have grown physically, emotionally and intellectually. The story of you began not long ago, and each day parts of your story were written, re-written and reinforced. The same way that rivers shape land, carving canyons and changing course, your life experience built and altered the story of you (even in unexpected ways). Your sense of your self has been and will continue to be changed because of your ever-growing experiences.

We found that fulfilled people shared an essential trait: they *change*, and they do so happily. They accepted external change as a fundamental reality: life cannot be completely controlled. They also quickly initiated change themselves when things weren't what they wanted. Sometimes that meant small shifts, like changing dealerships while working as an auto mechanic. And those small shifts often revealed something more – a path that felt increasingly fulfilling. One mechanic we interviewed evolved from the bottom of the totem pole at a car dealership up through supervising mechanic, and then into designing and fabricating parts for an entirely new type of motorcycle. Incremental change led to his fulfillment.

Sometimes necessary changes aren't so small and require leaps of faith. We interviewed Ellen, who had “basically drifted” from undergraduate study into law school. When she decided to leave behind years of legal training and move into financial services, she made a revolutionary (instead of evolutionary) change:

Snake River Canyon, over which Evel Knievel unsuccessfully attempted to jump using a rocket propelled motorcycle in 1974.

That isn't the type of revolutionary change or leap of faith we recommend.



PHOTO BY CHADH

*"I would say the thing that frightened me the most about being a lawyer, being at that law firm, was knowing that I didn't like it and I didn't have a particular skill that stood out. I just saw myself as a pedestrian lawyer who was going to be working from 9 to 5 just slogging it out...The work just didn't really grab me, so it just felt like a job. After changing to finance, strangely, I never felt like I had a job."*

Ellen's story also illustrates two basic types of change: passive and active. She didn't particularly regret going to law school itself, but the passive "drifting" into the field prepared her for a "job" she didn't particularly like. You have to be on the lookout for passive change – it might affect you in ways you don't want. In hindsight, Ellen wished she'd more thoroughly examined what lay ahead of her and acted sooner. Once she was aware of the situation, she tried actively changing, evolving in small ways by focusing more on corporate and securities law, but being a lawyer still left her feeling unengaged. Ellen again had to reassess and decided that in order to happily *work* she would need to make a **dramatic** (and active) change out of her *job*.

### ***Even the Word "Career" Has Had to Embrace Change***

A Ford GT40 on a career course at Laguna Seca Raceway in Monterey, CA.



PHOTO BY STUART SEEGER

*Career*, the word itself, has ties to your story. Originally a career was a "road or racetrack for vehicles." The term comes from Latin *carrus*, "wheeled vehicle," something that transports cargo from one place to another. Your career transports you from one version of yourself to the next ever changing and ever-growing self.

With respect to work, we travel a road with many turns – both expected and unexpected, chosen and unchosen – all of which shape our identity. Work is central to our lives. Work shapes who we are and how we live. The work we do, along with our attitude, is reflected in our physical, mental and spiritual well-being.



During our lifetime, most of us will work at least 40 to 45 years with 250 workdays per year. While not everyone works the average eight-hour day, the typical person will spend at least 80,000 hours at work. According to the best estimates, that time will be spent in at least fourteen different jobs in at least three distinct careers.

These numbers highlight why it's so critical to prepare yourself for the inevitable twists that will come your way and to create a career that has vitality, meaning and value. Compounding this challenge is the impending complexity of your course. Workers once moved through their personal careers with the steadfast determination of a marathoner powering through a demanding course. The route was long and required great endurance, but the path appeared clear and the destination apparent. Times are different now.

Your capacity to tolerate external and internal pressures, adapt to new jobs and roles and understand how work changes you as a person will be critical to your success. Work will change you. 80,000 hours has a way of making an impact.



PHOTO BY JOHN M. CARVER

Roberto, who'd grown up quite poor in Italy, had worked diligently and achieved significant wealth that he credited to luck, effort and values from his upbringing. Growing up without money, he'd learned how to tolerate frustration, deal with envy, and appreciate non-material gifts (such as sincere expression of caring) from friends and family. The financial rewards from his successful career inevitably meant his children grew up somewhat differently than he did. This made him worry about whether his children would learn those same values that he felt made him a good

and successful person. Work had changed Roberto's circumstances quite dramatically, seemingly for the better (money must be good, right?), but it also created an unexpected problem: increased uncertainty about the future of his family.

Roberto found it difficult to reach out for help in facing some of his negative feelings about his success. Eventually, through conversations with friends, mentors and counselors as well as intense introspection and self-reflection, however, he accepted the difficult reality that success had changed him and his situation in both positive and negative ways.

### ***Fully Feeling = Fulfilled***

During your working years, there's more in motion than just your career. As with Roberto's case above, career impacts life. The opposite holds true as well: life impacts career. You will both make and be confronted with personal changes: in relationships, health, achievement and living situation, just to name a few. Some changes will feel positive, some will feel negative and some will be complicated, bringing up a range of different feelings. How you approach the feelings evoked by change matters.

A positive mental attitude can be helpful, but only if it doesn't cause you to be out of touch with reality. Not experiencing negative emotion (trying to deny there's any downside to a change) ultimately limits your capacity to fully process the change. Fulfilled people consciously feel **all** the relevant emotions that arise from change.

This double exposure nicely captures the up-and-down, sometimes unexpected feelings change can evoke.



PHOTO BY RICHARD P J LAMBERT

Fully feeling is not the easiest task – experiencing and processing negative emotion can be hard work and can take time. But it's essential work in finding fulfillment. Tuning into the many different emotional aspects of change helps create a more

realistic context for coping with and capitalizing on a new situation. It gives you the capacity to handle any large negative change in a balanced way, leading to a life of more acceptance than grief.

***Give Me Ambiguity, or Give Me Something Else***

Fulfilled people whom we interviewed were good at tolerating ambiguity – the in-between state when it's uncertain what might change or what the full impact of a change might mean for them. They also knew when to *stop trying to control a change* and when to *start trying to accept it*.

Your brain is fundamentally a sense-making device, and making correct sense of the world is what (from an evolutionary perspective) keeps you alive long enough to pass along your genes. Information about your environment arrives in your brain through the senses – vision, hearing, touch, smell, taste. Your brain interprets that information and determines, based in part on prior experience, whether or not action is necessary. Research indicates that a particular set of structures in your brain (referred to as the “default mode network”) assess if change has happened and both mentally and physically primes you to address either the resulting problems or opportunities.

***“Our evolutionary history tells us this: The brain appears to be designed to solve problems relating to surviving in an unstable outdoor environment.”***

***John Medina, Ph.D. in  
Brain Rules***

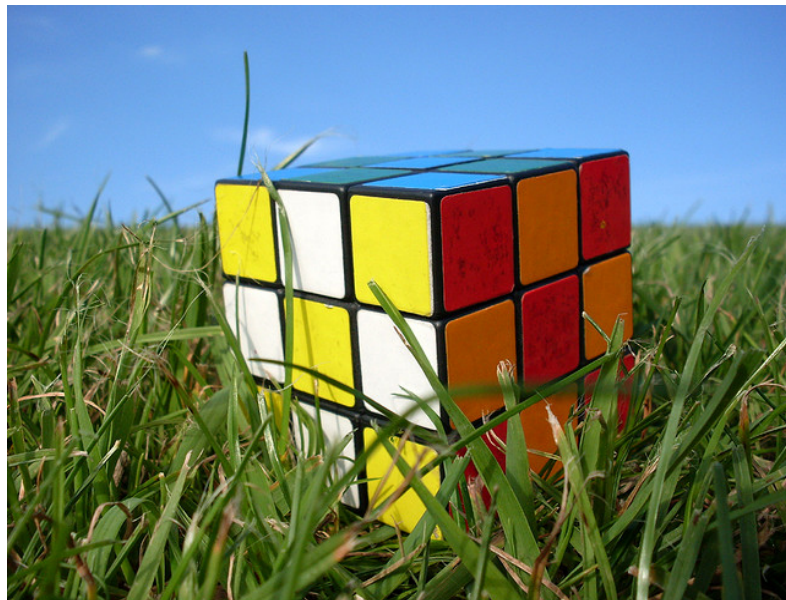


PHOTO BY THREEHEADEDMONKEY

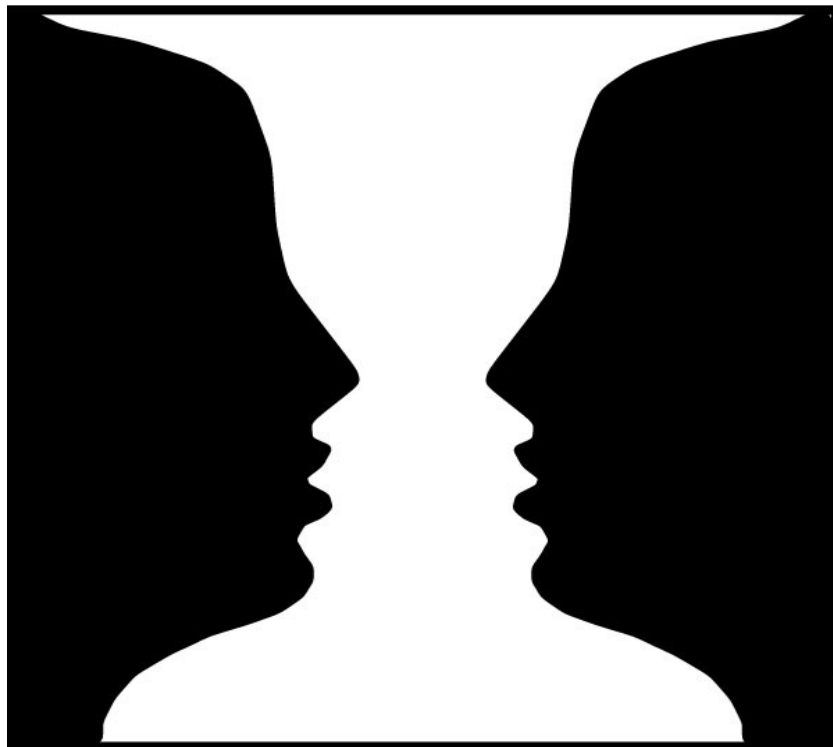
Sometimes, though, there's no clear sense that a change will resolve into a solvable problem or an opportunity of which you can take advantage. These ambiguous situations, by definition, don't lend themselves to easy interpretation and the ongoing uncertainty can be increasingly stressful as time goes on. Brief periods of ambiguity, like “Will I be able to pass this test?” may be stressful, but the short duration of stress effects on your body isn't cause for concern. Longer-term periods of ambiguity, like Roberto's above, do create the potential for health problems. Too much stress over too much time puts your health at risk. So having a higher



capacity to tolerate ambiguity means a lower chance of stress-related health problems.

Some people, having grown up receiving enough consistent, attentive and reliable parenting or caregiving, have an internalized sense that things will be alright, one way or another. That's referred to as a "secure attachment style" and it serves as a buffer against ambiguity and stress. It also makes it easier, as it did for Roberto, to reach out for help when stressful changes are occurring because prior experience has been that connecting with other people feels reassuring.

Not everyone has that sense of security in the face of change, unfortunately. Other tools must be learned to help tolerate ambiguity. One learnable tool is seeing multiple perspectives. As an example, what do you see in the figure below?



Some see a vase. Some see two faces looking at each other. Obviously, this drawing (known as Rubin's Vase) contains both representations, but your brain sees one at a time, depending upon whether you're attending to black or white as figure or ground, respectively. Shifting your attention allows you to see situations differently. Practicing this type of cognitive flexibility enables you to manage ambiguity more easily, as you can then imagine more than one perspective or outcome. Ideally you'll be able to see positives as well as any negatives in the uncertainties of change, reducing your stress.

Doing the same thing over and over again and expecting a different result is one definition of insanity. (Again, as psychiatrists we have an interest in this sort of

thing.) Insanity with regards to change tends to manifest as attempt after failed attempt to control the uncontrollable. The most fulfilled and successful people seemed best able to avoid pointless repetitive efforts to try to change things they couldn't. When attempts to manage a change first failed to yield the expected result, they didn't just try again – they stopped to analyze the causes and looked very closely at whether those causes were controllable or not. When things appeared outside their span of influence, they fairly quickly moved into trying to accept and adapt to change.

### ***Essential Wisdom About Change***

- Your awareness and attitude about changes both large and small matter – passively being changed in situations that you could instead actively steer can have negative life and career consequences.
- 80,000+ hours of work experience inevitably shapes not only the trajectory of your career, but also the person you will ultimately become. Coping with those changes is a stressful process at times and you need to be open to asking for help.
- Fully feeling the emotions that arise from change leads to less stress and a smoother adaptation to the new situation.
- To manage change in an emotionally and physically healthy way, work to improve your tolerance for ambiguity by viewing situations from multiple perspectives and practicing identifying when change must be accepted.

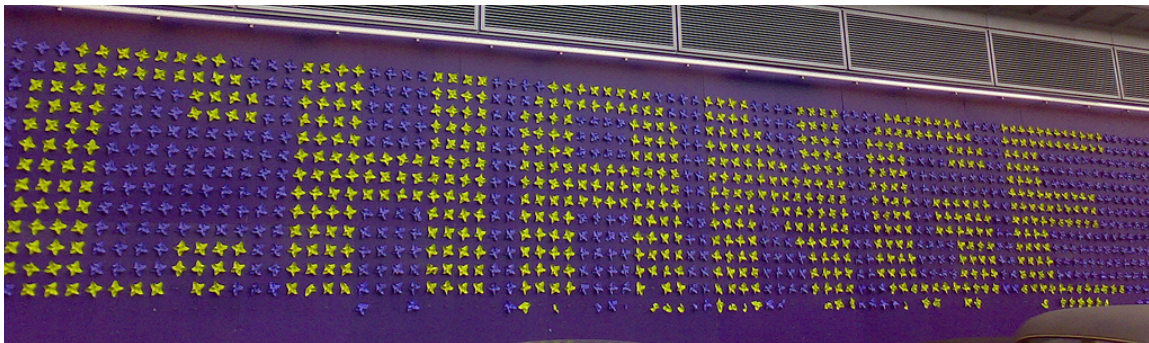


PHOTO BY DOMINIC CAMPBELL

## APPRECIATE

*In the greater game we strive not for winning, but to extend our personal boundaries of who we are and what we can be, not as much to become faster as to become more... to become the best we can be... to create ourselves in motion as a celebration of our creaturehood.*

Lorraine Moller, marathon runner

### **Who Are You? Who! Who! ... Who! Who!**

Your own “creaturehood,” your sense of yourself, drives your journey through life and career. Shaped continuously by change, you constantly grow as a person. Fulfilled people pay close attention to this process and *appreciate* the growth in their lives, recognizing the subtle differences between the **real**, the **ideal** and the **theoretical**. The real you is here and now, how you are, for better or worse. The ideal you embodies your goals and ambitions. The theoretical you holds possible paths you could take to move from real to ideal. The gaps between those three states of being guide the decisions you need to make to find a career path that allows you to like what you do and do what you like.



PHOTO BY PAWEŁ LOJ

Sorting out what's needed to move closer to your ideal requires time and attention – slowing down to clearly see yourself and the people around you as well as the constraints of each situation. To appreciate the good qualities as well the difficulties, you must consider factors that are hard to confront as well as those easily overlooked or taken for granted. Seeing the good and the not-so-good in yourself



means taking a fearless outside perspective, getting beyond your own point of view. To appreciate the gaps takes substantial effort. You've got to ask good questions.

### ***Know Thy Selves***

Why ask searching questions of yourself? A targeted question is an answer in disguise. Asking about your real, ideal and theoretical self opens up channels that may have been previous hidden.

#### **Questions to appreciate your (current) real self**

- What are my current personal needs and goals?
- What values are important to me as a person?
- What do I enjoy doing?
- What am I good at doing?
- Are there personal strengths not identified from the above questions and what are they?
- Who do I love and want in my life?
- How do I behave in relationships with colleagues, friends, family and loved ones?
- How do the behaviors of others in my relationships affect my sense of myself?



PHOTO BY JIM KUHN

#### **Questions to appreciate your ideal self**

- What values do I want or need to change?
- Which goals make me a better self?
- What values or experiences do I want in my personal life (physical, emotional, intellectual, spiritual)?
- What values or experiences do I want in my relationships (colleagues, friends, family and loved ones)?
- What values or experiences do I want in my career (power, influence, building an organization, helping others, financial security, giving back to the community, sharing ideas)?
- How (and for what) do I want to be remembered (and by whom)?



PHOTO BY LARRY KWAN

**Questions to appreciate your theoretical selves**

- What are the many possible paths that exist to move me from real to ideal?
- What elements of chance are involved on those paths?
- How much of the path can I control or reasonably influence?
- Am I risk-oriented or do I play it safe?
- How might my needs change over time?
- What tradeoffs (between self, family and relationships, and work) am I willing to make to achieve the transformation from real to ideal?
- What changes on this path are irreversible or irremediable, and can I accept closing those doors?



PHOTO BY DEREK PURDY

Answering these questions realistically and as accurately as you can is critical to finding success in the future. Those people we spoke with who had found their way to fulfillment didn't just ask themselves these questions – they asked other people for their opinions as well. Why?

***“Only the Shallow Know Themselves”***

Oscar Wilde said it best, above. No matter how well we think we know ourselves, inevitably there will be blind spots that can trip us up. We can't see every aspect of ourselves accurately. Ideally, we're able to know what we know and know what we don't know. But realistically, that can be difficult to sort out.

Our internal landscape is more complicated than the external factors influencing it. We are an entanglement of polar opposites. We are rational and irrational at the same time. We are mature and childlike under different circumstances, whether we are career beginners or Chairman of the Board. We see the big picture but get sidetracked by the minutiae. We harbor bold ideas, but can lack the risk and assertive power to make them happen. We are content one moment and dissatisfied the next. We like action and no action. Sometimes we plan. Other times we act impulsively. We are generous and compassionate as well as stingy and indifferent. We like sameness, order and control. But we also like spontaneity, variety, challenge and excitement. We have enough but we crave more. And even if we appear calm, steady and very much in control, we may be struggling internally with a maelstrom of doubt. But through all of these contrasting thoughts, feelings and actions there still exists a core of self that has a consistency that guides us.

That core steadiness in you still requires some help. You need other people to help you see your blind spots in the same way that you need more than rearview and

side mirrors to assess if the other lane is clear when you're driving and want to change lanes. To change lanes you need to change perspectives: when driving you either turn your head and look over your shoulder at the next lane or you ask a passenger if he or she can see that it's all clear. (Or, you could just swerve into the other lane and risk an accident...but that's obviously a bad idea.)

You need other people to see your blind spots, but every person who mirrors your real self back has his or her own blind spots



PHOTO BY NIMISH GOGRI

Other people can provide different perspectives of your strengths and weaknesses and what might be good to consider as ideals for yourself. They may have great ideas about theoretical paths to move from real toward ideal. Importantly, however, other people have *their own* blind spots and may or may not be able to appreciate every aspect of yourself about which you're asking. Evaluate each person's capacity to see each part of you clearly. Does it seem this other person has successfully navigated the challenge you face? What is this person's ideal for you? Does what's being said about you add up? If something sounds unusual, ask the person what factors into that assessment and check with others to see if they have the same experience of you. Fulfilled people make judicious use of other perspectives to better appreciate themselves.

### ***Finding Your Own Flow***

One important way to increase the chance of finding happiness in your work is to focus on these two questions about your real self: what am I *good* at? And what do I *like to do*? These two questions are not the same, and they help reveal dangerous career gaps:

- A person **likes** doing something but is **not good at it**, despite sufficient time spent learning and practicing. This is a blueprint for continuous anxiety, cautiousness and avoidance behavior (see negative effects of stress, above).



- A person may be **good** at something but **doesn't like to do it**. People who let themselves be passively changed often find themselves in this trap. This can be an easy path to take: "I'm good at chemistry, so I became a chemist. But I hate working in a lab." Skill combined with a lack of passion is a perfect recipe for burnout at work – low morale, procrastination, inability to stay focused and discouragement.

In both situations above there's a serious misalignment between what the person likes (enjoyment) and what he or she does well (competence). No amount of struggle will bridge this gap, leading to disappointment, frustration and potential emotional or physical difficulty.

		<i>Enjoyment</i>	
		<i>Not much</i>	<i>Very much</i>
<i>Competence</i>	<i>High</i>	<b>Burnout</b>	<b>Fulfillment</b>
	<i>Low</i>	<b>Need a New Job</b>	<b>Anxiety</b>

On the other hand, a situation where **liking connects with competence and commitment** can create FLOW, a term coined by psychologist Mihaly Csíkszentmihályi. (And, no, we're not going to help you pronounce his name...use the Web!) You can think of flow as *extreme* fulfillment.

Flow has all of the following characteristics:

- Clear goals with a high levels of challenge and skill required
- High degree of concentration with deep absorption into the activity
- No sense of self-consciousness
- Time passes quickly
- Success and failure are quickly apparent (so adjustments can be made)
- The activity is neither perceived as too easy nor too difficult
- The person feels a sense of control over the situation or activity
- The activity is intrinsically rewarding and feels effortless
- No awareness of bodily needs – one can reach a point of great hunger or fatigue without realizing it

The message is clear. Determine what you *like*. Find out if you're *good* at it. And *follow through* with it. That's a great starting point for a successful career.

***One Way to Know This Book is Written by Psychiatrists: Dream Sequence***

*Alex is a talented person in his senior year at a Midwestern university. He has always been hard on himself. No matter how much he's accomplished (and it's been considerable) it's never been enough. As he prepares to graduate he looks around his community, compares himself to a number of his classmates and friends and finds himself desperately wanting. He feels he's not as accomplished as his buddy Jack the math whiz, or Steve the three-sport varsity jock, or Andy his entrepreneurial friend who is already making his mark at a startup company.*

*"All I am," he sadly says to himself, "is an ordinary guy, nothing special, with no definitive way of knowing what to do after graduation."*

*Heavily burdened by these disappointments and his perceived lack of finding his niche, he goes to bed one night and has a startling dream. Lady Gaga approaches him and asks a simple but powerful question. "Alex, you worry too much about not being like your friends. You constantly compare yourself to others and always come out on the short end of the stick. I have one question I'd like you to answer straight up: Why can't you **appreciate** what you have rather than focus on what you lack?"*



PHOTO BY ROBERT COUSE-BAKER

*He awakens quickly, heart racing and full of fear. Lady Gaga? He mulls over the question and starts tallying up his assets: smart, hard working, creative and with a talent in design. He immediately appreciates the meaning of Gaga's question and feels an enormous weight lift off his chest, followed by a blinding insight. He realizes that his task in life is not to mirror the special skills of Jack or Steve or Andy, but to use his personal resources to carve out what he is capable of doing and to find that which is meaningful and rewarding to him. And then he appreciates something even more impressive. In the history of the world there has only been **one Alex**. And not even his awesome trio of his friends could be an Alex.*

Anna Quindlen, the writer, expresses this thought beautifully: “The thing that’s really hard and really amazing is giving up on being perfect or being like others. It is beginning the work of being yourself.”

Fulfilled people don’t measure their self worth by *comparing* themselves to others (though clearly others can give feedback on our real selves and provide models with which we can imagine our ideal and theoretical selves). Fulfilled people find self worth *reflected* in their relationships and *residing* within themselves. Appreciate your self from the outside and the inside.

***Essential Wisdom About Appreciate***

- Being aware of the gaps between your real, ideal and theoretical selves charts the courses you can take to reach fulfillment in your career.
- Like everyone, you have blind spots that cause inaccurate assessment of your selves, and the only way around that is to find in other people more accurate mirrors – your relationships with others are essential to seeing your real self.
- Flow is the fulfilled state where you feel committed, competent and happy.
- Appreciate the whole of your self, for better and worse – you’re unique, which means you have a singular combination of strengths, weakness and experiences.



PHOTO BY ROBBIE WAGNER

## RISK

*Try again. Fail again. Fail better.*

Samuel Beckett

### ***Chances Are Your Chances Are***

Fulfilled people seem to intuitively understand that “hap-piness” shares a common root with the words “hap-less” and “hap-hazard.” Luck and chance play an intrinsic role in life and they understand that happiness is not a given. They take a mature perspective regarding the uncontrollable ups and downs of life, riding the waves as well as they can, regardless of whether they hit a crest or trough. Importantly, they don’t mistake those waves as solely emanating from themselves. Some things you can control, some you can’t. Since chance dictates aspects of life, fulfilled people choose to make their own luck as much as possible. They *risk* in considered and thoughtful ways, stepping outside their comfort zones to pursue new relationships and career interests.

Once the ride  
begins, you control  
it the best you can.



PHOTO BY DANIEL FLOWER

Elaine, an occupational medicine specialist described such a scenario:

*When I was finishing my M.B.A. and getting ready to return to medical school for my last two years of study, I decided I would like a summer job working for a hospital corporation. Back then, these publicly traded companies that owned and operated hospitals were kind of a new concept. I wrote several letters to human resource directors of different companies explaining my background and asked if I could work there for the summer. They all wrote back, telling me to reapply for a job after I completed my medical training. Frustrated, I picked up the phone and called the CEO of one of the companies. To my surprise, he took the call. He was fascinated by my story, being a medical student who was just completing an MBA. He offered me a job on the phone. I worked as a special assistant to him. What a fantastic job it turned out to be!*



Elaine risked shame from rejection, perhaps, but knew she'd make it through that feeling if it happened. For her, the potential growth from the new experience was a reward that far outweighed the risk. How do our brains do the math of risk / reward processing?

### ***Risk, Reward, and a Detour on the Road to Fulfillment***

Risk runs in tandem with your progression from real to ideal self. Each theoretical self includes inherent risk. Recent research indicates that your brain is wired to assess risk from three distinct perspectives:

- Your own imperfect foresight (even after learning all you can)
- Uncertainty about outcome probabilities
- Unexpected uncertainty.

#### **He's Not a Neuroscientist, But He's on It!**

*There are known knowns; these are things we know we know. We also know there are known unknowns; that is to say we know there are some things we do not know. But there are also unknown unknowns – the ones we don't know we don't know.*

- Former United States Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld discussing the risk of Iraq having weapons of mass destruction



PHOTO BY MEDILL DC

Your brain also weighs a situation's reward potential using multiple systems, the most well-known of which is clearly involved in motivation, love and addiction. Precisely how the brain balances risk and reward is complicated and not completely clear. Studies show a range in how people approach risk – some are more impulsive and open to risk, others less so.

Fulfilled people we spoke with also had a range in risk tolerance, but notably they all risked intelligently, overcoming fear and taking a longer term view of their decisions. They understood that growth intrinsically involves risk and risk always has a certain amount of associated fear. Feeling too much fear is a sign of one of three things:

- You haven't gathered enough information about the situation to assess it.
- The situation may really be too risky.
- You may have a blind spot of sorts and overestimate negative outcomes, thus overvaluing fear.

If you overvalue fear (especially of typically non-fatal things such as embarrassing yourself or failing), staying in your comfort zone will be very seductive. The routine appears safe. You could postpone risk until you think you have full knowledge of the

situation and then act with certainty. It might seem a winning strategy, but it's not. Waiting until you have full knowledge (or think you do) may mean the world has passed you by or that time expires on a golden opportunity. In today's rapidly changing workplace, you must risk change. You don't want to stay stuck in your comfort zone.

It may be okay to spend limited time in the comfort zone. But at 9, DJ Frank kicks you out. That's a good thing if you seek fulfillment.



PHOTO BY MARCO REPOLA

*Steve was a good student, a responsible member of his family and a prodigious worker. His family owned a successful manufacturing business that had been passed down through three generations. At one point in his life, taking over the business had been his dream. When college exposed him to a myriad of exciting career options, however, he realized he had lost the passion he initially felt for the family business. After graduation, he faced a choice.*

*On the one hand, the family business could be the right thing to do – it was expected and safe, he would make a good living, and he would have the respect of his family and community. Besides, he had been the beneficiary of his family's support and didn't want to disappoint them. On the other hand, he had strong desire to be his own man, go to the West Coast, and try his hand at writing screenplays – something he had been secretly working on for several years. And that thought excited him.*

*After evaluating his options, he chose to enter the family business. Everyone in the family was happy. He worked at the company for two years, bored and faking his interest. Each day was like walking through molasses. Time dragged. Finally, with great trepidation, he sat down with his father and explained his decision to leave the business and risk screenwriting as his career.*

"Courage is resistance to fear, mastery of fear, not absence of fear"  
– Mark Twain, Clam Hut regular

Overvaluing fear (primarily of disappointing his family) unfortunately caused Steve to make a decision that held him back from following a potential path to his ideal self. He regretted that decision in hindsight but was glad he hadn't continued working for the family business. While it was initially a comfort zone, the toll of the work (which lacked most of the characteristics of FLOW) on him became increasingly difficult to handle.

### ***How the Fulfilled Prefer Their Failure Served***

Fulfilled people challenge themselves and push themselves beyond their comfort zone in order to reach their goals. As they risk, they recognize they might make mistakes along the way, but fear of mistakes doesn't hold them back. They have the courage and confidence to put forth their best effort and are focused on succeeding instead of worried about failing. A mistake along the way or a larger failure causes them only temporary disappointment. When a reasonable risk doesn't pay off, fulfilled people analyze what went wrong and try to learn from mistakes to increase the likelihood of success next time.

Similarly, when you stick your neck out, try for something you want, and fail to achieve it, all is not lost. You need to reflect on what happened, assimilate the lessons learned from the experience and try again, provided the risk of trying again is not too great. The initial risk may have given you additional information you need to be successful on your next attempt, or make it easier for you to risk again in the future.

How to best view a risk that didn't lead to the expected reward.



PHOTO BY PAUL KELLER

When the United States set out to launch satellites into space, the first few sputtered back to Earth, never coming near orbit. Each successive attempt yielded more detailed knowledge about what adjustments were needed and eventually the

satellites reached space. Does that mean the early launches were a failure? Not at all – the initial mistakes, mishaps and missteps successfully set the stage for future space shots, including manned travel into space.

***So, Are You Risk-oriented or Do You Play It Safe?***

We ask you to consider this question in order to appreciate your theoretical selves. Because some careers are more risky than others, it's important to know so you can match a career path with your capacity to risk. Each industry and each company within an industry carries distinct risk profiles.

So how badly do you really need bait? A classic risk-reward conundrum!



PHOTO BY JUSTIN HENRY

Becoming a scientist for a biotech startup that is developing a new drug to treat AIDS involves many risks. The drug's success depends on how the chemical characteristics of the compound will interact with individuals infected with AIDS. There are plenty of known unknowns and many unknown unknowns that could derail the process. Lengthy and expensive studies must be performed to demonstrate efficacy and safety. Individuals may work for this company for years before an FDA-approved clinical trial proves either that the drug is effective and safe or that the drug has failed to meet FDA standards and will not become a commercial product. If the drug fails, the company may dissolve overnight.

If you have a Ph.D. in virology you might come to one of several conclusions about this startup as a place to start your career. You might be influenced by the chance to contribute to society by helping develop a breakthrough drug that saves lives. You might be influenced by the lucrative stock options if the drug is approved by the FDA. If the rewards fit your goals, it might feel okay to risk the job and move toward your ideal self!

Another person with the same educational background and a different tolerance for risk might be more influenced by the downside of this startup. The company has no



current revenue and only has one drug under development. To this person, failure seems a more likely outcome from such a small place; he or she would rather risk less with a job doing similar work at a large pharmaceutical company that has a strong revenue stream from many drugs and a big development pipeline.

Neither choice is wrong – the point is to find the best decision for you based on your own risk profile.

Police officers, firefighters and Navy test pilots all face a different kind of risk. These individuals put themselves in harm's way, risking their lives on a regular basis to keep the peace, protect property and advance aviation respectively. Other careers, such as auto mechanic, office manager, or employee for a city government may have much less built-in risk. Employees in these careers experience neither high levels of physical danger nor the uncertainty found in the start-up and financial industries. These careers are not, however, risk-free. Businesses can be caught off-guard by competition and struggle or fail, affecting workers. Financial crises in state and local governments create uncertainty about the number of government jobs in the future, their stability, and how well these employees will be compensated. We found fulfilled people risked in all kinds of industries and jobs, but they did so in ways that fit their progression from real to ideal self.

These apartments may not be the safest place to live. Or maybe easy access to factory-fresh risk suits you.



PHOTO BY STUART CAIE

***Everything That Can Be Counted Does Not Necessarily Count***

And everything that counts cannot necessarily be counted. If you believe Einstein, that is. In the case of risk assessment, at least, he's right. Given that uncertainty, you need a simple and effective set of steps to help determine which risks are reckless and which are reasonable. We suggest:

***Learn All You Can***

It isn't possible to wait for absolute certainty before acting. However, just because you cannot wait for full knowledge does not mean you should act with no or limited knowledge. Before making a decision, understand as best as possible the problem or opportunity, the potential upside, and what could be lost if things go awry. Remember Einstein's wisdom above!

***Think Long Term***

People often overvalue the immediate impact of a decision and have a harder time considering the long-term impact. It requires time and discipline to imagine the future "what if's" and weigh them appropriately.

***Risk Intelligently***

Risks are not created equal. Intelligent risks have a greater upside than downside. After you have learned all you can about the situation and taken the effort to think long term, you can make a reasonable assessment of the risk / reward balance. Fulfilled people risk intelligently, knowing they can live with the downside.

Try not to follow an overly bureaucratic risk assessment process...



PHOTO BY BRETT JORDAN

A woman who had worked for years as a land use attorney provides a good example of assessing risk. After initially being hired, her senior partner told her men control land use law and that it would be difficult for a woman to crack that fraternity and get referrals. He suggested she form a breakfast club for young professional women in careers related to land use. At the time, the woman already had a family and a demanding schedule with long hours, and she actually hated initiating conversations with people she did not know well. She felt time developing contacts would take her away from her family, have no immediate payoff, and make her feel uncomfortable.

Rather than follow her initial gut reaction, she spoke with many land use attorneys (both men and women) about how they brought in business. Her partner was right about it being a difficult road at that time that did require laying groundwork in one form or another to get referrals. Long-term gain clearly required short-term pain. So she took the time to invite women working as developers, architects, and city planners to join a breakfast club. As the years passed, the women in the club rose to positions of prominence throughout the community and served as a great source of referrals. An additional bonus was the friendship she derived from the group.

### ***Essential Wisdom About Risk***

- Risk and reward balance differently in each individual, so you must learn as much as you can about your own balance.
- Overvaluing fear can cause you to remain stuck in a comfort zone that won't help you reach your ideal self.
- Mistakes and failures help you learn how to do things better the next time and provide distinct advantages for you going forward.
- In the context of your own risk / reward balance, learning all you can and consciously taking a long-term view help you risk intelligently.

Hopefully she'll get to the sign soon and learn more about her risky situation.



PHOTO BY BRANDON SATTERWHITE



## EXPLORE

*Exploration is really the essence of the human spirit.*

Frank Borman, NASA astronaut, Commander of Apollo 8

### ***The Best Laid Plans***

Fulfillment sounds almost like a destination, a resting point. To some degree that's true, but there's a nearly constant motion that drives fulfilled people to jobs that satisfy them. And once there, they continue to be open to seeing new things (or looking at old things in a different way). They *explore*. Constantly. Voraciously. To find your way from school or a less-than-satisfying job to a career that you love, you must push beyond what you know and blaze new trails, finding and recombining interests in a way that feels true and authentically you.

Mark describes his career with deep satisfaction, almost glowing with a mix of excitement and contentment when discussing how he had been truly able to help people in a way he had never expected:

*My medical career started in a traditional way. Each move was planned and the future seemed clear – outpatient psychiatrist doing psychotherapy. Then a missile hit me on the side of my head. The chief of my department told me about a brand new consulting and teaching position working within a business school. When I told him I had no business experience and no idea what I would do or teach, he replied, "I know, but you'll figure it out."*

To be fulfilled, you must explore in ways you might never have imagined.



PHOTO BY NASA GODDARD PHOTO AND VIDEO



*I was stunned at his suggestion. At that point, his offer seemed the equivalent of suggesting to an accountant that he could start work as an astronaut. It would be a risky move as I would be in totally uncharted terrain. After many sleepless nights, I decided to take the plunge. Deep down, I believed, as only a neophyte could, that I would find an avenue to create something that could make a significant difference.*

*Attempting to find my rhythm teaching and consulting at the school was not without its rocky moments. For the first six months, I felt out of place. I was concerned about failing. I had limited thoughts as to where I could add value and I felt a sense of betrayal and shame for not following a traditional medical path.*

*At one point I experienced an epiphany: I would no longer think of myself as just a doctor. I would add a new role, that of an anthropologist. I learned about the culture and vocabulary at the school. I attached myself to several professors who served as mentors and voraciously gobbled up the books they recommended. And I visited a number of companies with different disciplines to get a lay of the business landscape.*

*All of these activities were enormously helpful in finding my way. It was that leap, that different path, that gave me a unique perspective and set of skills. And that's helped me to help people transform their lives.*

### ***Making You Who You Are***

Openness to new experiences, even if they bring with them fear or significant challenges, seems central to finding satisfaction in work. Every fulfilled person we interviewed took chances and explored “uncharted terrain,” just as Mark did.

Dive deeply into the unknown to explore  
(paint roller not required).

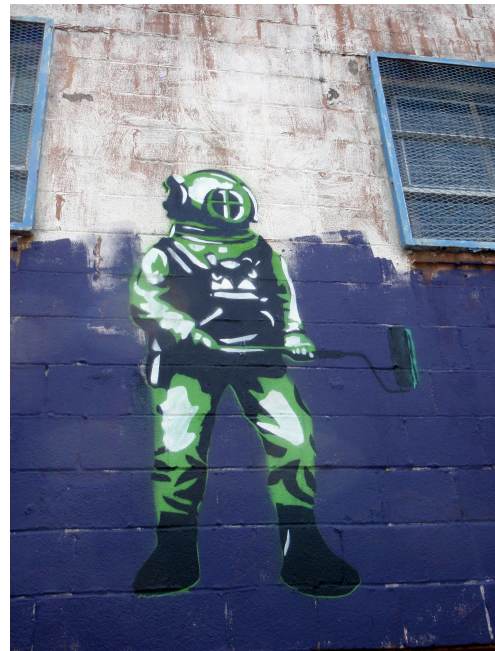


PHOTO BY DANIEL LOBO

Not everyone is aware of the importance of exploring in defining his or her trajectory, but to feel fulfilled, you must embrace exploring and consciously make it a core process in your life. This may sound easy to do, but it's not. Your own brain actually can get in the way. How does that happen?

Your life experience shapes the desires and dislikes that ultimately drive your behavior. Skills and interests have developed through your participation in and emotional reaction to a wide range of activities, including school, hobbies, sports and relationships with other people. You are a unique organism shaped by your unique set of experiences and feelings. As a result, you are drawn toward certain things and repelled (or even disgusted) by others.

When you explore things, it makes a big impact on your brain. Things that feel good do so at a neuronal level in the brain, resulting in the release of dopamine, the “feel good” neurotransmitter. That chemical effect drives us to further seek out the same or similar positive experiences. Those additional pleasurable experiences in turn release more dopamine, keeping the cycle going. Positive experiences are thus self-reinforcing, creating a pleasure-seeking state of mind. One good thing typically leads to another good thing – we explore to find more!

As such, tuning into what *actually feels good* can help guide your behavior toward career fulfillment and happiness. You simply need to pay close attention to what you feel, trying to make your feelings conscious. Embrace this emotional data as something that truly matters in setting your course in life. Emotion should act as your compass as you explore.

Using emotion as a compass won't require you to BUILD a giant compass.



PHOTO BY JOHN COOKE

Just as pleasure guides us toward what we should pursue, pain serves to move us away from things we should avoid. Consider what happens when you accidentally touch a hot pan on the stove. Before you're even aware of what's happening, a reflex

response pulls your hand away from the source of pain. Only after your hand is off the hot pan do you become consciously aware of the pain.

Why would it make sense to feel pain *after* you're out of harm's way? Pain plays an important role in learning, shaping behavior in a way equally powerful to pleasure. Of course, there are varying degrees of pain. One severe burn and its lingering painful effects can keep you cautious of the stove for quite a while; smaller painful episodes of whatever sort can take a while to add up to deeper learning. (And, for the record, we're not saying you should **always** avoid pain – sometimes in life the things you must do are intrinsically painful; tolerance of pain can be necessary to reach larger goals.)

Actually, Mr. Protester, pain is important and at times necessary for gain.



PHOTO BY CARLOS A. MARTINEZ

So, too, are there varying degrees of pleasure, ranging from mild interest to ecstasy. The amplitude of the feeling, in addition to the frequency of exposure, helps determine the feeling's potency in shaping your brain – allowing you to easily feel whether you might like something or not.

When you add it all up, the sum of your positive and negative emotional reactions determines what you explore (or avoid), whether it's a new sport like lacrosse (which reminds you of soccer and basketball) or a new job like accounting (which reminds you both of your experience with math and organizing the closet).

But if you haven't had any experience that's remotely similar to a new thing, or you don't have any idea what that new thing actually might be like at all, then you have no emotional reaction, no drive toward or away from it. Your brain is in the way. Here's where the conscious decision to explore comes into play – you must **force** yourself to explore, to learn more about what a job or job role might be like.



### ***Prisoner of Past Experience***

Our prior experience of life, encoded in our brain circuitry, determines our future experience of life. It guides what we will see and try, but most importantly it also determines what we will *not easily see* and thus likely *fail to try*.

Why is this so? Brains are powerful information processing devices but the brain uses shortcuts (based on prior experience) to make sense of the world. For example, can you read the following paragraph?

Aoccdnrig to a rscheeerar at Cmabrigde Uinervtisy, it deosn't mtttaer in waht oreDr the ltteers in a wrod are, the olny iprmoetnt tihng is taht the frist and lsat ltteer be at the rghit pclae. The rset can be a toatl mses and you can sitll raed it wouthit porbelm. Tihs is bcuseae the huamn mnid deos not raed ervey lteter by istlef, but the wrod as a wlohe

You almost certainly think you read it. Your brain is a sense-making device, so it automatically makes sense of the jumbled text above. "According to a researcher at Cambridge University, it doesn't matter in what order the letters in a word are, the only important thing is that the first and last letter be at the right place..."

The problem is that paragraph actually contains mostly gibberish with only a few real words sprinkled in. What you think you read is a great explanation for the origin of typos, but it wasn't a true written piece of language. In reality, it was a bunch of letters assembled in a way that *makes it hard for your brain to not see them as language*.

Below the masthead, headline gibberish that your brain doesn't easily decode.

The image shows a mock-up of the front page of The New York Times. The masthead at the top reads "The New York Times" in its characteristic font. Below it, the date is "NEW YORK, SOMEDAY, MONTH 5, 2007" and the price is "ONE DOLLAR". The main headline is "Half-R 21 Ipsm Dolor Sitt Atte Consym Tteurit" by "Adipis Cing Elit, Adi Onm Nyon Mummy". To the right, there's a smaller headline "A-HEAD IPSUZ MIN DOLLOR SITTA TAI CONSECO TEUR HIR" by "Nim 13/17 Tuio Tncitt Laoretit DoManuti Aliqu Se Errattatt". Below the main headline is a large photo of a man in a white shirt and dark pants standing on a stage, speaking into a microphone. The photo is captioned "PHOTO BY HARD SEAT SLEEPER". To the left of the photo is a smaller headline "ALF-B HEAD ISUDI OR TONETT ATTE" by "Consec TteuCingelit". Below the photo is another headline "ALF-B HEAD ISUDI OR TONETT ATTE" by "Consec TteuCingelit". The entire page is filled with placeholder text (Lorem Ipsum) and gibberish words.



Your brain's past experience powerfully biases it to look at clusters of letters and turn them into words. If you could have experienced that text in a fresh and unbiased way, you might have seen it for the nonsense that it is.

This property of brains, experiential bias, presents a barrier to exploration that you must get past if you are to find fulfillment in the world of work. You know what you know. It's deeply encoded and you aren't going to erase it. Sometimes, though, your brain leads you astray. You may think a particular job is something that it is not – you could put the pieces together negatively in what seems like order (just like you did with the gibberish paragraph) and instead miss a positive and rewarding reality.

### ***Using the Emotional Compass***

Interestingly, as we've discussed above, the paths you've **already** taken actually have determined what you **now** feel like exploring. So in a strange way, left to its own devices, your brain wouldn't necessarily be drawn to explore something **completely** new. You, like Mark in the case above, need suggestions and encouragement to come from someone else (such as a parent, friend, teacher or mentor) to truly explore something novel.

For example, have you explored "primitive corn meal maker" as a career? [requires rock, stump, steady supply of corn and upper body strength]



PHOTO BY JENNY818

You need to sidestep or circumvent your brain's expectations of the world of work and really explore. This essential process led the many fulfilled people with whom we spoke to the same place it will lead you: satisfaction at work.

To explore you have to **do something truly different**. Doing something different leads to **feeling something new**. Feeling something new means **setting possible courses – creating theoretical selves**. Bring truly different experiences to your brain and then the way you feel about those experiences helps determine where you go next. That's using emotion as a compass.

Because you're unique with your own set of talents and experiences, there's not a "one size fits all" roadmap for direct guidance. However, there are three fundamental areas of emotional exploration:

- Memory
- The Present Moment
- Imagination

### *Memory*

Tell us about your childhood. It's okay...we're psychiatrists.

Seriously, we found that many people who felt stuck careerwise looked back to what they enjoyed when they were younger. Remembering how things felt brought forth answers. We spoke with a motorcycle parts fabricator who loathed school despite having tested as quite bright intellectually. After dropping out and getting his GED, he looked at what he had always loved to do as a kid: take things apart and then rebuild them, beginning with Erector sets. He made the choice, emotionally driven, to go to vocational school and learn mechanics. He gets up every morning excited about what awaits him at work.

There could be big money and fulfillment in what you loved to do as a kid.



PHOTO BY J.D. HANCOCK

We spoke with a successful financial person who had made emotional decisions at each point in her academic career, picking where to focus her energies with each advanced degree. It worked well to a point, but she never felt passion for work until she tapped into the memory of how joyful she felt back in middle school building a mock stock portfolio.

Your childhood interests are fruitful ground for finding emotional guideposts that can lead you to career fulfillment. Turn off the outside world for a while and just explore your memories of the past – let yourself feel that past enjoyment.

*The Present Moment*

What we did to write this book is exactly what you should do: talk to people about what they do, either formally (by arranging informational interviews) or informally (by making it a habit to ask the people you meet what they do for a living and how they like it). In both cases, vicariously exploring can provide a real sense of whether such work might be a good fit for you.

The prime advantage of doing such exploration in real time with a real person is that you will more easily feel the other person's feelings. Humans are social animals and are wired to transmit and receive emotional data. When you converse face-to-face, you automatically get a fuller, more emotionally informed picture of the other person's experience and can use that to better model how that experience would be for you.

Talk to people about what they do to see if your hearts align.



PHOTO BY THE ITALIAN VOICE

That transmitted emotional data usually helps sort things out and helps you clarify whether that person's path or something similar might work for you. However, just as a nearby strong magnet can interfere with a regular compass, so, too, could a particularly charismatic person blur your reading of your own emotional compass. You need to make sure that what you're feeling about a job is truly about **your** emotional reaction to it rather than the result of being swept up in the waves of someone else's enthusiasm.

Of course if an opportunity presents itself, you could also choose to jump right in and do a new job (or role in a job). Firsthand experience and experimentation directly carve memories into the brain. Making the conscious effort while exploring to feel your emotional response to the experience moves you that much closer to finding fulfillment at work.

*Imagination*

Suspend your disbelief and imagine what could be. You do this all the time when reading fiction or watching movies. You know it's not real, but you go into an imagined world. You may leap in and, if the story compels you, not want to leave. You don't want the story to end or be interrupted.





PHOTO BY NEIL DOWLING / FLICKR ID: ABULIC MONKEY

Imagining work, while it sounds non-intuitive at best, makes perfect sense brainwise. Among the 100 billion neurons that comprise our brains are a particular type called a mirror neuron. Mirror neurons facilitate our capacity to learn from example by, in effect, helping us run simulations in our brains. Seeing someone else do something allows us to imagine what it might be like if we did that thing ourselves. We can try things on, put ourselves in the place of others doing a job, understand how it might feel for us through hearing or seeing how something feels for someone else. We can explore without leaving our rooms.

Stories of work actually can be compelling, even without digital special effects enhancing the action. You can read great biographies that give firsthand accounts of fulfillment at work, like *The Last Lecture* by Randy Pausch and Jeffrey Zaslow. Or you can watch interviews like those on the documentary series *Roadtrip Nation* (roadtripnation.com) or in books of collected first person interviews like *Working: People Talk About What They Do All Day and How They Feel About What They Do* by Studs Terkel or *Gig: Americans Talk About Their Jobs* by John Bowe, Marisa Bowe and Sabin Streeter.

Open yourself up to exploring the emotional experience of someone you don't know.



***To Infinity and Beyond***

What we're advocating are ways to truly explore things your brain might not think possible (and to be emotionally well-tuned to the things it already knows). Most people engage all three of these – memory, the present moment, and imagination – when using emotion to make decisions about the world of work.

The emotional labor of exploration is never easy. But the effort required to emotionally explore the world of work pays huge dividends, even if you've been fortunate enough so far to have primarily positive and enjoyable experiences at work.

Your career should be an exploration, and it should be as audacious as the Apollo program—spaceflight with the goal of landing a man on the moon. We ask you to explore emotionally within yourself, to make sequential movement toward finding a calling rather than simply having a vocation. What you do at work ideally resonates positively within you, thus fueling more activity and experiences that you will likely experience positively. In this way, you will progress in what you do, sometimes changing fields or functions, but never losing emotional sight of yourself, tuned to the feeling of moving in an ever more fulfilling way.

Explore the world of work!



PHOTO BY FRANCIS BIJL

***Essential Wisdom About Explore***

- Emotion not only helps to build your selves (real, ideal and theoretical) from experience but also serves a critical role as a compass as you explore.
- When you explore, your brain paradoxically prevents you from seeing the full size of the work world – don't be fooled into thinking all you see is all there is.
- You must push past your brain's limited view through conscious efforts to explore fully your memory, the present moment and imagination.

## ENDURE

*All endeavor calls for the ability to tramp the last mile, shape the last plan, endure the last hours toil. The fight to the finish spirit is the one...characteristic we must possess if we are to face the future as finishers.*

Henry David Thoreau

### ***A Fish Story***

An old story tells of a young fish that happily swims in his lake until he reaches maturity, when he wonders what lies beyond. He sets out to explore the stream that feeds the lake until he encounters a large rock sitting in the center of the stream. Arrested, he studies the rock, becoming discouraged that his pathway is obstructed. He pushes and pushes, but he cannot move the rock. As he swims around in circles, he wonders what he should do next—keep trying to push the rock, get friends to help him push, give up and go home, what? Becoming increasingly frustrated, angry, depressed, and hopeless about his situation, he questions himself. “Why am I a failure? What did I do wrong? What can I do now?” An old fish comes by, and on learning of his young friend’s problem, smiles and says, “Follow me,” and proceeds to swim around the rock.



PHOTO BY ADAM BELLES

In your career journey, you will encounter obstacles. All careers have them. In the story, the solution to the problem seemed obvious to the older fish, but it was not obvious to the younger one, who, as can happen to anyone when confronted with an obstacle, was blinded by his too-strong emotions.

Fulfilled people find the way past obstacles by using a well-developed ability to *endure*. By managing emotion effectively and providing the time to bring rational thought to a situation, they find novel solutions to problems. Maybe the solution comes from within. Maybe it comes from a more experienced coworker, family member, or friend. Maybe it takes longer to find the solution than anyone would like or expect (but not *too* long – fulfilled people also recognize when a situation is futile). The basic ability to persist in the face of adversity, hanging in there until the upside down becomes right side up, is essential to finding fulfillment at work.

The notion of enduring is more complicated than it seems at first. Enduring a painful or futile work situation can result in career stagnation or worse. The potentially toxic consequences of enduring beyond that which is reasonable can impact your sense of self as well as your relationships with others. How do you know when to *tolerate* versus *depart* a difficult situation? How long is long enough to endure? When can endurance lead to growth, maturity and joy versus depression, hopelessness and helplessness? How do you know when you have truly run out of acceptable options to solve a problem? How can you manage the negative emotions that can accompany endurance —surprise, confusion, shame, anger, humiliation, fear, distress and ambivalence?

### ***Stop, Look and Listen***

After graduating from college, Geno took a series of jobs with different computer software companies, each job lasting about a year, but he left each job because of different problems that created stress —a critical boss, demands for overtime, denial of his request for a raise, arguments with coworkers. Every time Geno encountered a problem and did not get his way, he felt frustration, anger, and shame. After he had quit his third job in as many years, he began having problems

Someone unfulfilled works here.



PHOTO BY JON ÅSLUND



getting any interviews from potential employers. Human resources staff, upon hearing his story, began to tell him that his experience was not what they needed at that time. During his protracted period of unemployment, his friend, John, ten years older, took him out for a beer and a straight-up talk about the realities of work.

“You’re not off to a good start here. Too many short-term jobs. You look like a quitter. Settle into a job that looks reasonable, relax, appreciate what you’ve got, and try to enjoy the good in the situation. Problems will arise. Instead of getting mad and walking out, think of what you learned as a kid when you got to the crosswalk: *Stop, Look and Listen*. *Stop* stressing out and acting on impulse. *Look* at what you are doing from other than your own viewpoint. *Listen* to the other person and your own emotions. Talk things over with a friend and see if there is a way you can work things out. Try to see the other person’s point and take responsibility for your part in the problem. Whatever you do, don’t quit abruptly or in anger. If quitting is the right thing to do, give notice, and do it for the right, not the wrong, reasons.”

John got Geno a job where he worked. John’s employer said there would be a six-month probationary period. John mentored Geno through this period and beyond, helping Geno to learn how to work through problems, cope, and endure. That was ten years ago. Today, Geno, now a supervisor, mentors young workers, sharing John’s wisdom on how to endure.

***Enduring More Than Is Good for You Is, Well, Not Good...***

Bob, a newly minted Ph.D. in his twenties, got a job as a lecturer at a prestigious university. He felt lucky to get this job in an economic downturn and looked forward to fulfilling his teaching duties in an exemplary way, publishing two papers from his dissertation, continuing his research, and writing his book. He also knew that it was important to be a good team member and, most of all, not to offend his superiors so

If only it were this easy to know  
a job’s expiration date...



PHOTO BY DAVID GOEHRING



that he could attain an assistant professorship at the earliest possible opportunity. After three years as a lecturer with no mention of advancement, he began to wonder if something was wrong. He saw that peers were passing him by. He became anxious and uncertain about how to proceed.

Bob thought that he was respected and liked. To show he was a team player, he had accepted additional teaching and administrative responsibilities for the Department Chair, who needed more time for his own research. Eventually Bob found that between his teaching, administrative responsibilities, research and writing, he was working all the time, damaging his marriage and relationships with family and friends. He had become irritable and short-fused. When his wife told him something had to give or she would leave, he realized he needed to get some clarification from the chair. In their meeting, the chair said that the department would review his situation over the following year. Bob suffered on without complaint.

Best to be loyal in situations where you know it will be reciprocated.



PHOTO BY MYKI ROVENTINE

After a year, Bob was told that the department, under economic pressure, had decided to shift its focus away from Bob's area of interest. He was welcome to continue as a lecturer and teach and publish. Some peers encouraged him to continue in his position. After all, to have any position at this university was an honor anyone would covet, but Bob feared that by remaining he was losing precious time to get positioned for tenure. Meanwhile, the department hired a new Ph.D. as an assistant professor in an area closely related to Bob's. Bob felt used, betrayed, and angry. He had been a loyal employee, dedicated to the department and generous about taking on additional duties as requested. He had endured being passed over for four years, but instead of being rewarded for his loyalty, he had been exploited while others, who were more selfish and competitive than he, had gotten the prize. He applied for every position he could find, but inevitably was questioned about his seeming lack of career progress – four years as a Lecturer with limited publications to show for his time. Ultimately he got a position as an assistant professor at another college.

Bob expected that his excellent background, “can-do” attitude, and commitment to his employer would be rewarded, but he learned that beyond a certain point *enduring* could produce diminishing returns. He had suffered on, but this had led

only to futility. Why had he stayed so long? What cues had he possibly missed? Bob learned four important lessons from this experience.

First, although peers were well meaning in their advice, in the end, he needed to develop an accurate way to gauge his situation. He learned to use his emotions as a compass to better navigate the changing landscape at work – those political, economic, and other forces that can disrupt the most reasonable expectations of the best employee. Second, he learned how to balance competing forces of self-interest against the interests of the employer, to be realistic rather than naïve, and vigilant without being mistrustful. Third, he accepted that sometimes it is necessary to call it quits and move on, and he discovered that he had to guard against the corrosive effects of workaholicism and stoicism on his relationships. Fourth, he set aside time for his wife, family, and friends, and as he processed his lingering emotions of disappointment, anger, shame, self-recrimination, self-doubt, and anxiety, his self-esteem and marriage recovered.

### ***Stagnation and the Third Option***

The summer before her senior year in college, Lydia, a top student majoring in business, took an internship at a major bank. She was mentored by Jake, a young and charismatic Managing Director, who had recruited her. That summer, he took an interest in her training and introduced her to everyone on the desk as well as the top officials in the bank. During her senior year of college, a number of companies offered her positions, but Jake urged her to join his firm, discussing “the fast-track” from trainee to analyst and beyond. He emphasized that the company was dedicated to growing the department and would reward her for good performance.

Once on the job, however, Jake ignored her. He provided none of the mentoring he had discussed, and Lydia joined the other dozen trainees, where she worked hard

Glamorous at first look, but things aren't always what they seem.



PHOTO BY JULIEN HALER

the entire first year. Given her excellent performance, she expected to be moved to the analyst training program, but the days passed with no additional training or responsibility. Lydia received a minimal bonus for her performance but decided to

give the company another year, despite her increasing concern. The reality of her situation became starkly clear after her second year: another small bonus and no change in her status. Her career path had suddenly dead-ended for no apparent reason. She felt quite anxious and found it difficult to sleep. She was stagnating in a monotonous work situation and felt increasingly hopeless and helpless. She felt guilt, shame, anger, and tremendous remorse that she had not accepted an offer at another company.

Lydia felt like quitting and looking for another job but decided to heed the advice of others at work to Stop, Look and Listen. By remaining a while longer, she would be able to observe and listen to coworkers as well as to her own emotions. She watched Jake's behavior with others and also began to realize some things about herself. Jake's enthusiastic initial interest in her was flattering and emotionally intoxicating, but it had blinded her to important behavioral signals like his avoiding eye contact, not listening to her, and pressuring her to commit to the job. Lydia also observed that others on the floor had had similar experiences with Jake – she was not alone. Although she was disappointed in the job, enduring gave her time to consider her options. She began to take calls from headhunters, feeling angry that her employer was “clueless” and unconcerned about advancing the department.

Also a good idea in situations other than railroad crossings.



PHOTO BY ANDY POWELL

As Lydia's emotions escalated to a crisis level, her friends supported her actions but urged her to meet with Jake's superior, Ted, the Managing Director of another division. She felt she had nothing to lose in communicating her complaints with no holds barred and hoped she might help other new employees coming aboard. Ted knew Jake well and understood the situation immediately. He knew that without quick and substantial intervention, the company stood to lose a valuable employee in Lydia. He also recognized that changes needed to be made in the way new recruits were handled. Ted asked if Lydia would be interested in taking three months training as an analyst in his division and in following the progression toward management she had been offered when she was first hired. This unexpected “third option” took her by surprise. After thoughtful consideration, she decided to accept.



Lydia was wiser for the experience – wisdom she would not have gained had she not endured. By making an effort to stop, look and listen, and using the energy of her anger and frustration, she was able to overcome demoralization and unearth potential solutions. Upon reflection, she was able to recognize that all companies have problems, and that change for the sake of change might not always be an improvement. Lydia also recognized that a boss like Ted might be hard to find elsewhere. She found that Ted was as good as his word. She also found that she enjoyed the new division more than the old. She remained under Ted, advanced, and achieved her goal of Managing Director.

***Essential Wisdom About Endure***

- Stop and make sure you give yourself the time to assess the situation – impulsive acts typically result in blown opportunities.
- Look both into and at yourself from other perspectives, like your manager's or the organization's, to see accurately how you fit (or could fit) at work. Find what can realistically change, both inside and outside you.
- Listen to other opinions about dilemmas as well as your emotional compass. Balancing perspective with intellect and emotion may reveal another path!



PHOTO BY RUTHANNE REID



## REFLECT

*By three methods we may learn wisdom: first, by reflection, which is noblest; second, by imitation, which is easiest; and third, by experience, which is the most bitter.*

Confucius

### ***Solutions in Solitude***

Obstacles, big and small, confront you every day as you navigate the world of work. You may face a large and daunting question: what should I do for work? Or the problems may be smaller. You might not know how to deal with a change in your work or work routine. You might run into difficulties with relationships in the workplace.

We found that people who feel fulfilled at work create the time and space to *reflect* upon themselves, their actions and the challenges they face. Reflection allows them to navigate any obstacle in their path successfully.

Reflect upon yourself  
(the artistry is simply  
in taking time to do  
so).



PHOTO BY MARGARET YARSH

*Kate loved her job working as a teacher for special needs children. The work was always demanding but she felt incredibly rewarded watching the progress each child made, growing in incremental steps. "It's noisy. It's crazy sometimes – most times. I'm supervising classroom aides, trying to tailor everything uniquely for each child within these very strict individualized education programs. Most days I'm lucky to remember to eat – it's that busy and there's so many things I'm juggling. I love it, though. The looks on these kids' faces when they really get a concept, make an advance, is just so rewarding."*

*Her first position had been temporary for a single school year, but she then found a permanent job in another district that sounded even better, with more support and resources. Things started well, but then a financial crisis struck and the school district had to slash spending – she was left with minimal resources (losing one of her aides) and some anxiety about how she'd be able to teach her kids effectively.*

*"I was feeling really stuck and didn't know what to do. I always want to do a good job and wasn't sure I'd be able to with what they were giving me. And there was no chance to figure anything out during work – I had no time to think except about what was right in front of me. It was stressful.*

*"So, without really knowing if I could still do it – it had been at least five years – I started to run. Not far, not fast. I just started and would go as far as I could go in a half hour. It was actually nice being alone, as much as I love people. There's a pretty trail that runs at the top of a ridge near my house, so that's where I'd go.*

Reflect to move  
forward...



PHOTO BY PEGGY REIMCHEN

*"I was kind of amazed I could run. But what was more amazing was where my mind would run. I found I was able to really reflect on the situation, see all around it, and finally come to grips with it. I stopped worrying somehow about what might be expected of me by the school or the parents and was able to see that all I could do is work with what I was being given and do my best. Anything more than the best I could do in the circumstance was unreasonable for anyone, including me, to expect. I was making this pressure for myself and I saw that I could stop it."*

Making time to reflect allowed Kate to sort out her difficult circumstance, relieving the tremendous stress she felt. And while there's certainly a biological component responsible in part for facilitating the change in her (aerobic exercise not only releases pain-killing endorphins, but also substances that facilitate neuronal growth and make your brain better able to weather the storms of stress), clearly the act of reflecting helped her the most.

***Turn Off, Log Out, Tune In***

It might seem like you don't have much **time** available to reflect. So many things in life compete for that limited resource: relationships with romantic partners, friends and family; projects and tasks to be done for school, work or your community; fun things, like athletics, entertainment and hobbies. Time does fly. Plus there's tremendous opportunity for distraction – the availability of technology in the form of smartphones, tablets and the Internet make it easy at any point to slip away.

Constant engagement (be it with people, tasks or technology) makes it difficult to tune into your feeling state. When that's the case, you aren't able to use your emotional compass to find your way. Your attention instead stays focused on what you're *doing* and you can't easily shift into *sensing* and *being* and *feeling*. Spending time in those reflective states is essential to solving problems and overcoming obstacles.

People frequently solve problems by creating uninterrupted time and space to process what's happening emotionally. One woman with whom we spoke finds she must "log out" while at work, turning off her phone, e-mail and chat apps for at least 60 minutes a day in order to gain perspective, generate solutions and plan how to accomplish what her company wants from her in her leadership role. She feels, as many do, that leading is primarily an emotional process. If she doesn't find some protected time to check in with herself emotionally, she can't lead.

Reflecting is in many ways the opposite of planking.



PHOTO BY VLADIMIR KLIMONTOVICH

We suggest you do a similar thing to help solve the problems you encounter at work, many of which will be emotional in nature. Of course some problems require your thinking brain more than your feeling brain – for those you do have to focus directly



on the task at hand – but thinking is generally the more straightforward aspect of problem solving, for which you’ve been trained in school or on the job.

Make time daily to reflect. If possible, do so during the workday. Disconnect from technology. Don’t answer the phone. Create some space for yourself to just see where you are and how you feel. Let things just come to mind. But we also suggest you go further, considering the big picture of you and your work life when you’re at home. Make the time every day to feel and reflect upon your emotional response to what you’re experiencing. This meditative act will help direct you toward fulfillment in your career and, by extension, your life.

Of course, if your computer has serial cables, you probably imagine major technology upgrades during your periods of disconnection.



PHOTO BY LEONID MAMCHENKOV

Find environments or activities that facilitate your entering the state of sensing, being and feeling. Go for a run. Sit and meditate. Go to a church, temple, synagogue or mosque. Take a walk by the shore. These are just some of the ways we found that people reflect.

An executive who works with one of us said, “Intuitively, I understood why you were pushing me to set aside time to reflect. Intellectually, though, it didn’t add up. I spent so many years figuring out how to maximize time by multitasking, raising the bar there each time and thinking that was success – having more and more that I could accomplish at once. Zero tasking was antithetical to my existence. But it’s really balanced my life for the better.”

Reflection doesn’t just make intuitive sense – it actually makes sense at the level of the brain. Turning off directed cognition activates a system in your brain known as the “resting network.” Functional brain scanning has found that some parts of your



brain that turn off when performing task-oriented cognitive work actually **turn on** when you are left to a conscious resting state. It seems these areas of the brain, known to be involved in retrieval of past events (both general and personal) as well as essential to integration of cognitive and emotional stimuli, serve important roles in problem solving and future planning. And they only can do that work when you aren't pounding away at task after task.

### ***Know Thyself***

The Temple of Apollo at Delphi bears this inscription (not in English, of course). There's much for you to know about yourself – physically, intellectually, interpersonally and emotionally. Additionally, you need to know yourself through time – who *were* you? Who *will* you be? Your ability to reflect is integral to knowing yourself.

Reading Greek is not required in order for you to know yourself.

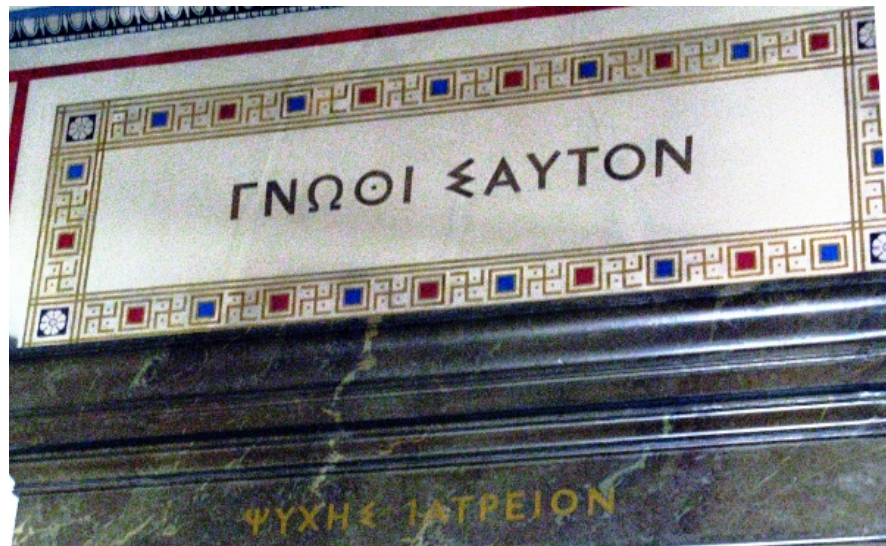


PHOTO BY TILEMAHOS EFTHIMIADIS

You build a sense of self in many ways. A physical sense of yourself comes from interaction of your body with the environment through time. This aspect of you resides in multiple areas of your brain responsible for processing sensation from your peripheral nervous system, coordinating movement and locating your body in space. Activity that engages your body or draws your attention to your body helps you better tune into your self.

Your intellectual sense of yourself forms consciously, affected by what you learn or read or talk about. You know what you know, whether it's history or pop music trivia, and that's part of who you are (as is what you don't know). Importantly, the intellectual aspect of yourself plays a large role not only in what you do for work but also in the relationships you form, as people often connect because of similar intellectual interests.

Relationships build a sense of your self in two important ways: interpersonally and emotionally. Your interpersonal self consists of your values and your roles. Parents,

friends, role models and peers all to varying degrees influence your interpersonal self, including how you value and treat people in relationships.

From the most superficial relationship with the drive-thru order taker to the most intimate relationship with your romantic partner, your interpersonal self is defined, affected and expressed. When a friend asks your opinion in solving a problem, it shows that your friend respects your perspective and input – a role is defined. Similarly, the many ways you relate to others – asking for help, apologizing for mistakes, showing appreciation – express who you are interpersonally. All interactions in relationships show you the different roles and capacities you have in life: supporter, caretaker and leader, to name just a few.

Relationships,  
starting from the  
very beginning,  
profoundly shape  
your emotional self.



PHOTO BY ROBERT WHITEHEAD

In addition, relationships play a key role (going all the way back to when you were an infant) in creating your emotional self. Your parents and caregivers taught you what emotions were and how to regulate them. Many people learn to overregulate all or certain emotions or even to ignore them entirely. Unfortunately, that eliminates a key part of your self, a part that can be of tremendous help to you as being in touch with all emotions contributes to fulfillment.

In our interviews, having a clear sense of self correlated with feeling fulfilled at work. How did these fulfilled workers find that clarity? They took time to reflect and paid attention to the thoughts and feelings that bubbled up during that time. For example, one financial services worker told us, “When I do cardio at the gym I listen to classical music, which people think is strange. But it’s almost like white

noise. It moves me to this place where I'm just open to myself. I think about what's going on with me and my wife, or sometimes what I need to research so I'm ready for the next investor call pops into my head. It's like my own 360 feedback session (where superiors, peers and subordinates all give opinions about someone's performance at work). Self-management. I tell myself what to do. But without telling."

### ***Confucius, Remixed***

Most people consider wisdom to be universal, a type of understanding that helps all people to judge correctly and follow the best course of action. However, when you reflect in the way we discussed in this chapter, you acquire not universal wisdom, but rather a specific wisdom about yourself that you can use to move toward fulfillment.

We can all benefit from universal wisdom – for example, knowing that a tomato is a fruit yet having the wisdom not to put it in a fruit salad averts a dessert catastrophe. Other people's acquired wisdom may be of limited utility when it comes to finding your way through the world of work. You need to reflect in order to learn your own wisdom. Then act on it!

### ***Essential Wisdom About Reflect***

- Create the uninterrupted time necessary to reflect deeply about yourself.
- Find environments or activities that help you sense, be and feel.
- Attending to the physical, intellectual, emotional and relational aspects of yourself creates the specific wisdom that can help lead you to fulfillment.



PHOTO BY LEO THOMSON

## SACRIFICE

*I think that the good and the great are only separated by the willingness to sacrifice.*

Kareem Abdul-Jabbar

### ***You've Got to Give to Get***

Fulfilled people feel that way primarily because of how their work affects others. Mastery of their jobs contributes to fulfillment, but at the heart of the matter is giving to others. Whether through the work itself (for example, by directly helping people as a teacher) or through the process of working with other people (for example, feeling like a valuable and contributing part of a team), their good feelings largely come from how they make others feel and how others feel about them.

We, like all mammals, are wired intrinsically to be social animals and much of our emotional universe comes from these social emotions. We have feelings of guilt and shame if we let ourselves or others down. We have feelings of pride and happiness when we help someone else – even if that someone else is dog or a cat. (All mammals share similar brain hardware for connecting emotionally.)

All kinds of work fulfill us mammals if we feel like an important member of a team.



PHOTO BY FRANK KOVALCHEK

Fulfilled people *sacrifice* for others. The cause may not always be grand, but the reward is. Giving something of your own (be it material possession, skill, knowledge or time) to another almost always increases feelings of appreciation and reciprocity in relationships. Those are good feelings. And since it's work, and one form of reciprocity at work is money, that's another nice reward.

Fulfilled people also *sacrifice* for the betterment of themselves. Developing the skills necessary for some jobs requires sacrifice of time and energy. You've sacrificed to



get through school, reading and studying at times when perhaps you'd rather do something else. Sometimes you have to give something up for yourself over the short term in order to secure a longer-term career gain. You might need to work repeatedly to practice your skills before you move on to something new and different. Maintaining self-discipline – sacrificing for your ideal self – seems a key to fulfillment.

### ***Getting the Balance Right***

So exactly how much must you sacrifice for yourself and for others to feel fulfilled at work? There's no magic formula. Part of it depends on your skills and abilities when you begin a job. Part of it depends on the job itself. For example, professional athletes we've spoken to typically practice their skills for so many years that the self-discipline to train and stay sharp feels almost unnoticeable. What they have to sacrifice for the team can vary from moment to moment and the emotional work involved in coming together as a team to win can feel more significant.

Health care professionals sacrifice in a particular balance that can sometimes seem unhealthy. Reform to limit the hours physicians work each week during their residencies, for example, reflects this concern. Doctors, nurses and others in the field usually derive great fulfillment from helping people heal and feel the sacrifice of time for others is well worth it. Anna, a highly regarded surgeon, is no exception.



PHOTO BY TUSHAR DAYAL

Anna sacrificed many evenings and weekends in college studying so she'd be able to go to medical school (where she again spent many evenings and weekends studying). During her internship and residency, she continued to sacrifice free time to do research on specific types of cancer in the head and neck region. The long

hours left her little personal time other than that which she spent with her boyfriend, who eventually became her husband.

She wisely recognized that helping patients make a successful recovery from their cancers required more than developing individual technical skills as a surgeon. She also made special efforts to further build her team skills, which began forming when she was a youth soccer player. It takes an entire team of physicians, nurses and support staff to help patients heal, so she can only be successful if her team communicates and functions well together.

From Anna's perspective, miscommunications and errors are frustrating and can cause less than optimal care for her often quite ill patients. However, she also views missteps as opportunities for improvement within her team (rather than chances to shame or inappropriately blame herself or others). Learning from failures large and small minimizes the odds of repetition and improves each patient's chances for recovery. Over the years, she's developed a great working dynamic with her team and they perform at a very high level. Getting to this point in her career took many years of hard work and diligent practice to the exclusion of some things she valued, but she feels it has all been worth it. In the words of Charles Finley, a former major league baseball team owner, "Sweat plus sacrifice equals success."

How do you get to New York City's Carnegie Hall? Practice, practice, practice!



PHOTO BY MATCHITY

Author Malcolm Gladwell notes that highly successful individuals often put in at least 10,000 hours in developing their specific expertise. Founder of Sun Microsystems Bill Joy, Mozart, Microsoft's Bill Gates, and Steve Jobs of Apple all put in their 10,000 hours (and more). Success in sports, entertainment and the business world does not usually come about solely as a result of a combination of genius and

good luck. To one degree or another, temperance, self-denial, delayed gratification and resigning oneself to years of practice are required elements. To develop mastery requires practice. “Repetition,” says a Russian proverb, “is the mother of learning.”

### ***C-E-R-E-R-A-S Is Just Another Way to Spell CAREERS***

Tony grew up in an Italian working class family on the East Coast. His father hated his factory job and Tony had vivid memories of hearing him repeatedly complain about going to work. Tony could have followed in his father’s footsteps and taken a factory job, likely becoming a shop steward with little effort. Instead, he challenged himself to pursue a course of study in electrical engineering. Tony then worked in hands-on engineering positions at utility companies but found himself eventually feeling stuck. Knowing he needed to *change* in a substantial way, he enrolled in an MBA program. While there, he *explored* the business world in ways quite new to him, mapping those experiences (both of others and imagined) back to his ideal self.

Actually, cereras is the only way to spell “waxworker” (in Spanish).

Look at the little waxworkers!



PHOTO BY NICOLAS BOULLOSA

Recruited by a telecommunications company, he brought discipline learned from his formal engineering training to his new management role. Success followed and so did the rewards. With the support of his high school sweetheart, who became his wife, Tony *risked* going out on his own to found a communications company just as the dot.com bubble was about to burst. He *endured* and after seven years the IPO that he and his team had worked for resulted in the group becoming very well off financially. Tony relinquished his role as CEO and considered retiring for a time at the relatively youthful age of 48. Before long, however, he found himself languishing in his new role as househusband. During this time, he became more dedicated to his avocation of long distance bike riding, but as his biking pals would routinely present business scenarios to him on their rides together, he felt that something was missing. He *reflected* quite a bit during those rides, recognizing a longing to leave the bike



saddle and return to the management saddle, fantasizing about once again being part of a creative business venture.

Not the sort of saddle anyone wants to return to.



PHOTO BY WILLIAM CLIFFORD

Tony *appreciated* that stepping so far away from work had moved him too far from his ideal self. He also appreciated that he could *sacrifice* more for other people with the skills he had developed through his own self-sacrifice through the years. Although he had the opportunity to go back into management in the for-profit sector when he left the semi-retirement phase of his life, he decided to forego the more generous salary, perks and prestige that might have come from following that path. Instead, he decided to make a difference with young people. After talking it over with his wife, Tony opted to accept the position of CEO with a non-profit organization dedicated to providing high school students from low income families with basic skills that increase their chances for getting into college and eventually being competitive in the 21<sup>st</sup> century workplace. The non-profit partners with major corporations and places young trainees in internships at corporate sites where they receive invaluable experience in office settings and company worksites over a period of months. A few years into the process he is by no means bored anymore. His eyes gleam when he talks of a young man or woman who completed his organization's program and has successfully matriculated at a recognized university.

Making a difference in the lives of young people who are starting out their careers represents an actualization of Tony's ideal self. His emotional connection with people in his current work provides him deeper (and different) fulfillment than he had earlier in his career. He loves what he does and doesn't look back. His path to fulfillment didn't follow a neat acronym. Neither will yours, but as you can see regardless of the order, each behavior (*change, appreciate, risk, explore, endure, reflect, sacrifice*) was essential to his progression toward fulfillment.

***Essential Wisdom About Sacrifice***

- Putting yourself second to care first for others creates the opportunity to experience increasingly deep and rewarding emotion.
- The path to reaching your ideal self likely requires much self sacrifice: practice, practice, practice and accept that at times gratification must be delayed.
- Every fulfilled person, regardless of job, sacrifices in a way that balances the needs of self and others.



PHOTO BY CHERICE MONTGOMERY

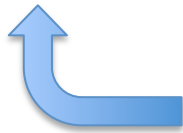
**Find the right balance for you.**

## Book → Conclusion → ... what's next?

We think it's the beginning of another chapter of you.

You can find fulfillment and make your life what you want it to be. Engage in each of the behaviors discussed in the preceding chapters throughout your career. Your brain is built for them!

**CHANGE**  
**APPRECIATE**  
**RISK**  
**EXPLORE**  
**ENDURE**  
**REFLECT**  
**SACRIFICE**



*This is your brain. Powerful thing!*

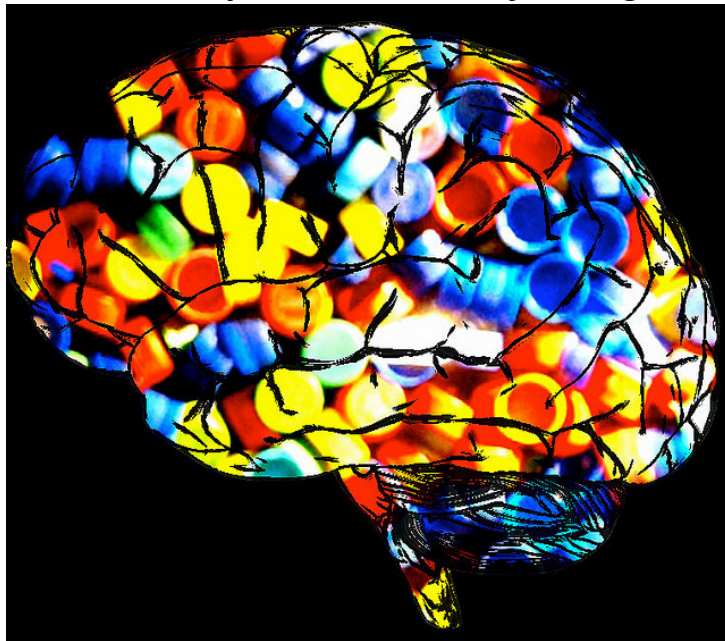


PHOTO BY CARLOS DANIEL GOMERO CORREA

*Same Essential wisdom!*



## The Q&A

### **What is the Group for the Advancement of Psychiatry?**

GAP is a think tank of top psychiatric minds whose thoughtful analysis and recommendations serve to influence and advance modern psychiatric theory and practice.

### **What does their Committee on Work and Organizations do?**

We look closely at the interface of the workplace and mental health, identifying issues that directly impact people's well-being. We develop and publicize solutions that can be implemented by individuals, companies and other organizations.

### **Why was this book written?**

Work, it seems to us, is an essential, important and influential activity in life. Too many people we met or spoke with in the course of doing our own work as psychiatrists seemed a bit adrift, unable to realize fulfillment in their jobs. Having also met many people with fulfilling jobs, we noted the many differences in how fulfilled people approached work (and life in general). We decided to study these differences more completely, and that led to the CAREERS project.

We cast a wide net in terms of career paths and consciously sought out individuals who loved their work. We used structured interviews (some excerpts are in the text; some identifying details have been changed) and then analyzed the information. We were quite struck by the many common themes. The behaviors of fulfilled people in pursuing jobs and working demonstrated an underlying essential wisdom from which we all can learn.

Because the brain best learns many things through models and examples, we decided to bring together the fulfilled peoples' stories to provide a book of potential templates. Originally, we thought CAREERS would work best for young people starting out in the world of work, but these principles truly apply to anyone who works.

Thanks again to everyone who participated in our interview process – your willingness to share your success in finding fulfillment permeates this book and we are privileged to be able to present it.

### **What else might be good to read so I can find fulfillment at work?**

- *Working: People Talk About What They Do All Day and How They Feel About What They Do* by Studs Terkel
- *Gig: Americans Talk About Their Jobs* by John Bowe, Marisa Bowe and Sabin Streeter
- *Roadtrip Nation: A Guide to Discovering Your Path in Life* by Nathan Geghard, Mike Marriner and Joanne Gordon
- *Oh, the Places You'll Go* by Dr. Seuss

- *Shop Class as Soul Craft: An Inquiry into the Value of Work* by Matthew B. Crawford
- *What Color is Your Parachute? A Practical Manual for Job-Hunters and Career-Changers* by Richard N. Bolles
- *The Pathfinder: How to Choose or Change Your Career for a Lifetime of Satisfaction and Success* by Nicholas Lore
- *Harvard Business Review on Managing Your Career in Tough Times* by Harvard Business Press
- *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People* by Stephen Covey
- *Getting to Yes: Negotiating Agreement Without Giving In* by Roger Fisher, William L. Ury, and Bruce Patton
- *Work and Love: the Crucial Balance* by Jay Rohrich
- *Seasons of A Man's Life* by Daniel Levinson
- *A Life Worth Living* by Barrie Greiff
- *First You Have to Row a Little Boat: Reflections on Life and Living* by Richard Bode

## About the Authors

**Josh Gibson, M.D.** is an Assistant Clinical Professor of Psychiatry at University of California, San Francisco (UCSF). His clinical and educational work focuses on the neurobiology of relationships. Prior to becoming a psychiatrist, he was a senior consultant for Andersen Consulting (now Accenture), specializing for nearly five years in process re-engineering, organization development, and education design and delivery. In addition to his clinical work, he consults to senior executives.

For three decades, **Barrie Sanford Greiff, M.D.** was a psychiatrist and faculty member at the Harvard Business School. He pioneered a unique course, the first of its kind in the world, dealing with the juggling of self, family and work life, ultimately publishing the book *Tradeoffs*. His latest book, *A Life Worth Living* (now an e-book), focuses on what really matters in a person's life. He practices in Cambridge, Massachusetts and consults to privately held businesses, professional service firms and senior executives.

**Stephen Heidel, M.D., M.B.A.** has always been interested in both clinical medicine and business. After practicing psychiatry for several years, he founded a business involved in employee benefits and also provided management consultation to address interpersonal conflicts in the workplace. He currently provides consultation to start-up biotech companies to address conflicts among the founder, CEO and management team. Throughout his career, Dr. Heidel has continued both his practice of psychiatry and teaching at University of California, San Diego Medical School, where he is a Clinical Professor of Psychiatry.

**Barbara Long, M.D., Ph.D.** is a board certified psychiatrist in private practice. Her main career focus has been consulting to corporations and to the legal profession about the broad spectrum of workplace problems. In addition, for 30 years she has worked with young people, both professionally and personally, facilitating their adjustment to college, career, and relationships. Her recently released book, *Keep Your Eye on the Prize! A Young Person's Guidebook to Adulthood*, helps young people grow toward being successful, happy, and well-balanced adults.

**David E. Morrison III, M.D.** is a board certified psychiatrist. As Director of Medical Services and Director of Individual Consultations at Morrison Associates, his primary roles include leading individual consultations for executives, facilitating seminars, and developing new products. His current suite of education programs include an in-house program, *Making Performance Management Discussions Work for You*, that helps managers and their direct reports develop a sense of mastery around tough discussions on performance. His course has been adapted for internal training and education programs at Accenture, Food Lion, Kraft and Motorola.