

The Catalyst Collective is a 501c3, non-profit community designed to bring your unique purpose to life. Based out of Austin, Texas, our mission is to help others develop personally, professionally and spiritually as they embrace opportunities to discover and develop their gifts and passions. To learn more about us, please visit www.catalystcollective.community.

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I have always felt average. For the longest time, my life was marked by being average at sports, getting average grades, being raised in an average home and even having an average name, Joe. Everything I did in life, I did just ok. I went to an average college in Texas, graduated and went to work for Dell Computer. That same year I also married my college girlfriend, and we began our new life together in Austin, TX.

I lasted about 7 months at Dell before I left for another job, which offered me more money and the chance to become what I hoped was 'more than your average Joe.' That gig didn't even last a year before I was let go in a massive lay off.

I would spend the next 9 years jumping from job to job, chasing a career in sales that I hoped would help me bust through that barrier of mediocrity I had been slamming my head against for 30 years. I began to doubt if I would ever find my calling, hit my stride, embrace my inner passion or whatever else you want to call it. As each year passed, I became more weary of this existential search for significance. Maybe I was, as the Bible calls it, chasing the wind.

All I knew was that feeling average really sucked.

However, in 2008, at the age of 31, I finally had my breakthrough.

The story of what happened is way more exciting than I have time to divulge in this brief intro, but it began with one simple decision. It was a decision that would set me in an entirely different direction and draw out of me a multitude of untapped skills I didn't know I had. This decision would end up being the catalyst behind everything amazing I would get to be a part of and forge me into the person I am today.

If the first 9 years of my career where marked by this ambiguous pursuit of purpose, these next 9 would reveal to me that everything I had experienced up until this part of my life mattered. Like puzzle pieces scattered on a table, I would need something or someone to come along and help me sort through it all by connecting pieces about who I was but it was this one decision that would make everything that happened next possible.

Before I share what I did, I suppose I should put it in a little bit of context.

I became a Christian my senior year of college and while I do believe that is the single most important decision I have ever made, it was not the decision that helped me bust through feeling average and locating a specific purpose in life. (I will explain this more in Section 1.) My decision to follow Jesus was not a reaction to some hyped up church event or rally.

Neither was it a flippant emotional decision based on some perceived need to have a reason for my existence. I had actually spent the past few years trying to convince my girlfriend/future wife, that the Bible was unreliable.

After a long season of trying to find evidence against the existence of God, it backfired on me. I ended up acquiring more evidence through history, archaeology, miracles and more to know that Jesus was real. But if following him meant being like the uninspiring, inconsistent Christians I had encountered my entire life, I was out. So I made the decision to not just be a Christian but to be all in on what it meant to follow Jesus. If I was going to enter into a warzone of Heaven and Hell, then I was going to ask God to send me to the front lines. If Jesus and his followers were Heaven's ultimate rescue squad, I wanted to stand outside Hell's gates and fight, not be nestled up in some church building.

I told God I was ALL IN. And I was.

Sadly, my ALL IN lasted 6 months until I received my first sales paycheck from Dell, went out and purchased a state of the art, 50" Projection TV that was bigger than the sofa in my apartment and decided I needed to chill a little. I charged hard in the war but ultimately got taken out by a television... Didn't see that coming despite all those warnings about falling in love with things of this world.

Those next 9 years of blah regarding my purpose and direction in life could all be traced back to the fact that I compromised my values and didn't want to admit it. I settled. That is until 2008 when one decision changed everything.

My wife, Ramona, and I were living in our dream home in Round Rock, Texas. I had converted my garage into the ultimate man cave, had a great job, 2 kids with a third on the way, was involved more in church and filled my life with everything we could afford. You have heard this story many times before, I know. The person who appears to have it all, never really does. It's true. Everything I had did not make up for the fact that I knew, deep down, I was created for more than this.

Changes at our church challenged me to spend a little more time in prayer and self-reflection and a little less time self-medicated with all my possessions. A hunger for change slowly began to brew. A desire to change my career and go into full time ministry was percolating. My ALL IN once passionate war cry was getting louder. I knew I wouldn't be able to maintain this life style on a single-income, ministry budget. And I also knew I didn't want to let go of what I had. I felt stuck.

Ultimately, the decision that became the Catalyst for where we are today was one my wife and I had to make together. We embraced the uncertainty of the future by hitting the reset button in our life. We sold our home, our fancy car, most of what we owned and moved into a mobile home on a borrowed piece of land in the outskirts of the city. In so doing, we cut our cost of living in half and put ourselves in a position to not be so bound to money and things.

The decision in 2008 that changed everything was the decision to re-enlist in the infantry of a war with no guarantee of future success. We were going to be ALL IN together, no matter the result. We were excited, scared and clueless, and having experienced the emptiness of the road we had been on, we felt like we didn't have much to lose.

Here's the deal. If you are serious about discovering your unique purpose in this world, you must be ALL IN. You have to be so sick of where you are at, so resolved to change direction and so stubborn to not stop until you find breakthrough that you refuse to quit.

If you choose to just skim through all the stuff in this purpose project, you will fail.

This Purpose Project is a compilation of the best exercises, tools and resources my team and I have ever used to help others, including ourselves, find their unique purpose. We have summarized decades worth of learning and provided a pathway that we are confident will help you step into the person God uniquely made you to be. And no, you don't have to even believe in God for this to work for you. You might not share the same belief in God that we do and that's ok. While we do share some of our spiritual experiences and refer to ancient wisdom we have found insightful, you and I do not have to agree on everything in order for this project to be of great value to your journey.

We designed this workbook to stand alone, apart from the Purpose Project video series, but we would encourage you to use them together.

It is our firm belief that you have a design that is 100% authentic to you. There are so many different things at play that make you, you. Life experiences, personality type, passions, natural talents and more all play a part in your specific make up. Learning how to read and interpret this data is what this project is designed to do.

Our advice before you begin is to commit to going through all of it, at your own pace, without skipping a section. Each part builds on the other. These are the short cuts you have been looking for that will help you gain the answers to the questions you are asking about your purpose and future. Becoming self-aware is the key and it does not happen overnight. You will be asked to reflect on what you learn and rushing that process would be a mistake.

You are either starting or continuing a journey that will result in you leaving a greater mark in this world. We are honored to play a small role in that and recognize that you are the one that has to do all the heavy lifting. Whatever you do, don't give up. I was serious when I said you have to be stubborn. I know you are probably already stubborn in lots of the wrong ways, time to apply that talent to something that really matters so resolve to keep fighting for more.

In the videos, Zac and I will do our best to share with you all our junk and how we used these tools to help get us to where we are today. Although we have more confidence than ever in who we are and what we are here to do, there is always more to learn.

If I say any more, I would be getting ahead of myself and repeat what you'll read in the rest of this project anyway. So enough about us, let's turn the conversation and focus on you. You are the reason we created all this anyway.

May Godly insight be with you,

Joe Elliott
Founder and Executive Director
Catalyst Collective

Section 1

Do I have a life calling?





What is a calling?

Definition - a strong urge toward a particular way of life or career; a vocation.

2 Types of Calling - General, Specific

Our general calling focuses on the fact that we have an inward desire to know where we come from, and where we are going. For the Theist, this desire was put within us by a Creator and is designed to draw us down the path of discovering who this Creator is, and what He wants from us.

Ecclesiastes 3:11 -" He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the human heart; yet no one can fathom what God has done from beginning to end."
(NIV)

As a Christian, I believe my general calling is summed up in the 2 greatest commandments: To love God and love others. For others, it might simply be "doing good" in this life.

The question is - What, specifically, does that look like in my life?

The Fear of Missing Your Calling

This is where the concept of a specific calling breaks down and gets confusing. Most of us fear having this mystical specific calling in our life and totally missing it. What if I was meant to be a doctor, lawyer, actor, politician etc., but either never had the chance to pursue it or missed my opportunity all together?

The Good News About Your Specific Calling

Well, the good news is that the only way you can miss your specific calling in life is by doing nothing at all.

Allow me to clarify.

Can a supernatural being, such as God, step in and assign a specific task to us? Yes! The Bible was written by average, imperfect people who were given a specific task to record events in history. However, just because this kind of thing does happen, it doesn't mean it happens for all of us.

The Apostle Paul wrote to the early churches in Rome and Corinth and took time in the 12th chapter of each letter to help the members of the community at the time understand their specific role. And guess what? The goal was directional, informative...and yet, pretty vague at the same time.

We learn we have a unique mix of natural and spiritual gifts that are designed to be used in collaboration with others' gifts to make a difference in the world around us. We also learn that we are given freedom to take our gifts and go meet the needs we encounter; the choice of what to do, how to do it and when to do it is left to us.

Freedom to Create and Be You

This all equates to a tremendous amount of freedom to go reflect the character of God by creating and being the individuals He uniquely created us to be - which is the topic of the next video. Before you move on though, take time some time to reflect on any urges or callings you have felt in your life.

Step 1

List 7 urges you have had in your life regarding a potential calling

Step 2

Now rank them in order with #1 being the strongest urge to #7 being the least compelling

Step 3

Looking only at the top 3 in Step 2, List some things those urges all have in common



Freedom to be You - When and Where It Matters Most

Let's talk more about this freedom you have been given.

What I am about to say will make way more sense after you complete Section 2, so just hang with me for now.

The way you are uniquely made is a pre-wiring for potential success in hundreds of different careers, roles and situations - more than you can pursue in your lifetime. This is not a guarantee of success, but it is important that you know and believe that the foundation already lies within you.

Before I bought my house, I learned that it was prewired for a security system. I thought that meant it was all ready to go when I moved in, but it wasn't. The wiring was in place, but it still needed someone to come out and make all the contacts, install the control panel and connect it to a live monitoring system. In order for my security system to function as it was designed, it required the influence and skills of many technicians, salespeople and call center operators.

You see where this is going, I know.

Like my pre-wired security system, you are an unfinished product that will require the right team around you connecting all the amazing pieces that make you, you! Nothing great is ever accomplished alone, so you are going to have to wake up every day and choose to put in work with the freedom you do have.

What does this look like exactly?

Later sections of this project will dive into this further, so I will start by telling you what it looks like for me:

1. **I start my day by choosing to thank God for it.** Our attitude shapes our actions, and I cannot afford to lose perspective on how short life is and why I am really here. Neither can you.
2. **I ask God for help in expecting the unexpected each day and responding appropriately.** Has anyone ever had a day when everything went perfectly according to plan? I haven't. So, it makes sense to be prepared for adversity and new opportunity.

3. **I focus on the one thing I need to accomplish today** - and I give it the majority of my energy.
4. **I remind myself to enjoy the ride.** There are thousands of things buzzing around us daily that can suck the joy out of life. Even when things are really, really bad, I know that there is value in failure and pain. This empowers me to take risks, speak boldly, give whatever I have in me to give that day and just enjoy the rollercoaster of life.
5. **I do my best to encourage and thank those around me.** I admit that this is a muscle group I am still developing. The environment of people we choose to surround ourselves with influences who we are and what we become. It's hard to find relationships with others that bring out the best in you. When you do find them, nourish those relationships the best you can.
6. **I realize I can never be all things to all people.** When who I am and what I do is not a good fit for someone in need, I acknowledge it and move on. There is so much diversity in this world that it seems insane to fight against it. The more self-aware you become- and you will grow leaps and bounds by the end of this project- the more you will learn to position yourself in situations that will help you thrive.
7. **I end the day by choosing to thank God again.** I already battle with pride as is. I don't need to go to bed every night with a Superman complex. When our pride starts to swell, our humility retreats. Humility is the glue that keeps us moving forward despite our circumstances.

These 7 habits are something I have been cultivating for some time, and I pray, will never stop. They provide a framework for me to go out and be the person I have been uniquely made to be.

I inhale gratitude and exhale focus. And as I do, I prepare myself to just go be who I am in every situation and let God worry about the end result.

Now before we jump into how this will all play out specifically for you, I have one more very important thing for us to think about-

War.



Notes



Making the Most of Every Opportunity

***“Make the most out of every opportunity because the days are evil.”
- Paul to the Church in Ephesus***

You said “Yes” to this project, because at the end of the day, you want to live a life that truly matters. You know that you are willing to learn, willing to be challenged and ready to put this all into practice.

But what you really need to know is that all of Hell is focused on making sure that none of this ever happens.

Why?

Because we are at war.

No, I’m not being too dramatic. Any human can look at this broken world we live in with pain, suffering, despair, violence etc., and see that something is not right. When the Apostle Paul saw the depravity within the church at Ephesus, he made a point to remind them that we are in a war.

As is the case for any war, it is imperative that we know our enemy.

Whenever we set out to do something “good”, we find ourselves battling an enemy that loves to attack our body and mind. When you said “Yes” to this project, you enlisted yourself in boot camp. Not everyone makes it through boot camp, but those that do are ready to take the fight to the next level. In a world that is hungry for hope, your quest to embrace and refine who God made you to be matters more today than in any other point in history.

We would be doing you a disservice by not talking about all the ways you have been, and will be, attacked. To take advantage of the opportunity this life has provided, you must be a person of influence each day, let’s look at 5 of the most common ways people get taken out by the enemy:

1. Doubt

It’s the oldest trick in the book, literally.

The devil questioned Eve's reasoning in the garden and planted a seed of doubt about whether she understood God's words correctly. Doubt continues to plague all humans and infiltrates all aspects of life. We doubt our parenting, our relationships, our work, our faith, our thinking, our talent...on and on.

Doubt will stop you from applying anything you learn in this project. To overcome doubt, you must lean on the ancient definition of faith found in Hebrews 11:1.

“Faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see.”

Your confidence and assurance comes NOT from everything working out exactly as you hope. That will rarely, if ever, happen.

Your confidence and assurance comes from knowing that God desires to help you commit to developing your gifts and passions and never quit. Ultimately, your success lies in your ability to keeping moving forward DESPITE YOUR DOUBTS over and over again.

2. Endurance

If Hell can't get you with doubt, it will aim for your stamina, banking on the hope that there will only be so much adversity you can take before you quit. To battle against this, you must always have the end in mind.

Let me give an example:

After completing the exercises you are about to do in Section 2, I realized my passion was to help others find theirs. I have set very specific goals about who I want to help, how and where, but this is not the end I have in mind. My end is not even physical in nature- it's spiritual. My goal is to be more like Jesus by the end than I was in the beginning of my life.

Every day I wake up and face a new set of challenges preventing me from doing this. And, if I allow myself to become discouraged in the present, I take my eyes off the future. The only way I fail is by quitting.

So, if everything I desire to 'do' in this life falls apart, I will be disappointed- yes. However, I will have in my possession the one thing that cannot be taken from me - my choice to be more like Jesus.

3. Environment

A very popular podcast I listen to, Entrepreneur on Fire, ends every episode with an encouraging challenge. The host, John Lee Dumas, tells his listeners that they are the average of the type people they spend the most time around. We see this truth play out in many aspects of society, and it's largely true. You are who you hang around.

If you desire to take all your talent and see it thrive, you must plant it around others who will water it.

Surrounding yourself in a nurturing environment will not happen overnight. You will need to be patient; you will need to network and develop new contacts and you will need to try things you have never tried before.

Or do what Hell is whispering in your ear to do- which is doubt you will ever find a better environment to plant yourself in and give up trying. There's much more to say about this topic, so we will circle back around to it and discuss more details in Section 3.

4. Past Failures

Yep, you got plenty of them. We all do! If I were your enemy, I would love nothing more than to get you stuck reliving your past mistakes. Any time you attempt something new, I would be right there to remind you that you will fail again, just like you did last time... maybe even worse.

Overcoming this trap is easier said than done.

Mistakes are vital to future success. They are our greatest teacher. They invoke emotion in us and that emotion is a powerful motivator. For some, when reflecting on past mistakes, the emotion of fear rises to the surface. For others, determination flares up. One of these emotions works for you, the other against you.

The key to choosing which emotion you embrace when past failures resurface is in knowing that God foreknew all your screw-ups and that knowledge did not, even for a second, make him hesitate in his choice to give His Son to die for you.

God uses your past failures to bring humility into your life. Humility is a powerful weapon against an enemy consumed by pride. With humility, you can glance into the past and give thanks to God that you not only survived these failures, but you grew in character as a result.

5. Hope

It is reported that 1 in 5 people suffer from depression. As a leader who has coached people of all ages for some time now, I see that hope is being robbed from our world. The thief is brutal and loves to see us destroyed.

God came into this world as the embodiment of hope through Jesus. To remove hope from our equation is to remove God from the center of our purpose- the ultimate win for an enemy who is only at war with humanity, because he cannot win against God.

So, we circle back around to #1. Faith is being sure of what we hope for. Faith makes everything you are about to embark on possible. Without faith, there is no hope. Without hope, humanity will lose this war.

The only person that can let that become reality is you.

One Final Thought

I hate to lose!

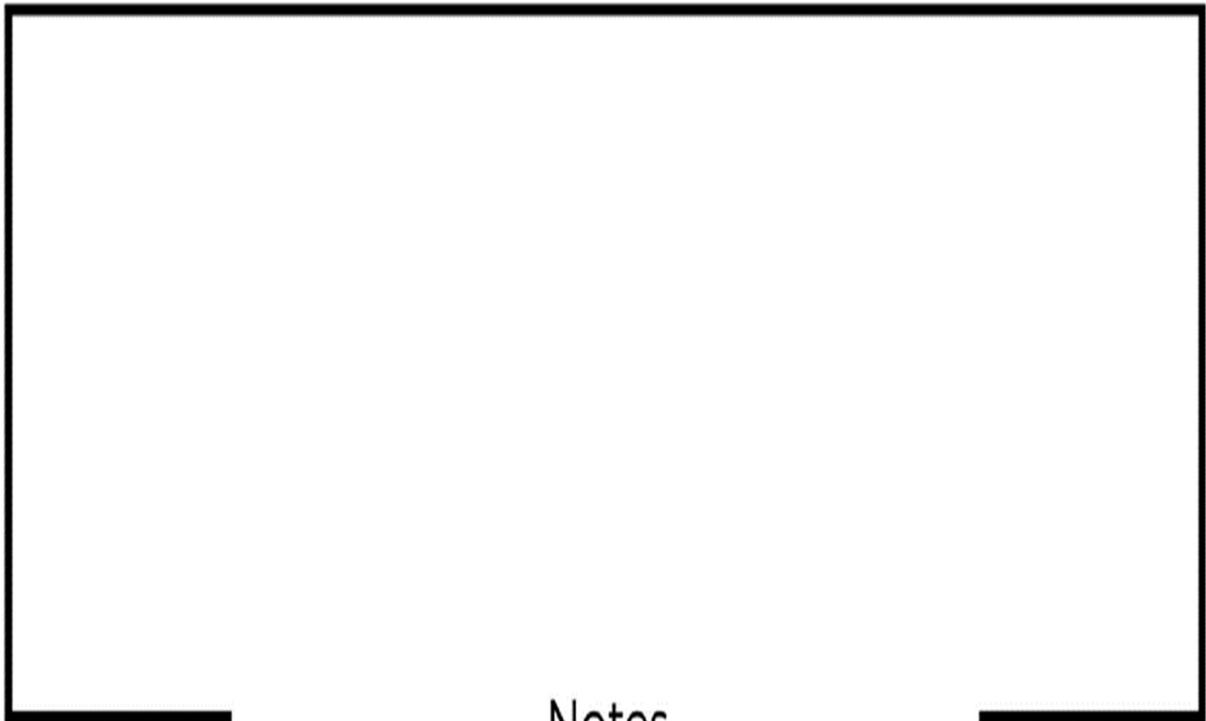
The very thought of an enemy that is out to steal, kill and destroy pisses me off. It invokes in me a desire to go to war and sacrifice whatever is required, in order to take him out. This emotion was not always alive in me. It was cultivated by putting myself in positions to see the impact of evil up close. If you find yourself in a place where you are more numbed than stirred by the depravity in this world, I would encourage you to draw closer to the pain that others are suffering.

Maybe that means spending time with a homeless person in your city to hear their story. Maybe that is saving up money to go serve on a short mission trip. It could mean attending some local non-profits' event to hear why they are passionate about their cause.

Life is too short to not be all in. Your goal in completing this purpose project is to get your bearings on where you have been and where you are going. Once you pick a direction, you must commit to being all in.

This world is so desperate for you to make the most of every opportunity because the days are, in fact, evil.

So, let's get started.



Notes

Section 2

Discover Your Purpose





I am sure you have drawn out your family tree at one point or another. For some it is easy: Mom, Dad, 2.1 kids... the American dream, but for the majority of us it is a little bit more difficult.

Did you know over 50% of suburban families come from a single parent or split family home nowadays?

For this section, we are going to dive into the good, bad and messy that is family. Enter the Genogram.

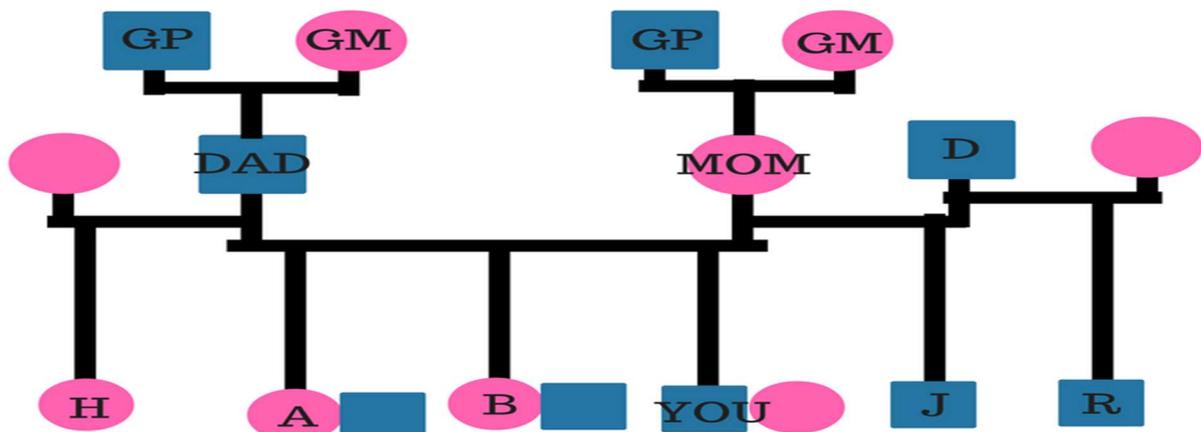
Genograms can be done many different ways, but at their core they are a family tree or outline that focuses on the relationships between members as opposed to the members themselves. We will look at family traditions, traits, and situations that have helped to shape your family and thus, have helped to shape you.

As we seek to understand who we are and what our purpose is, it is important to take into account those we share the most time and genetic information with. By default, I am subject to western culture, American culture, Texan culture, Republican culture, and my family Culture. As Pete Scazzerro says so eloquently, "Jesus is in my heart, but Grandpa is living in my bones."

Let's start with a blank sheet of paper.

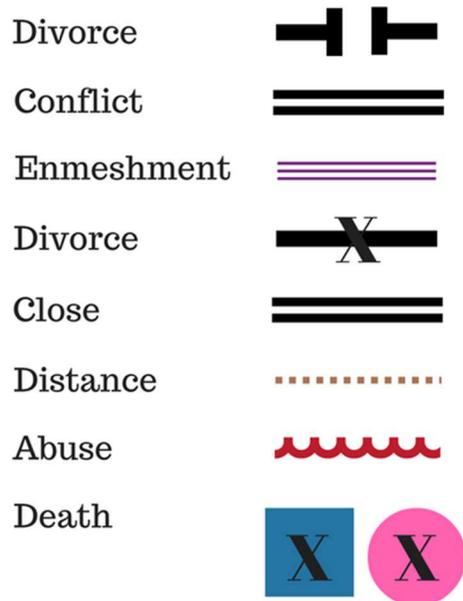
In the lower center of the page draw a circle if you are a girl or a square if you are a guy. This is you: the star of your story.

From there, follow my example and create a basic family tree mapping out your parents (or maybe even guardians), siblings etc. You can take this back as far as you want but let's try 2-3 generations for now. Mine ended up starting like this:

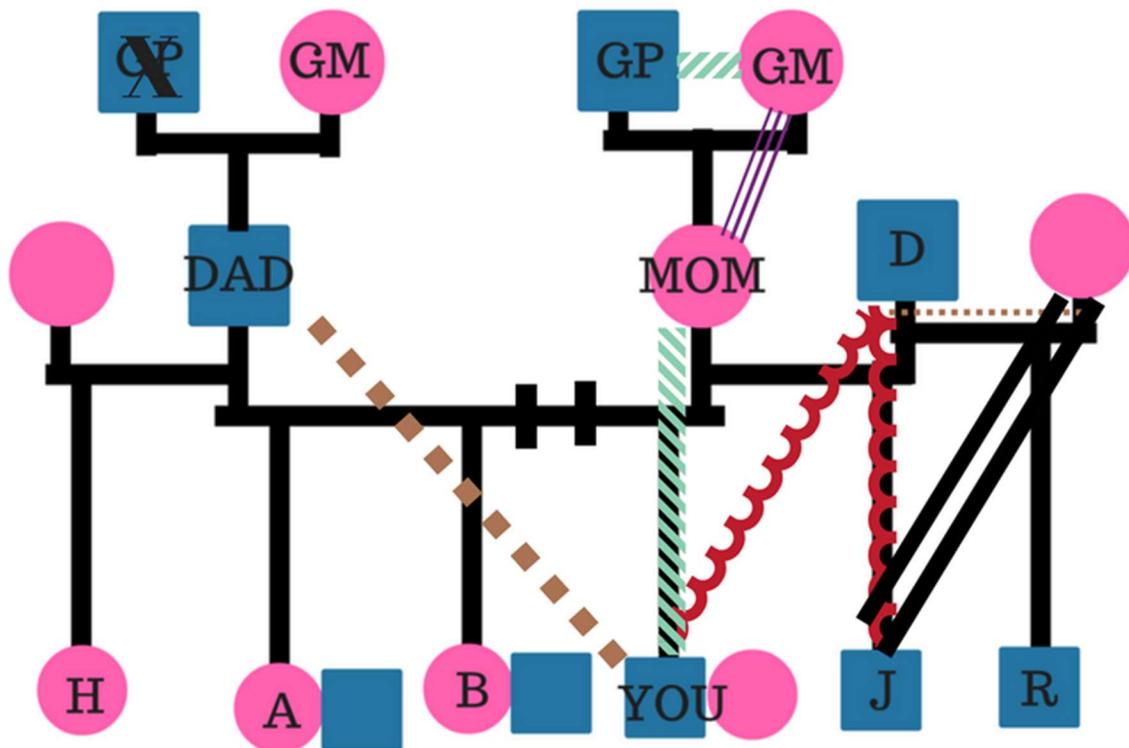


Now that we have all the key pieces in place, let's take it one step further. What happens in one generation tends to be repeated in the next, so we must look back in order to look forward. This next section can be difficult, some of our families have so many skeletons in the closet we don't have room for much else, but it is important to take inventory of these things so you are able to make an objective decision about the things you WANT to carry into the future.

Look at the chart below. It has signs for divorce, death, conflict, etc. Each of these things affects our relational dynamics and how we see the world. For the next step, draw lines between family members marked by any of these traits.



Here's my updated Genogram:



As you think through family dynamics, make note of anything else that stands out to you. Here are some good examples of things to note:

- Growing up I never saw conflict worked out well. Some family screamed while other family buried it deep inside.
- Generational differences between my step dad and the grandparents who raised him led to higher value on rules and less value on relationship.
- There is a high value placed on what we do and where we work. This performance based identity can lead to success, but also to striving.
- Abuse is rarely in one generation. Instead, it is passed down.
- Enmeshment is a lack of boundaries shown in a pressure to act or feel like everyone else.

Take a moment to reflect on your genogram. There are a thousand more things we could note within your family (dates, occupations, stories) but this is a great start!

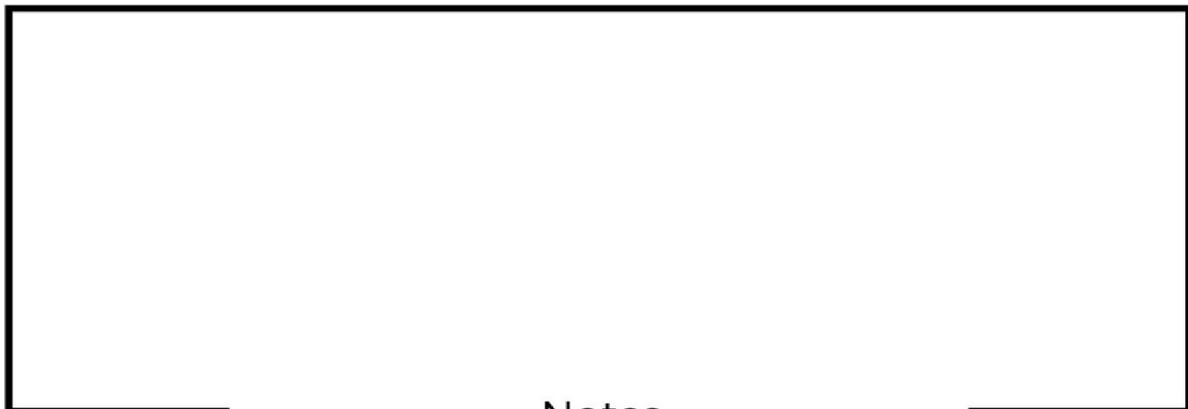
As you look on your family history, maybe you like what you see; note those things and hold them close.

Maybe you notice some unhealthy trends and you are now at a point of self-awareness that enables you to choose how you continue forward and which values you want to pass on.

One last thought on this.

Nobody has a perfect childhood. From a Christian worldview perspective, I am an adopted son, so that means I am constantly learning to live in this new family and become like my Father in Heaven. The fancy term for this is sanctification. It begins with taking an inventory of how my family on earth has shaped who I am and then figuring out which part of that Heaven wants to reshape in me. Before I am a Texan, Italian or American, I am child of God. As I embrace this new identity, I realize that my success in this life will be limited if I cannot find a way to reset some of the hurts and bad habits I have picked up over the years.

The genogram has been a great tool in helping me does just that- and I pray it will be for you as well.



Notes



When it comes to our Life Experiences, our past often foreshadows our future.

I am bow legged. It's not super obvious, but it's there and I hate it. It seems that all my years of playing soccer gradually made a permanent dent in how I walk today. At the same time, all my years of soccer have led me to a place where I am coaching my daughter's team and getting to enjoy the extra time watching her develop both on and off the field.

There is no denying our life experiences shape us; Sometimes positively, sometimes negatively and as is the case for myself with soccer - sometimes both.

So, what do our life experiences have to say about whom we are today and where we might be headed?

Well let's jump in and find out.

The most important thing we can do is take an inventory on where we have been. Let's start with the positive. Starting from childhood and working up to where you are today, reflect on the people, circumstances, events or experiences that made a positive impact on you.

Depending on how good your memory is (mine is terrible) you could probably list lots of examples, so try to focus on the experiences you often think back on, how they impacted you in the past and are still having a positive impact on you today. Here we go...

	Most Impacting:

Now it's time to do the same reflecting over the negative experiences in our life. For many of us this is a road we would rather not travel back down, yet it is vital to the process of becoming self-aware. The most successful individuals in life are also the most self-aware.

As you again think through the people, events, choices that have had a negative impact on your life at some point, you might have already experienced ways in which that adversity has been leveraged in a positive way.

For now, though, just take note of things that did negatively impact you at some point in life.

	Most Impacting:

Finished. Now what?

Well, nothing for right now. We will refer back to this later. Use the space below to write down anything that stands out to you as you look back on both your positive and negative experiences.

Notes



Natural Talents

You are going to need a partner for this one- Someone who knows you well. Don't try to cheat yourself by not getting someone else involved in this either.

Here is where our doubt flares up. We think we are good at something, but we're not really sure. We have hunches, but not confidence. This is not the time to be humble, though. If you think you might have a talent for something, write it down. If you suck at it, that's why you got a friend involved to tell you.

On the flip side, your friend may also make you list things that they think you are good at, but you don't. Write it down, if they tell you to. You can put a question mark by it if it will make you feel better.

Exercise 1 - Natural Talent Inventory

Before you start, remember that a natural talent is just something that comes naturally to you. You can do it without a ton of effort. It could be skill like fixing specific things, singing, acting, and writing. It could be more descriptive in nature, like listening, empathy or patience. Think about any time someone has ever said "You are good at _____" and write it down.

Don't stop until you have listed 20 items. Then, circle the top 5 that you feel most confident in.

- | | |
|-----|-----|
| 1. | 11. |
| 2. | 12. |
| 3. | 13. |
| 4. | 14. |
| 5. | 15. |
| 6. | 16. |
| 7. | 17. |
| 8. | 18. |
| 9. | 19. |
| 10. | 20. |

Good.

Make sure you circled the top 5 talents that you feel are your strongest, or could be your strongest. If you wrote a list without a friend's involvement, stop and send them this text:

"Hey. I'm doing this purpose project thing online, and it's making me ask a friend what my natural talents are. Here is the list I came up with. Which do you think are my strongest? Would you add anything I missed?"

Since that wasn't hard, let's keep the momentum going...

Exercise 2 - Words That Describe You

Again, with a friend's input, write down 20 words that you feel describe who you are. Things like fast learner, nurturing, counselor, loyal, outgoing, positive, etc. These are things that other people have probably spoken over you in the past. Remember, phone a friend for input and don't be lazy.

When finished, circle the top 5 words that you feel best describe you.

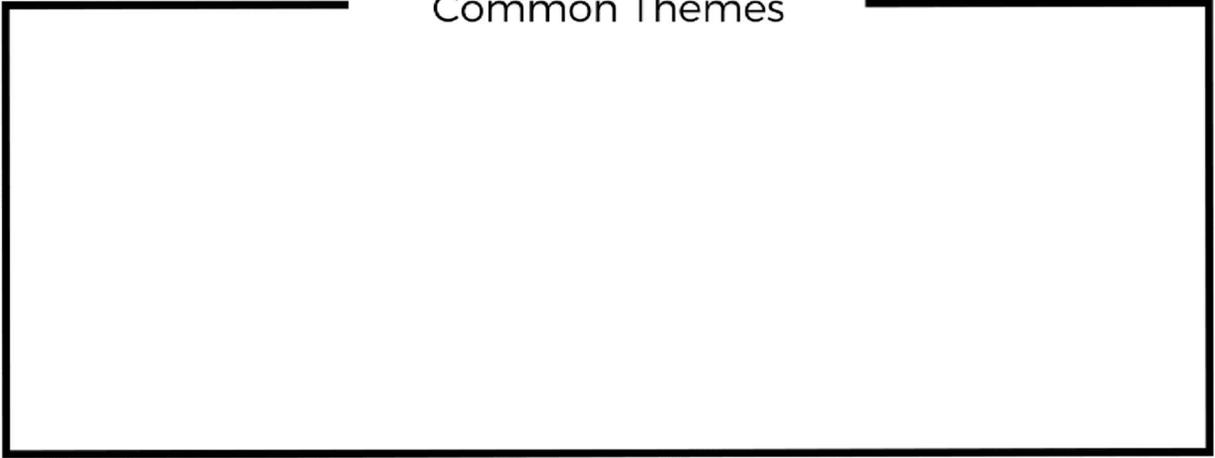
1.	11.
2.	12.
3.	13.
4.	14.
5.	15.
6.	16.
7.	17.
8.	18.
9.	19.
10.	20.

So now we have 2 lists with a total of 10 things circled.

In our final box, it's time to look at these 10 circled descriptors of yourself and list what they have in common.

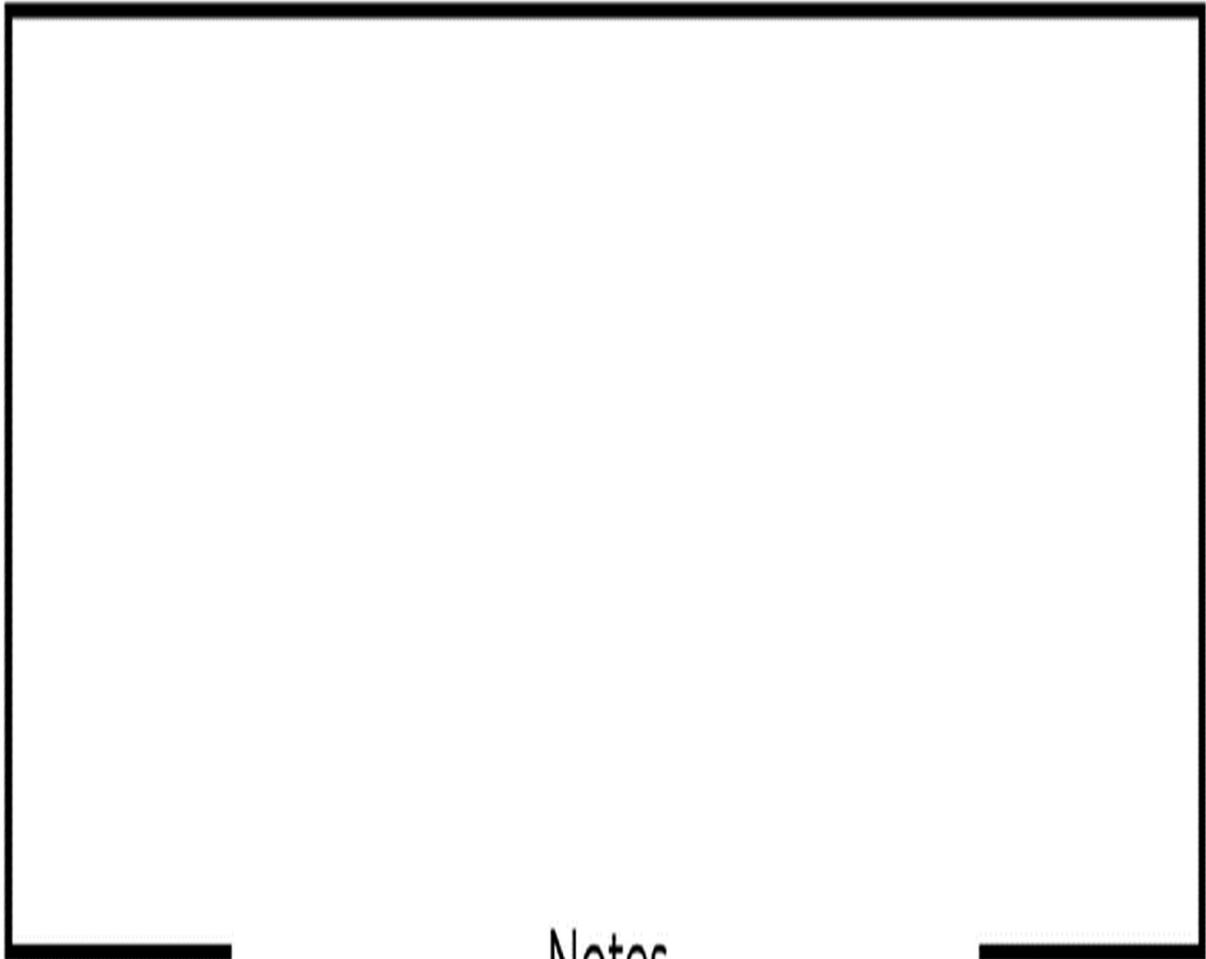
Don't rush through this part. Outside help can come in handy here.

Common Themes



If you got this far without cheating, good for you!

We are finished with natural talents for now. Let's move on to one of my favorites - personality type.



Notes



Personality Type

Personality Type

*“Your vision will become clear only when you can look into your own heart.
Who looks outside, dreams; who looks inside, awakes.”
Carl Jung*

Carl Gustav Jung was a Swiss psychiatrist and psychotherapist who founded analytical psychology. His work has been influential, not only in psychiatry, but also in philosophy, anthropology, archaeology, literature, and religious studies. His research would later provide the foundation for one of the world’s most widely used and scientifically verified personality assessments known as the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator or MBTI.

This is not a test to see which Star Wars character you are. This is an exercise in further self-awareness.

Since there are 16 different personality types and only 1 that concerns you, we thought it best to leverage a great free resource to keep the costs of this project down and allow you the most insight into how you are wired.

At this point, we would like for you to visit www.16personalities.com to take a free MBTI assessment. Before you do that, we need to tell you something important that can influence the outcome of this assessment.

BE HONEST.

When we take these types of tests, we tend to answer projecting who we would like to be, but not who we really are. The MBTI is designed to assess our NATURAL tendencies. You might currently be in a job or environment, like sales, that forces you to be an extravert in many areas. Given your natural preference, however, you would rather not talk to many people. So, when asked to agree or disagree with a statement like:

“You find it difficult to introduce yourself to other people.”

the sales person in you might tend to disagree, but outside of work, you would agree. In that scenario, you would want to answer based on how you actually feel in normal situations, rather than what you have learned to be comfortable with because of a job.

Make sense?



The Passion Question

This question will either get you stirred up or frustrated. My wife hates it, because she feels like she never has an answer that is as good as someone else's.

The good news is you can't get this question wrong. Give me a few minutes to frame this before I ask you though.

We already established in Section 1 that this world is jacked up. (Not that you needed our help coming to that conclusion.) So the passion question aims at drawing out which part of this broken world stirs in you the most.

This may seem like a big question, so I will just throw it out there and we can break it down it pieces.

THE PASSION QUESTION: If you were given unlimited time, money and resources, what would you do to make this world a better place?

BEFORE YOU ANSWER KEEP READING!

Rule #1

When we say "unlimited time", you would still be bound to our 24-hour day. So, you couldn't fight every single injustice on earth, but you could make a serious dent in one particular area, especially when combined with all the money and resources you need.

Rule #2

Don't answer with your head- answer with your heart. Yes, access to clean water may be one of the largest problems our planet faces, but that may not necessarily be an issue you are super passionate about.

Rule #3

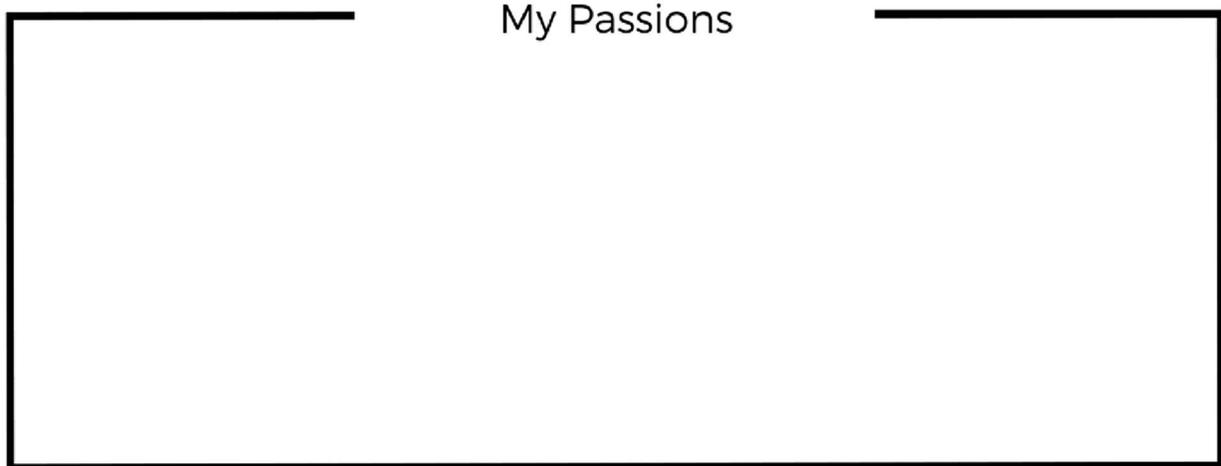
Review your life experiences. It may not be the case for you, but for many, our greatest pains do foreshadow our greatest passions. Consider how your experiences in life have influenced issues that matter to you in this world.

Ok, you can answer now. Write down a few areas that come to mind. What issue would you tackle? In what part of the world? What age group? Try to be specific.

Perhaps you have a history of mental illness in your family and that is an area you are passionate about seeing others healed in? That's a good start but whom, what types of illness and where might you start?

That's being specific.

My Passions



Now we are going to ask you the same question, but this time your answer cannot relate to an injustice in the world. Instead, it's time to focus on things that are passions, even if you have never done a single thing about them.

THE 2nd PASSION QUESTION: Given unlimited time, TALENT, money and resources, what would you pursue in this life?

I know some of you would have loved to play in the NBA. Some people would love to own their own business, be a pilot, actor, score movies, etc. Make a list of these dream jobs in the box below.

My Dream Jobs
(Given Unlimited Talent)



Looking at your answers to this 2nd Passion Question, it's important that you take time to think through some of the jobs or careers you just listed and ask yourself this very important follow up question: Why do I have a passion for these things?

For many of us, the answer is simple. We are all thinking about individuals in these fields that we have been inspired by, and we want to be able to inspire and influence others in the same way.

Inspiration is ultimately the focal point of both passion questions. Identifying what inspires you in this life is so important. In fact, go ahead and take an inventory of anything that has ever inspired you and list why it inspired you.

Don't stop until you think through 7 examples.

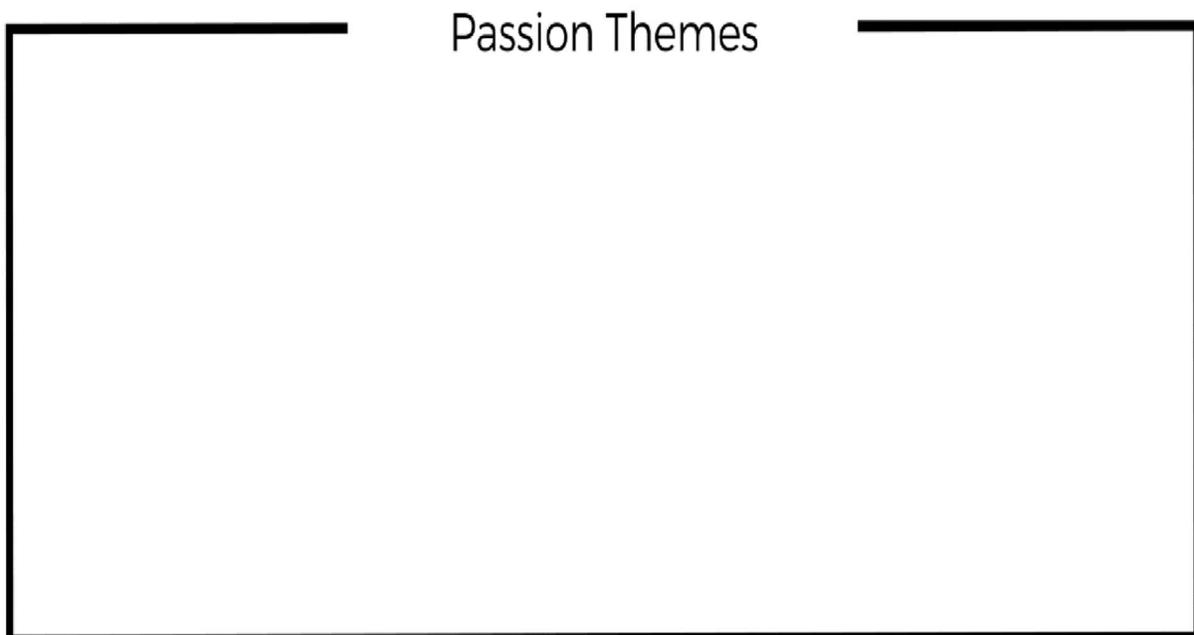
Things That Inspire Me



Now for some final self-reflection: Look at everything you wrote down under Passion Questions 1 & 2, plus your list of inspiring moments, and take note of any recurring themes, connections or anything that stands out to you.

Go ahead and light a cigar and grab your detective hat. Phone a friend for help, too, if needed. We are about to help you pull all this together, so hang on!

Passion Themes





Putting it all together

Ok, now it's time to zoom back out and take a look at the big picture. Let's go back through the answers you gave, and follow the directions to summarize everything on this one page puzzle sheet.

The thing about puzzles is that everyone goes into solving them with a strategy. We start with the border, sort the colors, have the box cover close as a reference and pick a section to start in. Ironically, when it comes to solving the puzzle of who we are and what we are designed to do in this life, we execute only a fraction of the strategy that we use in solving a simple picture puzzle.

As we wrap up section 2 of the **Catalyst Purpose Project**, you have created a border around your purpose and sorted everything into sections. The problem is you don't have the box cover, just the pieces ready to be connected, so let's connect some pieces.

Connecting the Pieces with 3 Steps

Step 1: What Themes do you see?

Put back on your detective hat. If these were all clues to solving the mystery of what your specific purpose can look like, what stands out to you? Remember, there is NO 1 CORRECT ANSWER, only well researched theories based on your own self-reflection. The only way to know for sure will be to pick a direction and begin walking down it. (We will cover that in the next section).

Step 2: Draw a line between Similar Themes.

Maybe you see that one thing some of our answers have in common is that they deal with interacting face to face with people. In that case, what need might these people have that you want to help them with?

Maybe you see that creativity is a theme. You love creating. What kinds of things would you create, and what purpose would they serve?

Step 3: Connect your Themes to your Passions with a Purpose Statement.

In drawing some conclusions, you may see that you are a highly creative person, who enjoys dealing with people face to face and has a passion to help them overcome traumatic pain in their life.

Possible areas of purpose could lie in Art Therapy, Counseling, teaching underprivileged youth, or doing something new that nobody else is doing.

In the bottom center of the puzzle diagram, you want to connect these themes and passions using a purpose statement like this:

“I can see myself doing _____ for _____, because I would be excited to see _____.”

Specific Examples:

I can see myself teaching guitar for adults, because I would be excited to see them embrace the idea that it's never too late to explore new passions.

I can see myself starting a 24-7 teen center for all teens, because I would be excited to see them have access to people who care about who they are and where they are going personally, professionally and spiritually.

I can see myself serving on the school board for my school district, because I would be excited to see every student receive the best possible education experience our tax dollars can create for them.

Take some time to think through a few purpose statements of your own and write down at least 3 in the center of the puzzle.

Your purpose statements will land on something that can be defined in one of 3 ways:

1. Completely new
2. Kind of like what you are doing or
3. A bigger step down the path you are already on

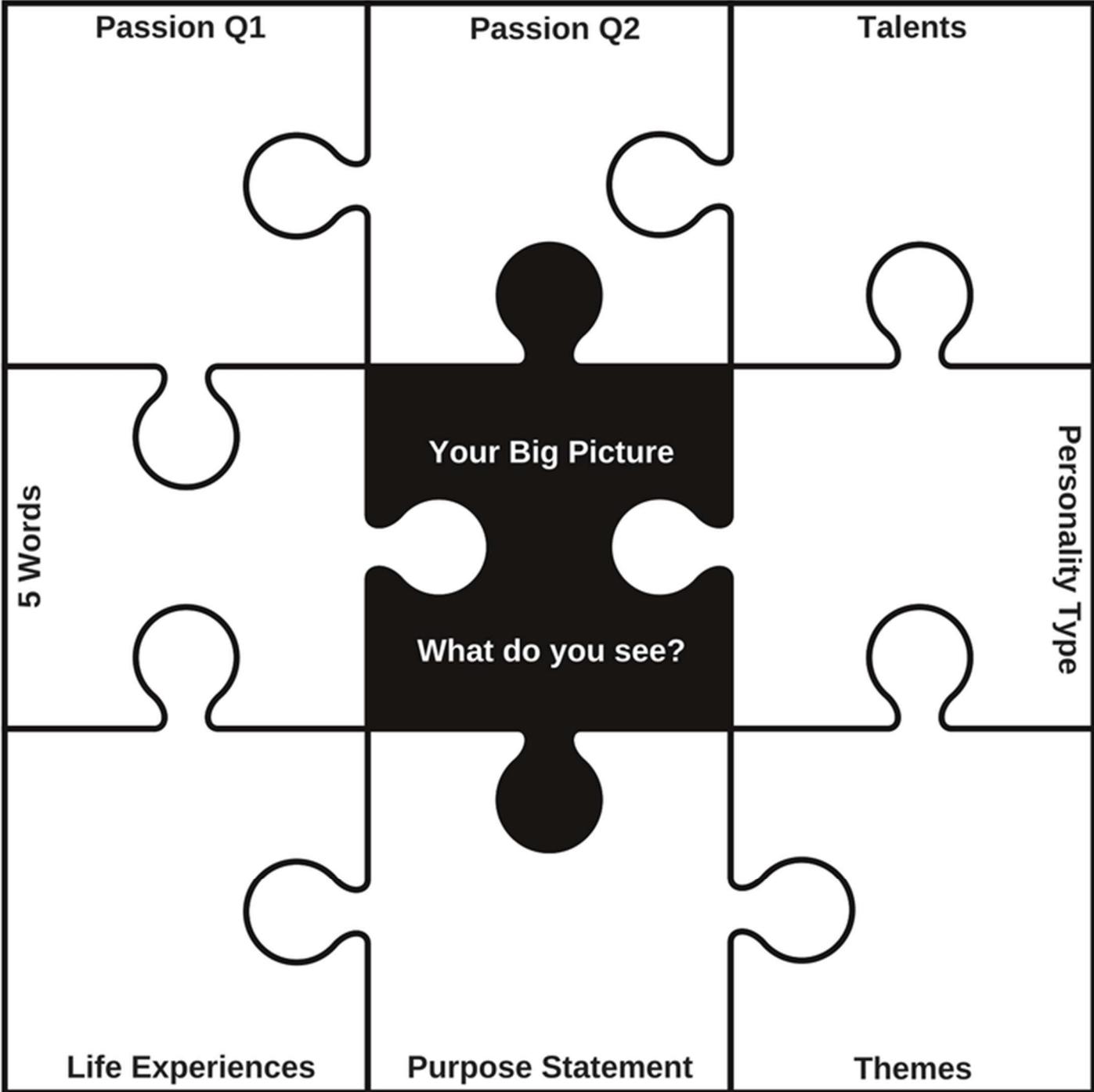
This is where we will pick up in Section 3, because it is now time to narrow your focus. Before we move on though, I want to tell you that the vast majority of people on this planet never even get this far in the pursuit of their unique purpose.

YOU ARE DOING GREAT!

If you are not happy with the purpose statements you have crafted, we have a few options for you:

1. Show 5 people your puzzle overview from this exercise and ask for their input on what themes they see and what purpose statement it might result in.
2. Consider taking advantage of a 30 minute or 1 hour coaching session with our team. We will look at what you have written down so far, ask you a bunch of questions and help you think through possible purpose statements. To learn more about our coaching sessions, go to <http://www.catalystpurposeproject.community>

If you are excited about some of the purpose statements you have written, it's time to move to Section 3, where we will help you narrow your focus and create an action plan.



Notes

Section 3

Develop Your Purpose





Narrowing your focus

Narrowing Your Focus

It's now time to choose which purpose statement to pursue.

If you are still afraid of making a 'wrong' choice, it's probably a good time to remind you that the only wrong choice is not choosing any of them.

This could also be a good time to re-watch the video on freedom from Section 1. There are tons of purpose statements you could actually make because God has put a very diverse set of unique talents, life experiences and passions within you.

Yes, it is possible to start down a path only to later find out it's not the right one. You are afraid of wasting time, money and energy on something that may not work out. It's a risk and your inclination is to avoid risk.

But here's the problem: You will never find success without risk.

Risk is just part of the equation. Risk leads to failure and if you want to do something with your life that is meaningful, you need to learn to embrace failure.

Risk and Failure are your friends. (We will remind you of this later in Section 4.) Risk and Failure are here to toughen you up. This is war, remember? This world needs people who can overcome their fears of failing and push forward anyway. That is what it means to be courageous.

So, let's acknowledge our fears as being real, because they will not really ever go away, but they can be managed and even help us develop courage, which is absolutely needed in order to bring our dreams into reality.

Evaluating Your Purpose Statements

It's best to have at least 2, but no more than 3 purpose statements. The following exercise will help you narrow this down to one. Write each statement in the box **provided**, and in the column to the right, add a tally mark for each statement that meets the following criteria:

- Add 1 mark if the statement is in line with something somewhat aligned to what you are already doing **in life**.
- Add 1 mark to the statement you get most excited about.
- Add 1 mark to the statement that lines up with something you are already good at.
- Add 1 mark to the statement that best fits your Myers Briggs Personality Type. If you are not sure, google career options for your personality type. “ENFP Careers”
- Add 1 mark to the statement that you think has the highest probability of becoming reality.
- Add 1 mark to the statement that a friend thinks you should pursue.
- Add 1 mark to the statement that most closely connects to a very impacting life experience.
- Add 1 mark to the statement that you most likely have the time and resources to pursue now.
- Add 1 mark to the statement that you think will draw out the best in you if you pursue it.
- Add 1 mark to the statement that would make the most impact in the lives of others.
- Add 1 mark to the statement that you feel you would gain the most support for from others if you pursued it.
- Add 2 marks to the statement that you will most regret never going after.
- Add 2 marks to the statement you would be willing to sacrifice the most over to see it happen.

Purpose Statements	Tally Marks
	

Out of a total possible score of 15, which statement came out on top?

In the event of a tie, go with the one that you will most regret never going after, or that you would be willing to sacrifice the most over.

When we punch out of this life, we will all have regrets. Now is the time to decide which regrets you can live with and which ones you can't. If you pursue something and it does not work out, at least you will never have to live with the regret of not trying. To me, that is much worse than trying and coming up short.

It's extremely rare to hit a homerun with your first attempt at something, but the more at-bats you give yourself, the higher the chances of eventually knocking one out of the park.

Chosen your statement?

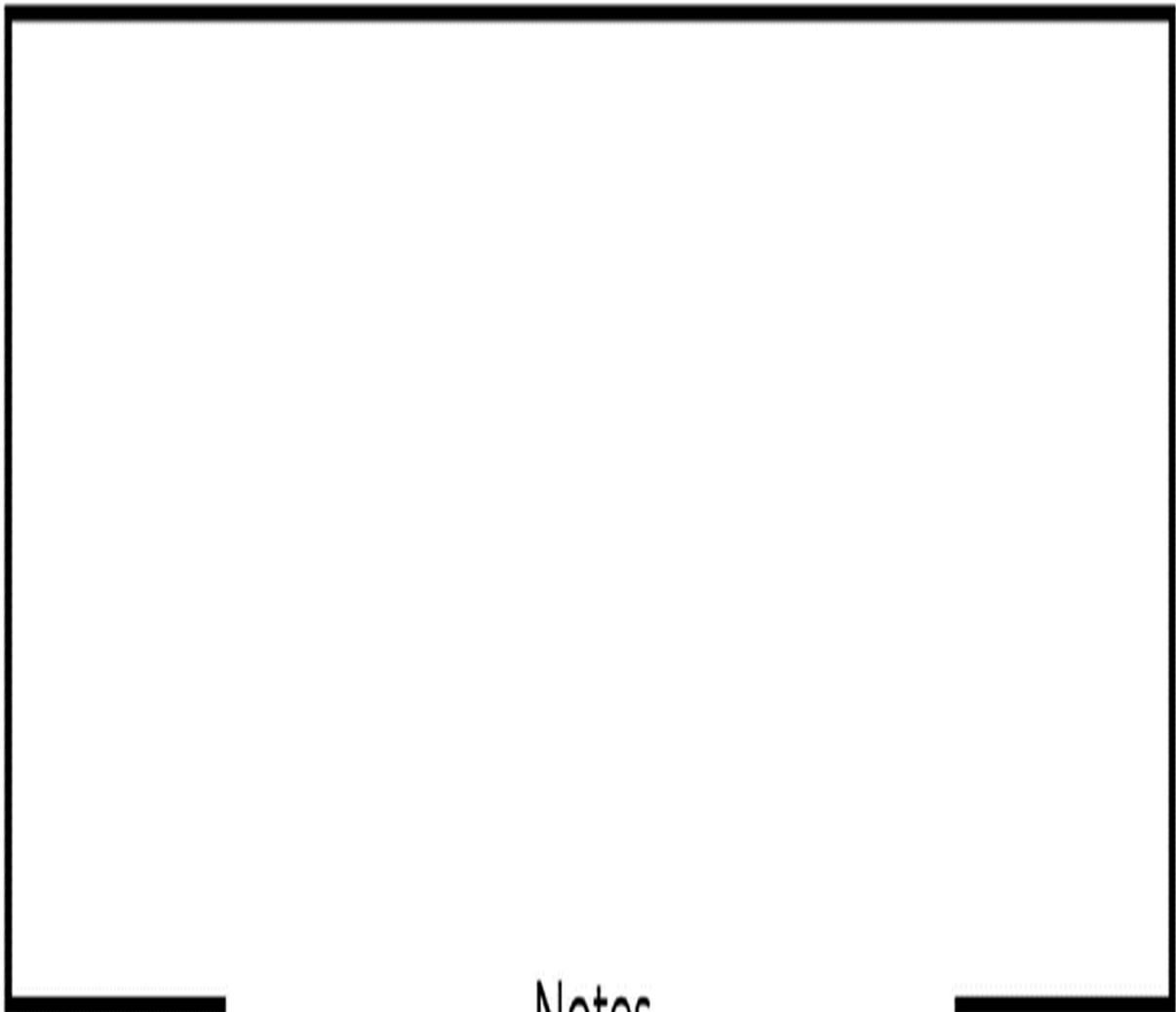
Starting something new is always exciting. The excitement will come and go, as the level of adversity you encounter increases, but that is all part of the journey.

You got this.

Take every thought captive right now that is causing doubt. You are making the most educated guesses any human can make at this point, when it comes to purpose and direction. You have already learned so much about how to self-evaluate that even if you stopped right here, you could still help hundreds of people get to the point you are at right now.

But you are not stopping.... This is only the beginning.

With your chosen purpose statement in hand, we are now going to create a life mission statement that will ensure your success, before you ever even put any plans into motion.



Notes



Creating a Legacy Vision for Your Life

“What you get by achieving your goals is not as important as what you become by achieving your goals.” - Zig Ziglar

I'm so proud of you for not skipping this part! Your attention to detail is important and will be a significant factor in your success down the road.

So, what is a Legacy Vision, and why is it important?

A legacy vision statement is one or two sentences that describe how your life will influence others, before it is over. Unlike your purpose statement that focuses on doing something, your legacy statement focuses on being something.

Here is mine:

“To encourage those around me in their God- given gifts and passions, while providing opportunities for others to discover, develop and pursue what matters most to them.”

Others might be something like:

“To inspire people in their creative talents, and help them live with hope despite having endured great despair.”

“To be that best student of history I can be, so that I may help others learn from the past and forge a better future.”

A legacy vision is something that you want others to say about you after you are gone. In the business world, we call this beginning with the end in mind. And, it's so very important.

With a legacy vision in place, you are free to live it out in any number of situational possibilities. You can create purpose statements, pursue after them, and even fall short, and it won't matter.

Why? Because in the process of doing you are being.

Steve Jobs, the founder of Apple, died before he was ready. Even though what he had accomplished was an enormous success, he still died with unfulfilled plans on the table. People will never know the things he might have brought to life if he had an extra 10 years, but they will know how he inspired a generation to never give up on their creative ideas.

In the process of doing, Steve was being a person that was inspiring so many lives.

We don't know exactly what his legacy vision was, or if he even had one, but we do know that he left behind a memorable legacy.

You and I may never influence as much of the planet as Steve Jobs, but that doesn't matter. What matters is that we have a legacy vision in place, so that when we evaluate our success in life it is being measured not as much by what we accomplish but rather how we live.

There are so few role models in our world today because so few people actually live out- consistently- who they claim to be. Ask people why they no longer attend church, and many will point to Christians who have consistently modeled a life that counters that of Jesus. Ask teens when they don't respect their parents, or employees why they don't respect their bosses, and you find the same type of response.

As humans, we desire to be led by others who can consistently (not perfectly) be the person we long to be.

Since I used an example from the apostle Paul earlier in this project, it makes sense to point out that Paul, in his letter to the Corinthian Church, encouraged others to follow his lead, as he followed Jesus' lead. His purpose statement was to plant churches among the Gentiles in Europe and the **Middle East**. His legacy vision, however, was to model the life of Jesus, as well as he could, and help others do the same. Some of the churches he founded did well, while others struggled. In the end, Paul's success was not measured by the quantity of churches he planted, but rather by the consistency he modeled, while showing the world what it looked like to be a follower for Jesus.

So, what does this mean for you? Although we are giving the majority of attention to finding and developing your purpose, your success in this life does not hinge on obtaining and fulfilling a specific purpose. Success, instead, is determined by fully embracing your general purpose over your specific purpose.

Establishing a legacy vision can help you stay aligned with what matters most. What do you want others to remember about the way you lived? Consistently choose to BE a person worth following and allow the cultivating of your specific purpose to express that as well as you can.

We are about to build a serious framework around your specific purpose, but I would encourage you to not move on before establishing your Legacy Vision. When you are ready, write it here:

My Legacy Vision



Creating Strategic Goals

Creating Short Term Goals and Strategic Actions around your Purpose Statement

*“Setting goals is the first step in turning the invisible into the visible. “
Tony Robbins*

If you have arrived at this part of the project before solidifying your purpose statement and legacy, you are moving too fast. Being impatient in this process will come back to haunt you at some point.

Let's assume you are ready to go. How do you know you are taking the right steps down the path? It begins with creating a short-term vision.

I know.

How many of these vision/mission/purpose/legacy statement things does a person have to make?!?!?

This is the last one, I promise.

Your short-term vision is something that you can realistically accomplish within the next 3 months to 3 years. It's looking forward, but not so far forward that you lose stamina during the pursuit.

The elements that make up your short-term vision statement include the following components:

1. Practical milestones you need to achieve in pursuit of your specific purpose.
2. Something that will require discipline, sacrifice and focus.

Short-term vision statements are fluid. They should change more often than any other statement you have made so far.

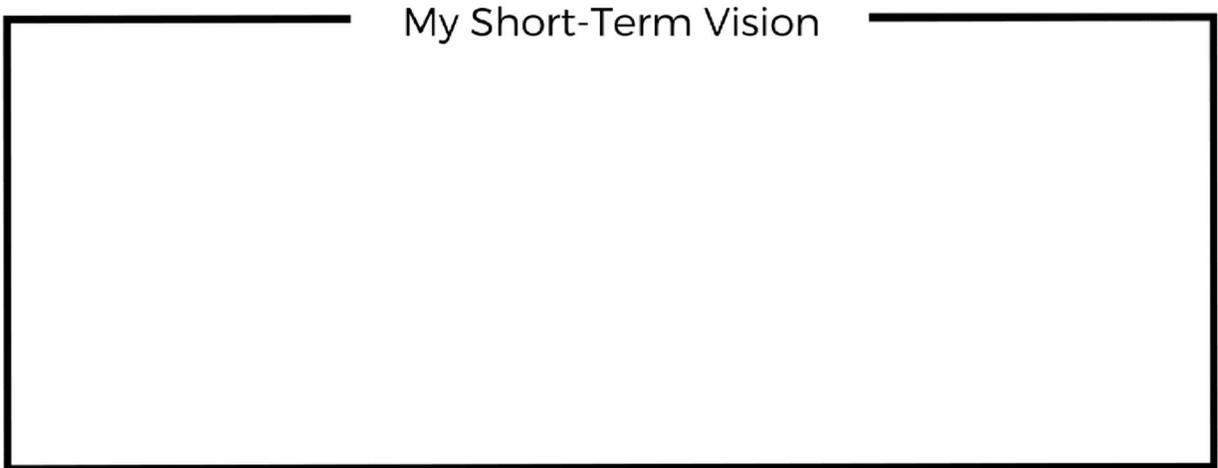
Here is mine:

“To establish our first 24-7 center with diverse and sustainable funding sources.”

- ✓ It is something that can be done within 3 years.
- ✓ It includes milestones: Securing our first location and having the funding to maintain it.
- ✓ It will require my discipline, sacrifice and focus.

Your turn. In the space below, write out your short-term vision statement.

My Short-Term Vision



Around this short-term vision, we will now create some goals and strategic actions. These will become your focal point over the next 12 weeks and will be updated when the period is over.

Why 12 weeks?

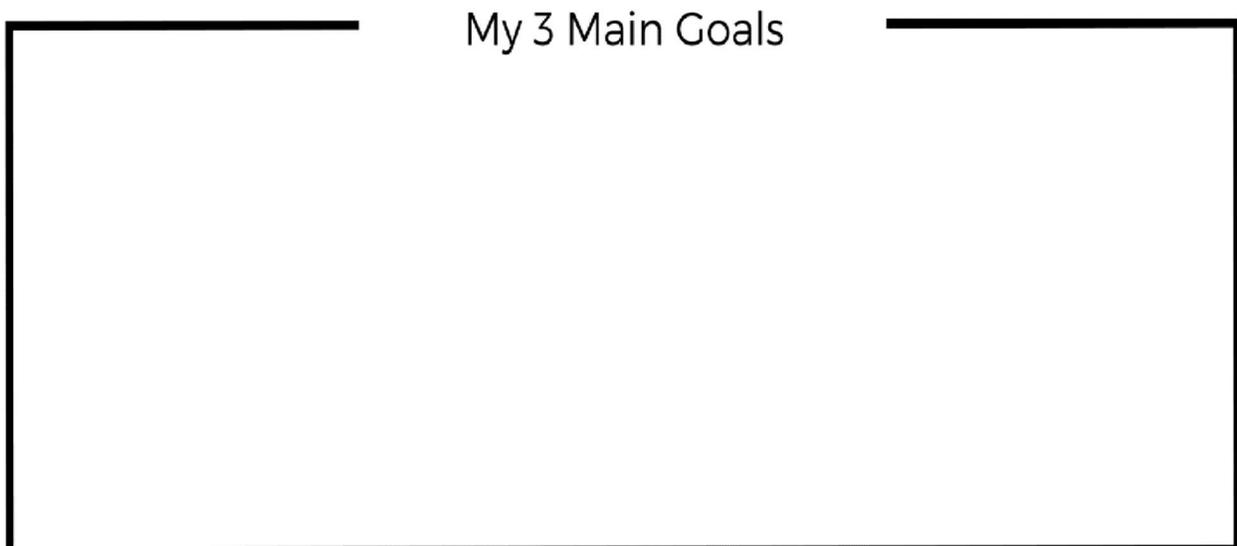
We want to build and keep momentum. How many times have you set a New Year's resolution, only to give up on it in February? Annual goals are good, but quarterly goals create a sense of urgency to get things done. From now on, we encourage you to goal set in 12 week increments. Try it for at least one quarter, before you make a decision, regarding whether or not it works for you.

Focus on 3 Main Goals

In light of your short-term vision, what are the 3 most important things you need to accomplish first and can do so within 12 weeks?

List them below.

My 3 Main Goals



To accomplish these goals, what strategic actions must you take over the next 12 weeks?

HINT: They should be specific and measurable. Here is an example...

12 Week Planner
CATALYST COLLECTIVE

Legacy Vision
To be a lighthouse where my family, friends, and others can find refuge from the storm and I can point them "home".

Short Term Vision
Create a center serving my diverse community and allowing them opportunities to give back to their community.

12 Week Goals

- Learn, Learn, Learn
- Meet people who have created non profits/Centers like I want
- Draft Business Plan
- Map sustainable funding

Strategic Actions

Tour a Non-profit and ask to meet with a director	Write a draft of the business plan	Share the draft with my team and review
---	------------------------------------	---

We have a few different version of this 12-week tracker you can download your free at <http://www.catalystpurposeproject.community>

Before you take off, I want you to share a copy of your completed tracker with one or more people from your team.

What team?

The one you are about to assemble, because nothing great is ever accomplished alone.



Building Your Team (Collaboration)

Earlier, we promised we would talk about environment in more detail, and here we go. You should have already involved people in helping you through Section 2. It's possible that those same people could play a role in the team that you need to put around you, in order to succeed. They could also be completely different.

Here is what you are looking for: 5 people. They must be...

- ✓ Knowledgeable
- ✓ Supportive
- ✓ Able to tell you the hard truth

Their knowledge base should be diverse. Three out of your five should have experience you respect in one of each of your 3 main goals in the first 12 weeks. Let's use my short-term mission statement as an example:

"To establish our first 24-7 center with diverse and sustainable funding sources."

If I was just getting started down this path, and it was literally day 1, my goals in the first 12 weeks would be:

1. Market Research - Talk to those who have established Teen Centers in the past.
2. Creating a Business Plan - Envision how ours will be set apart and function.
3. Find Strategic Partners - Network to find others who share my passion.

With these 3 goals, I would be looking for mentors who, respectively:

1. Have run a non-profit for Teens and would be willing to support my efforts.
2. Have created and executed business plans in the past and can give me guidance.
3. Are interested in sharing in this work with me as volunteers, board members or partners.

But you don't know who those people are yet, do you? Most of us don't- which is why you must learn to network.

To be honest, I hate networking. As an INTJ personality type, my preference is to not interact with humans at all. I also know that the things I am passionate about have no chance of happening, if I don't push myself out of my comfort zone daily.

Networking is one of many ways I must do that.

The best place to start networking for people that you can draw closer to your short-term vision is to leverage social media. Start with Facebook friends, people that are closer to you, and tell them what you are doing and who you are looking for.

When I did market research on Teen Centers, there were none in my area, and the people I knew didn't know anyone I could connect with in that field, so I went to Google. I found Teen Centers across the USA, picked up the phone, and starting talking to any of the Founders or Directors I could.

I learned so much doing this. None of these people ended up being a permanent part of my team, but that's ok. When I shared my vision with people in my church, several came forward and wanted to get involved. Many became my first board members.

As your goals change, so should some of the people you surround yourself with. So, keep looking for people who can speak wisely into the areas you are focused on.

That's 3 out of the 5. Here is what you are looking for in the other 2 areas:

- ✓ Someone who shares your passion in this area.
- ✓ Someone who will support and encourage you no matter what.

These are your special advisors. They are in the loop, regarding what you are doing. They can help you find resources, cheer you on, have your back in prayer and be your listening ear. Those that comprise these two categories are the ones that make you feel you are not alone on this journey.

Now here is something you need to remember: Putting a great team around you takes time.

Make it your goal to develop your team within the first 12 weeks, but don't get frustrated if it doesn't happen. Be patient. Share your vision for the road ahead with others, and you will eventually cross paths with the people you want around you. Some hang around for months - and others years.

What you have control over is the networking piece of the strategy. Never quit trying to put the right people around you, and be quick to remove those that derail your momentum. Your team is your own personal eco-system; It's an environment designed to draw out the best in you, so develop and maintain it well.

Potential Team Members



Personal SWOT Assessment

Your Personal SWOT Assessment

I'm sure you are tired of self-analyzing, which is why this next segment will be something you are tempted to skip again - but don't. Our team does SWOT assessments at least twice a year, and they create the blueprint for everything we do. That's how valuable they can be.

This evaluation has been around for quite some time, so while you may be familiar with it, you may not have completed one that focuses on yourself.

SWOT stands for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats. Most people draw it out like this:

Strengths	Weaknesses
Opportunities	Threats

We recommend taking yourself through this in May and December, or at least twice a year. Doing so will result in:

- Clarity of direction and purpose.
- Affirmation of what you are doing right.
- Identifying where you might need help.
- Being more aware of what is happening around you.

It also doesn't take very long to complete. So, let me guide you through the 4 areas of assessment before you try it.

1. Strengths

As it sounds, strengths identify what you are doing well or, in the beginning, what you anticipate you will do well. Maybe you are highly disciplined - then, include discipline on this list. Maybe you love connecting with new people - Include networking, as well.

Don't stop until you record 7-10 strengths that you have and that are relative to your short-term vision and 12 week goals. If you want to be a pilot, don't include the fact that you are a great cook.

2. Weaknesses

Same concept as above: Identify what you are not doing well, or what you anticipate not doing well, in relation to your current vision and goals.

3. Opportunities

In light of what you are setting out to do, what are the biggest opportunities you need to take advantage of? If school is a required piece to achieving your specific purpose, is there an opportunity to take at least one class this semester? Could you commit to attend a conference in the field you are interested in?

What if you desire to be an entrepreneur and you already know a successful entrepreneur that is willing to mentor you? That's an opportunity. Anything that can advance your progress in achieving your goals is an opportunity.

List 5-7 potential opportunities.

4. Threats

Great leaders are often glancing towards the horizon to see what is headed their way. There are always potential obstacles trying to take us out, and sometimes those hurdles are beyond our control.

Maybe you are battling an illness, and it is slowing progress towards reaching your goal. Maybe your plan takes some startup capital, and you are not sure how to go about acquiring the money.

Virtually anything can become a threat to your progress, so you want to evaluate some of the biggest potential threats that would keep you from pursuing your specific purpose.

Ok, done. Now what?

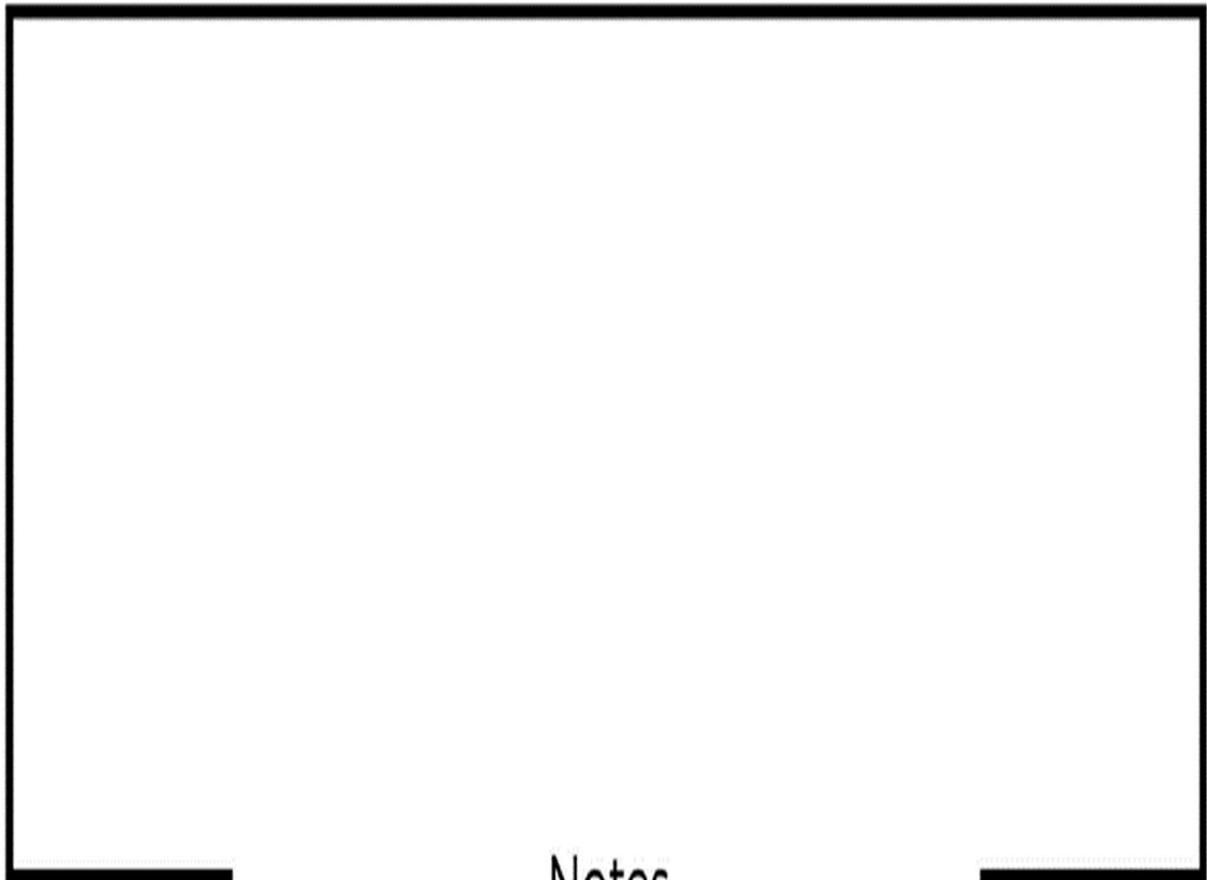
✓ Address any imminent threats first. Seek wise counsel from others, as to what you can do to avoid stopping your progress all together. The threats you identify should be reflected somewhere in your 12 week goals or strategic actions.

✓ Make sure you have a plan in place to take advantage of the opportunities that are before you.

✓ Lean on your strengths and outsource your weaknesses. If administration is a weakness for you, find someone that can hold you accountable or volunteer to help you in this area. Focus the majority of the time operating in the things you do well, and find a way to navigate around your weaknesses.

The SWOT assessment can be a great tool in helping you see the big picture. We all suffer from tunnel vision at times. Try not to get so caught up in the daily grind that you miss what is happening at the 1000 ft. level.

After completing your personal SWOT assessment, record your biggest takeaway from this exercise in the space below.



Notes

Section 4

Work Your Purpose





The Urgent/Important Matrix

If I could turn time back to the start of my career, I would make someone teach me about the Urgent/Important Matrix. I think it would have simplified and focused my efforts in more ways than I can imagine.

In a speech to the Second Assembly of the World Council of Churches, former U.S. President Dwight D. Eisenhower, said: **"I have two kinds of problems: the urgent and the important. The urgent are not important, and the important are never urgent."** This "Eisenhower Principle" is said to be how he organized his workload and priorities.

You cannot afford to overlook applying this to your life.

Before you begin, it is best to brainstorm all the things you do on a weekly or monthly basis. These are tasks you spend time doing or responsibilities you have. When we did this for our organization, we came up with almost 30 things. We then sorted it, using the parameters we have outlined for you below.

The Urgent/Important (Top Left)

These are all things that are both immediate and important. Your success hinges on giving focus to these areas with 80% of your time and effort.

The Not Urgent/Important (Top Right)

This is your long-term strategy section most likely. They are important for your success in the future, but ultimately they can wait because you have bigger fish to fry.

The Urgent/Not Important (Bottom Left)

These are all the annoying things that suck up your time, scream for your attention, but in the end, don't play a vital role in your success. Steven Covey calls them "time pressured distractions."

The Not Urgent/Not Important (Bottom Right)

In this section, you would put things that are good to do, but in light of everything else you listed, produce the least amount of return on investment. Often, these need to be delegated or completed in your dead time.

This is what our list looked like.

	Urgent	
Important	Social Media Posts Open House's Networking/Prospecting Film Projects Recruit Working Board Success Coach/Mentoring Content Creation Speaking/Workshops Executive Team Planning Development Team Mgmt Prayer Donor Development Managing our Technology Marketing	Not Urgent
		Board Committee's focused on processes Volunteer Onboarding Attending Programs Intern Team Development Program Development Program Tracking/Metrics
Not Important	Website Management Random Admin Stuff	Planning non fundraising events Community Service Projects Enewsletters Managing ASUM Students Financial Reports Grant Writing Blogging

Once you complete this for yourself, I would print it out and post it somewhere you are forced to look at it every day. It is way too easy for us to drift away from our focus. We can't even keep our hands off our cell phones, when our car slows down in traffic. Our culture has made us busybodies that exert lots of energy, yet have little to show for it.

So, go ahead and think through all that you have on your plate, and begin to sort them in your own Urgent/Important Matrix.

Your goals and strategic actions should reflect what is in the Urgent/Important section. If not, you need to either reconsider whether you have the right goals -or if the task is something that is both urgent and important.

For those of you that believe EVERYTHING is urgent AND important, pull one of your team members in on this. Their outside perspective is very valuable.

Urgent

Not Urgent

Important

Not Important



The 3 Biggest Time Wasters

“Yesterday is gone. Tomorrow has not yet come. We have only today. Let us begin.” – Mother Teresa

If you are pounding through this purpose project and have gotten this far without skipping any steps - you probably feel more organized than you have felt in a long time.

That's great!

Let's keep you focused on your goals by addressing the 3 biggest things that suck your time away. Time management may be a natural talent of yours, but it's not for most of us. Even if you are great about controlling your schedule, you will still find areas you can adjust to create even more space to pursue your passion.

These 3 time wasters are after you. I wish there were only 3, but if I gave you a list of 100 you might get overwhelmed and quit before you start. You might have something that is not on this list but also steals lots of your time; if so; it's a threat and should be accounted for in your personal SWOT assessment.

Let's look at each of the 3 time wasters individually and assess the threat level they pose in your life.

#1 Sleep

The average person spends one third of their day asleep. Unfortunately, sleep is necessary, but if you getting more or less than 8 hours of sleep, something is robbing you of your time.

I have heard people say they NEED 10 hours of sleep each night, when really what they NEED is a better diet and sleep schedule. If you are serious about pursuing a specific purpose in your life, you need to seriously consider what you are willing to sacrifice to attain it. Life does not care if you are a morning person, night owl or something in between. If you are sleeping 10 hours a day when you should be aiming toward 8, you are wasting 730 hours a year on something you can learn to do without. That is an entire month you are throwing away every year just by sleeping!!

Conversely, if you are averaging 6 hours of sleep per night, my question is, "Why"? Is it because you are working your butt off toward your goals, or is it because you spend too much time playing?

If your lack of sleep is a result of anything entertainment related or extracurricular, you are also not serious about achieving anything that matters in this life.

At least not yet....

#2 Free Time

Like sleep, free time is something we all need to recharge and take a break from the norm. Some of us feel we have no free time, and others don't realize how much they actually have.

According to the Department of Labor Statistics, the average working American has 4 hours of free time per day, not including weekends. I think it's more like 6 to 7 hours per day. Let me show you what I mean.

My alarm goes off at 6 a.m. Like you, I have to eat and get ready. I then have to go somewhere and sit in some traffic. When I settle at my desk, I'm checking email and getting distracted by junk email and social media. Eventually, it will be time for lunch. Midafternoon will demand a break of some sort. When things are slow, I turn back to social media. Then more time in the car traveling home or somewhere equally necessary - each evening, I get around to the gym, dinner, TV, reading, time with kids, etc., before finally getting back into bed for another night's sleep!

If I had someone following me around with a stopwatch and asked them to mark down all the time I had free to do something related to my goals but didn't, what would they come up with?

A ton of time I wasted being checked out or entertained. Add that to the 4 hours of normal free time the average American has, and I think it's safe to say we have more time than we realize.

#3 Excessive Communication

I am the kind of person that likes to get straight to the point, but when I am passionate about a topic, I tend to get long winded. We waste so much time communicating information that is just not necessary.

A phone call is often much faster than texting something that is hard to explain. A simple text is often faster than a long email explanation. We can get on a phone call with someone for a quick chat and find ourselves talking about the most random topic that has no value for either of us.

And I know all of us have been in an hour-long meeting that should have taken 5 minutes.

Don't get me wrong- it's important to build relationships with others, and sometimes our lengthy communication is really about getting to know the people around us. Most of the time, however, it's not. It seems that we all could benefit from applying the urgent/important philosophy to each of our methods of communication.

Convey what is urgent and important in the first few minutes of conversation or connection, as often as possible. Use discernment about whether a call, email or text is most efficient.

Be mindful of repeating things you have already communicated. Stop treating your inbox as a trauma center. If you let the email sit there awhile, you may find that the problem solves itself.

Not all communication is both urgent and important. Find a way to say no and politely end communication, if it continues to drag on.

Your Top 3 Time Wasters

Just talking about time management is helpful, but what does it look like in your world? Take a minute to consider the top 3 time wasters you encounter and changes you can make to earn back some of that valuable time.

My Time Wasters



What To Do About Them



After acknowledging these are threats to your future success, your goal is to be more mindful of them and set small goals for yourself, by trying to build better habits in these areas. As an entrepreneur, I can't afford to stop learning. I have a list of podcasts, audiobooks and more ready to go while I drive, visit the gym, have lunch, etc. If I have 5 minutes between meetings, I am going to use that free time to research something online related to my goals.

It's about maximizing each day the best I can. It's about creating habits that help me and overcoming addictions that distract me. You get better at this over time, but you must start somewhere.



Avoiding Financial Pitfalls

It has taken us awhile, but we are finally here- The Money Talk. Sadly, bringing our unique purpose to life will cost us many things, one of which is money. This is where we sit down and figure out exactly how much money your journey down this path is going to cost you, and what you need to do to prepare for it.

There are two steps involved in this process:

1. A cost analysis.
2. A plan.

Let's jump right in.

1. Cost Analysis

There are costs associated with both your short-term vision and your 12 week goals. Here is an example list of some costs that I'm talking about:

- Education - School, conferences, books, online learning, etc.
- Equipment - Supplies of any kind that you need to purchase.
- Services - You may need to hire an expert in a specific area up front, to help you get off the ground.
- Time - If you have a job, you are trading time for money. If you need more time to develop your purpose, but can't afford to give up any of the time you have at work, you need to find a job where you can earn the same, if not more, money with less time. You need to give yourself a raise. (More on this in a minute.)

Using the chart below, begin to research and map out all the projected costs over a 3-year period, and then focus on those that are relative to the next 12 months.

If costs are within your reach, meaning you can already afford all the resources you need, great! Will that be the case in year 5 or 10 as well? If not, adjust the timeline and look at more of those longer-term costs.

Whatever number you come up with, add another 20%. Life always costs more than we think it does, and it's better to be more prepared than surprised.

Cost Item	Projected Costs	Amount

Now look at your first 12 month costs only, and divide that number by the amount of discretionary income you have each month that can help pay for these resources. Discretionary income is the average amount of money you have remaining each month after all necessary items like food, shelter, transportation are paid. You spend discretionary money on luxury items, vacations, entertainment...things that are not needed but wanted.

Example:

You are 22, going to school part time and working 30 hours a week. You average about \$12/hour at work and pick up a few small gigs, like babysitting, each month. So, your net income after taxes is about \$1300 per month.

You have taken a look at your bank statements over the last 3 months, and determined you have about \$150 per month in discretionary income, perhaps more if you don't go out to eat as much.

To execute your plan in pursuing your unique purpose, you will need about \$10,000, or at least that is what you are estimating, by completing the cost analysis above. So, it looks like this:

Your Net Income = \$1300
 - All Your Bills
 \$150 (Discretionary Income)

Your 12 Month Financial Goal of \$10,000 ÷ 12 = \$833.33 per month needed

\$833.33 - \$150 (of Discretionary Income) = \$683.33

It looks like you need an additional \$683 per month in discretionary income to finance the path you going down. What are your options?

2. The Plan

You are going to need to be creative. I am going to throw out some ideas for you to consider, and you will judge which might be feasible for you. If so, assign a monthly dollar value to each. You need to put together a plan that amounts to an extra \$683 a month (using my example), or whatever that number is for you, based on your own estimations.

- *Budget Better.* Next to rent, food is the largest expense people have each month. How much money can you save by adjusting either your living situation or eating habits?
\$ _____
- *Find another job.* Your low paying job should be a threat on your SWOT assessment. I know you feel like this is not your best option, but it is. In fact, I have so much to say on this topic that I had to devote a separate section to it, which we will examine more next. For now, let's just imagine you are capable of a 10% raise. Put that number here.
\$ _____
- *Pick up a side job.* With an additional 5 hours per week, could your automobile become a source of revenue as a taxi or delivery person? Could you do side work for a family member or friend? Could you pick up another job somewhere? Could you babysit or walk dogs? If this were the great depression, and you had to get creative, what could you do to bring in some extra income?
\$ _____
- *Borrow stuff.* Go back and look at your costs. Does everything have to be purchased? Is there anything on this list that you could borrow? Maybe there is, but you don't know who has it. Ask! This is where that networking thing comes into play. Ask - and keep asking. If you were to borrow a few items on your list, what would that save you per month?
\$ _____
- *Scholarships/Grants.* Have you looked into all the possible free money that is available? You might be surprised what you qualify for. If education is a line item in your cost analysis, spend time researching scholarships. Ask school counselors. Even localized conferences or workshops might consider scholarshiping you, if you put a good case together for them. It's a wildcard, but what would even a small scholarship save you?
\$ _____
- *Strategic Partnerships.* In the process of building your team, did you run into anyone that shares your similar passion? Would it be possible to network and find someone who wants to do what you want to do and partner together, so you can share resources? This is one of many reasons why nothing great is ever accomplished alone. What would you save every month by finding a strategic partner?
\$ _____

This is not a comprehensive list. Our goal is to pump the well of your creativity. Even if you came up with one idea that could save you some money, you are making progress. If you get stuck here, get others more experienced than yourself involved. Money will prevent you from doing lots of things in this world, if you let it. If you are fighting to bring something you deeply care about to life, you won't let money get in the way. You will not stop until you figure this out, because if you don't, you know you will regret not giving this everything you got.

In our experience, most people know they are capable of making more money somewhere other than where they are now, they just feel stuck. Even if that is not you, we encourage you to go through this next topic; because it will help you better guide those around you who are stuck.



How to Quit Your Dead End Job

There are lots of reasons people feel stuck at their job. See if any of these resonate with you right now:

- You don't feel you have the skills to do anything else.
- You don't know what else you even would want to do.
- You feel you should wait it out, because things might change.
- You feel you owe your current employer loyalty.
- You are comfortable where you are and don't want to risk leaving.
- You don't know how to find another job with your skills and experience.

Uncertainty, doubt, fear - we get it. Who hasn't been there? You know what they all have in common?

THEY ARE TERRIBLE REASONS TO STAY AT YOUR JOB!!

Most people never step into the things they were made, for because they are too busy settling for what they already have. You don't want to settle- which is why you are doing this project-but you also don't want to risk leaving only to fail.

That's ultimately the problem: Failure is part of the success equation. You can't achieve anything meaningful without risking failure. The first thing you have to decide to do, when it comes to your current job, is take risks. Once you commit to taking risks' you must learn how to take the right risks.

In search of more funds to finance the development of your unique purpose, here are "Do's & Don'ts" that can help you quit your dead end job and find something more beneficial to what you want to achieve.

DO:

- ✓ Identify what you need to make per hour and the types of jobs that pay that.
- ✓ Narrow your job search to 3 potential types of jobs that match your financial criteria.
- ✓ Create 3 versions of your resume that are geared toward each of these jobs.
- ✓ Network your butt off, sending your resume to 50 friends on Facebook.
- ✓ Set aside time every week to job hunt.

DON'T:

- X Send your resume to any job or manager you have not spoken to verbally.
- X Take a commission only job, unless you have spoken to sales people at that job.
- X Quit your job, until you have a starting date confirmed for your next one.
- X Network with friends sitting at other dead end jobs - aim higher.

The 3 Most Important Factors that will Land a Better Job:

#1. Networking. This has very little to do with your work experience and much more to do with who you know and what they think you are capable of. All of us know 50 people online. LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram...hit them all up and be honest and creative.

When my wife worked at Under Armor, she told me about an entry level sales person at another company that was trying to get the attention of an upper level director in her office. This guy took a selfie of himself kicked back at his desk, shoes off and feet propped up with his Under Armor socks showing. With a smile and thumbs up, the image he attached to his email to the director simply said, "I'm a big fan."

The director was so impressed with his creativity, he shared the email with his entire sales staff. This guy may have never closed a sale in his life, but his outside the box thinking earned him the right to be heard.

When you network with people you know across different industries, you are reaching into their network of people they know in other sectors. If 10 out of these 50 pass your resume on to someone they know with their stamp of approval - "Jim would be really great at _____. Here is his resume." You will move yourself to the top of the stack; win an opportunity to also be heard.

#2. A Disciplined Job Search. Networking and looking for available opportunities takes time. The process can drag on for months and months, if you do not get disciplined about when and how long you plan to search. If all you have is 10pm to Midnight, then finding a job BECOMES your second job for these 2 hours every night of the week.

It's hard. It's often discouraging. You will face rejection. However, this is all part of the character building process that you will carry with you into living out your purpose. What people don't tell you about getting to do the work they love is that it is just as much work, if not more, than the job you are currently stuck with. To get where you want to go, you will have to build discipline and learn to do things that you hate doing. There are no short cuts.

#3 Great Interview Skills. You need to read about interviewing and, if you know any managers that hire, practice mock interviews with them. So much hinges on your ability to impress others in an interview. There are entire books written on this, so make sharpening your interview skills part of the job search process.

The reality is hundreds of people get hired every day that have almost no skills for the job they just got hired for. They navigated around their experience, with strong referrals from networking and impressing managers during the interviews. The people that we coach who have trouble landing better jobs are falling far short in at least one of these two areas 100% of the time.

We believe in you. Be creative in how you present yourself and do your best to enjoy the ride.



Learn by Doing

**“For the things we have to learn before we can do them, we learn by doing them.”
— Aristotle**

Life is one big science experiment. You create an educated hypothesis about something, and then you conduct the experiment. If it doesn't work, you adjust something and try again.

That is exactly what you are doing with this Purpose Project.

You don't have to stress about getting it all right, because you won't. You just need to get enough of it right and be willing to learn from what didn't go according to plan. It's about adjustments.

At this point in the project, you have positioned yourself in a better place than perhaps you have ever been, in order to chase after what is most meaningful to you.

Now - it is time to commit to putting ideas into actions.

You have more focus and direction now than most people ever have in their entire life. A thousand people may purchase this very course, but the clear majority won't even make it past Section 2 before quitting.

If you got this far, I know you love learning. Now, you must love doing and taking risks just as much.

If we are in fact in a war, take a moment to look at what you have just equipped yourself with:

- ✓ A unique map of who God made you to be.
- ✓ A map of how the enemy will try to take you out (SWOT).
- ✓ A short term and long term vision of the future.
- ✓ A team around you ready to help you succeed.
- ✓ A strategic next steps action plan.

And, in this final section:

- ✓ A knowledge of the most important components that will determine your success.

And - you put all of this together for less than what you probably spent on your first date. That's pretty nuts!

You have the makings of someone who is ready to take the fight to the enemy. The more you put all you've learned into action, the more battle tested you become. You will not only be leading yourself well, but leading those around you, as they watch.

Everyone has some degree of influence, but yours is about to hit another level.

Commit to being an action oriented person- with a "nothing-to-lose attitude"- and you will look back on a life that was lived to its fullest.

And remember, it's not what you are doing that matters most, but who you are being as you go 'do' that creates the biggest impact in this life.

So now, let's turn to the final section of this project and look at the most important areas that will determine your ongoing success.



Notes

Section 5

Perfect Your Purpose





Becoming a Student of Life and Yourself

How many times in life have you felt like you were your own worst enemy? So often, we put ourselves in situations that set us up for failure.

We keep dating the wrong kinds of people, we settle for jobs where we know we won't be happy, we volunteer for things for which we don't have the talent or passion...on and on it goes.

Increasing our self-awareness is central to our ongoing success, no matter what we set out to do in life. This kind of insight about how we are wired, however, is not automatic. In order to consistently put yourself in a place where success is likely, you must commit to being a student of yourself, above anything else.

For the first several years of our organization, I was spending the majority of my time trying to do everything. While doing so, I drifted from one of the core strengths that I brought to our mission in the first place- speaking and teaching. When I took the Myers Briggs Type Indicator for the first time, I was shocked at how much my personality type (INTJ) described me to a T. I discovered that INTJs are often the jack of all trades, and as such, jump into many things they feel they can improve.

The result? Stretching myself too thin and not operating inside of my core strengths. Developing my ability to delegate and build up the people around me was going to be important, if I wanted to be successful.

So, what about you? How can you build habits that demonstrate you are committed to focusing on growing yourself- personally, professionally and spiritually?

Consider these 3 habits as central to your Future Success:

- 1. Establish quarterly learning goals.** I'm sure there are hundreds of things you would like to learn or do better, but which one is most important to your short-term goal achievement? Don't overload yourself with learning goals. If you do, you fail to become a practitioner and are at risk of acquiring knowledge you may never actually use.

Maybe you determine that you have a great blog you want to get in front of a target audience. Your quarterly learning goals should be to pick a marketing strategy you want to master and dive into acquiring that skill.

- 2. Invite steady feedback and evaluation into your life.** Your ability to be humble and invite healthy critique into your life will never become easy.

We are good at beating ourselves up when we fall short, so it doesn't feel like there is much benefit to inviting others to that party- but there is. Remember the section on putting a solid team of people around you? Read the book of Proverbs and count the number of times the author encourages us to seek wise council. It's wise, because it will speak into your life that which draws out the best in you.

Our suggestion? Don't let a 12-week period go by where you have not invited someone's feedback into the most important areas you are focusing on. It's often painful, sometimes encouraging, but more importantly, it is a necessary part of your commitment to personal growth and doing things with excellence.

- 3. When have a you win, figure out what exactly you did right.** When something goes wrong, we are quick to point the finger or launch an investigation into what happened. We want to know where we failed and make sure it doesn't happen again. Ironically, we rarely do this when something goes right- and we are fools not to. If we don't know what we did well when something good happens, how in the world can we ever repeat it? Thinking a win was attributed to something that had little impact on the outcome could be a costly mistake.

We could give thousands of examples here, but you don't need them. You just need to remember that people and organizations who win consistently do so, because they are extremely self-aware and take the time to investigate why things work as much as they investigate why they don't. It's a critical healthy habit that all of us are capable of.

At this point, does it feel like there is so much you must get right to be successful? I think about this almost every day. Leading yourself well is an intense balancing act. There are so many things that contribute to success. You just have to remember that not all things are weighted equally, and you will never be excellent at everything.

One of the main ideas behind Tom Rath's Strengths Finder series is the reality that we will never be excellent at everything, so it makes sense to take what we already do well and invest in doing it even better. What if, in our earlier example of making marketing a learning goal, you realized that this is something that just does not come naturally to you? In that case, you should begin to develop a plan to have someone else take over in this area. Sure, it may cost you more time and money, but it may also free you up to invest in areas that can make you an expert in your field.

Before you move on, ask yourself if you have a genuine plan in place to execute these 3 key habits of self-awareness and development. Document your plan here.

Notes



Things that take most people out

In coaching people of all ages, we come across several recurring themes that tend to stop someone's progress, if not take them out altogether. These are nothing new. You have been battling them your whole life. Like a big game of Whack-a-Mole, these things pop up and you have to see them and respond quickly to win.

In no specific order, here are the most common things that take most people out in the pursuit of purpose.

Losing Streaks

A losing streak is normally a string of negative events we experience over a period of time. Most of us recover from a bad day or two but a losing streak is normally more painful than that.

When the majority of things you invest in are not panning out, doubt flares up and you feel your mind and heart beginning to give up. Negative self-talk becomes louder. The war over your mind, body and spirit is at a peak.

What can you do when this happens?

My father loved Kenny Rogers and made me listen to one particular song, The Gambler, over and over. So, as Kenny puts it, "You got to know when to hold 'em, know when to fold 'em."

Losing streaks can sometime be just bad luck. More than likely they are a sign that something is off in your strategy. You may FEEL like folding; however, the wisest move is to HOLD. Launch an investigation into everything (and I mean EVERYTHING) that has been negative and invite your team into the mix to help troubleshoot with you.

At minimum, you will come up with some areas that may be contributing to your loses and have now put yourself in a position to adjust and try again. If the demon of negative self-talk feels too strong and you just can't find the motivation to keep going, then you need to pause all of your efforts and find an exorcist. I am a big believer in counseling. In fact, I think everyone on the planet needs it. At Catalyst, we even make our interns take counseling whether they feel they need it or not.

Bottom line, you must be mentally and spiritually strong to tackle developing your unique purpose over the long haul. Expect losing streaks. They are a normal part of the journey. When they happen, evaluate the loses, adjust your strategy and do whatever it takes to stay mentally and spiritually healthy.

“The body cannot live without the mind.”— **Morpheus, The Matrix**

Blood Suckers

In Jon Gordon’s book, *The Energy Bus*, he spends time talking about the impact that negativity has on our ability to get things done. When some of the people closest to us tend to only focus on how we might fail, what we are doing wrong and why things will never get better, they are sucking the passion and drive slowly out of us. Gordon calls these people “Energy Vampires” and warns that we must not waste time in removing them from the bus.

Of course, you can’t confuse these blood suckers with people who generally do want to see you succeed and yet, are not shy about delivering to you the hard truths. The blood suckers you are in the lookout for are the ones that continually suck the wind out of your sails. You need to identify the patterns and be quick to separate yourself from their involvement.

Easier said than done, right? What if it’s a spouse, boss or best friend?

You need to work up the courage to have an honest heart to heart with them. Tell them how you feel and how their words or actions are impacting you. If you have tried to communicate these kinds of things in the past, do it again. And, again. And, again. Each time you do, you show resolve to not fall victim to opinions that are derailing you, no matter how important those voices are to you.

If you build a habit of remaining silent in these situations, you are just hurting yourself. You bottle up resentment until one day you either quit or erupt. Instead, be quick to address the negativity as it arises and let people around you know that you are a person that refuses to be taken out by the opinion of others.

No, this is not easy and that’s exactly why it takes so many people out. Now you are aware it’s a real threat so put a strategy in place as to how you will hand blood suckers when they show up. If it doesn’t work, try something else. Doesn’t work? Keep adjusting and talk to others who have overcome this adversity in their journey. Eventually you will land on a system that works for you. And read Gordon’s book- it’s a good one.

Marathons

The very thought of running a marathon seems miserable. Yes, it would be cool to say I did it but it just seems like unnecessary self-torture to me. If you are a long-distance runner, I’m sure you understand the amount of focus and training it takes to compete. The rest of us don’t even consider the thought of it because we are so far out of shape in this area.

When a person decides they want to pursue their unique purpose, something that is of great passion and worth to them, they generally start out at a pace they cannot maintain over the long haul. Most people never make it out of the idea phase, much less implementation.

When you said yes to embracing who God uniquely made you to be, you signed up for a race not marked by distance but time. Were you intending on just dabbling in your passion or were you setting out to make a meaningful impact in the lives of others? You are either committing to developing your unique purpose for the rest of your life or you are fine just settling for average.

As a Christian, I believe in the idea of sanctification. That fancy church word that means I am in the process of modeling my life after Jesus. It's a process that I will never fully achieve until I get to heaven but that doesn't stop me from making progress. When other Christians let me down, I remember that they too are in the process of sanctification and are no better or worse off than me. Progress is slow, painful and includes setbacks, but it's still progress if I can stay focused on the long-term goal.

Long distance runners, Christians and so many other types of people on this earth must adapt to being clearly focused on their long-term goal in order to endure the difficulties they will encounter in reaching their destination. The way you do this is by establishing healthy rhythms in your life that can sustain you.

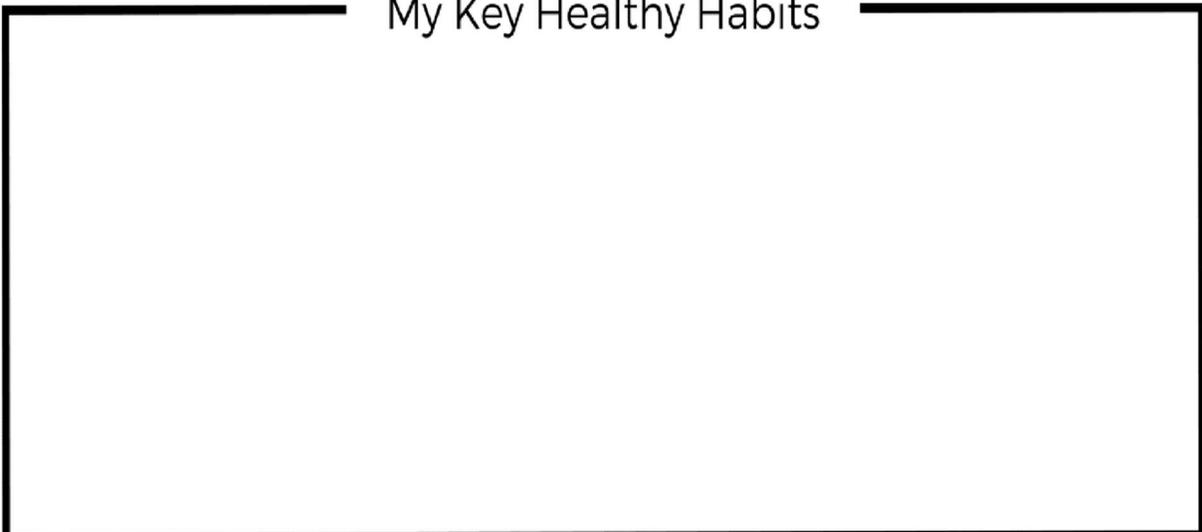
You are going to have bursts of energy or passion along the way. Other legs of this race will seem dry and mundane. Healthy rhythms can help you build stamina so let's take a look at a few ways to do that:

- Establish a weekly rhythm of nutrition and exercise. Your body is not a tire; you don't own a spare.
- Build in frequent short breaks in the week and longer ones every few months. Like a swimmer, you must come up for breath to keep going.
- Begin and end your day with thanksgiving. I mentioned this as part of my core strategy before. It will help you stay focused on the positive.
- Choose an object that will help you keep the end in mind. For me, it's a simple print out of my legacy vision. I look at it before I plan my week and have done so for years.
- Set aside time to think on a weekly basis. There are different types of thinking - creative, strategic, prayer etc. Hit the pause button and zoom out. It's a great habit to get into to reset your mind and focus on what matters most.

Ok, we are not going to list every healthy habit imaginable. You know yourself. What habits are important for you to build in order to not be taken out by Losing Streaks, Blood Suckers and Marathons?

Throw your thoughts down here.

My Key Healthy Habits





Embracing Failure and Adversity

It feels like we have already talked about this, doesn't it?

Well there is something I have wanted to say but have been waiting until close to the end before doing so. I wanted to save the most encouraging and inspiring stuff for this very moment so here it goes....

You are a failure.

Let's look at some of the things you have failed at thus far in life.

- ✓ You have lied to people.
- ✓ You have talked trash about people behind their back.
- ✓ You have taken things that do not belong to you.
- ✓ You have been insensitive at times.
- ✓ You have used words to tear people down rather than build them up.
- ✓ You have implemented ideas that didn't work out.
- ✓ You have made a judgement about someone and been wrong.
- ✓ You have quit on things too soon.
- ✓ You have let people around you down.

And this is just the warm up.

You can keep going for another few pages if you feel inspired to. You have screwed up a ton.

And yet, you are still here. Alive. Seeking to make the most out of this life you have been given. Despite your epic fails, you still have hope.

And hope keeps us moving forward even when the reality of failure looms.

That's right. Failure in some form is imminent yet again in your life and if I were you, I would learn to embrace it. Humility cannot exist without failure and humility is the secret ingredient to navigating through this rollercoaster of life.

Here is how failure fuels the resolve of the humble.

- ✓ It protects you from arrogance.
- ✓ It tests your faith.
- ✓ It brings to light areas you are weak.
- ✓ It builds your character.
- ✓ It exposes fear.
- ✓ It inspires honest evaluation.
- ✓ It teaches patience.
- ✓ It advances wisdom.
- ✓ It strengthens your strategy.

Failure is life's most proficient teacher. Its lessons are painful, but the absence of its education would be far more damaging.

Failure is the best friend you always wanted but never had. It is here to ultimately remind you once again that success in this life is not about what you are doing but who you are being.

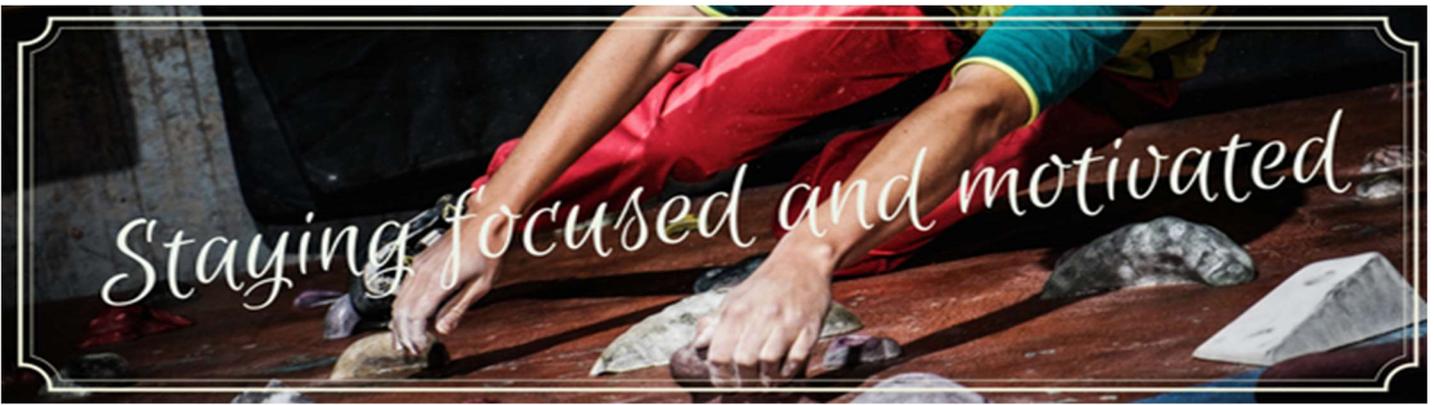
This world is longing for courageous men and women who are not afraid to fail. Failure is an event, not a medical condition. There are a number of epic fails still scheduled for your life and no matter how conservatively you live, you won't be able to avoid them.

Your best course of action is to let failure do what it was designed to do - toughen you up for the war you find yourself in. There is no room for victim mentalities on this train. Bad stuff happens to good people all the time, you are not immune to it. You will either make the most out of what you have to work with or spend the rest of your life being sad and angry about what could have been.

Embrace adversity by choosing to be thankful for the things it's intending to produce in you. If you forget what those are, read through the list above again. Now add to the list by taking time to list out the positive things that your past failures have drawn out of you.

Failure is my Friend

<div style="text-align: center; margin-bottom: 10px;">Past Failure</div>	<div style="text-align: center; margin-bottom: 10px;">Redeeming Value</div>
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How to Stay Focused and Motivated

Your ability to stay focused and motivated on this journey is the fire you want to kindle. We want to highlight some ideas that we think will help, however, this is something you have to continue to experiment with over time. Reflect on times in your life when you have been most motivated and make a note on why you think that was the case.

I was motivated when..	What Motivates Me	Because..

Study Your Motivational Patterns

The list of motivators that exists in life is extensive. The book What Motivates Me, by Adrian Gostick and Chester Elton, is one of many great resources you can find on this topic. Understanding your motivational patterns should be part of your learning goals at some point. To give you an idea of what you are trying to look for, here are a few common motivators people have:

- Money
- Recognition
- Impacting Others
- Problem Solving
- Autonomy
- Achievement

If you are motivated by impacting others, for example, you should measure your progress not by money or recognition, but by the stories you encounter of people you have helped. Everyone is motivated by something. When you pinpoint yours, make sure you think through how to create some goals around these motivators.

Inspiration Room

An inspiration room is an area in your home or office that inspires you to stay focused on your goals. Not everyone can afford to designate an entire room to something like this but at least a desk area or wall is better than nothing.

In my inspiration room, I have movie posters that symbolize the level of risk and sacrifice it takes to bring something you are truly passionate about to life. I also have memorabilia in the form of pictures and letters from lives impacted. I encountered a homeless man in California selling his homeless signs to pedestrians walking by. I was so impressed with his creativity that I bought his cardboard sign for \$20 and placed it above my desk to remind me of the power of innovation.

When you design your inspiration space, it should remind you of the big picture in life. It should highlight victories, cultivate hope and draw out the creative within you. Try it. Send us a picture when you're done too. We would love to be inspired with you.

Journal

I'm kind of bad at this, but I can tell you that pulling out my journal and reading the few entries that do exist is motivating to me. On a personal note, my journal has helped me see the evidence that God is, in fact, real. I have recorded dreams that have become reality and words that were spoken over me by strangers who didn't know me but were dead accurate. I even documented some of my deepest prayers and have seen many answered.

Documenting the journey will help you remember that the sacrifice is worth it. You can push through your current affliction because you have before. Circumstances always change over time and a journal can be the perfect testament to that.

You don't have to journal every day. Start by doing it once a month for a year. If it helps, awesome. If not, at least you will have some amazing insight waiting to be discovered by future generations when you check out.

Calculate Regret

I have a question I ask myself every time motivation is running low. If I stop doing what I'm doing right now, will I regret not persevering through later in life?

If my answer is yes, I let the fear of regret motivate me forward.

We can't go back, only forward so we all must make choices today about how we want to live. As I said earlier in this project, we will all acquire some level of regret. My goal is to not accumulate any more of it than necessary.

I'm sure you are about tapped out on thinking about strategy, evaluating every area of your life and just thinking in general. It's exhausting.

We have one last thought we want to leave you with before you are ready to fly on your own so let's finish strong together and take this next topic to heart.



Enjoying the Ride

We have more than likely not met in person but we do mean this with deep sincerity: we are so proud of you. You don't realize how few people make it this far but it's true. You are among a minority of people with the ambition needed to be someone special. At this point, you don't even have to achieve a single goal you set and you will still impact people around you, because you have the courage to travel down a path that they only dream about.

You are taking risks and you will fail your way forward. Most everyone around you will exert their energy trying to avoid failure only to find that in their conservative approach, they still fail.

Your level of confidence and doubt may see saw but your daily choice to keep learning and moving will be the foundation of your success.

If you want to perfect your purpose, there is one thing left to do - enjoy the ride. Joy is something we can choose to experience when we give thanks to God for this life. The wealthiest, most famous individuals to walk this earth have never been able to find lasting contentment in fame or fortune. That is never going to change.

If what you are setting out to do is primarily self-serving, you are in for major disappointment. However, if you desire to take the things you have been blessed with and offer them back to God for the good of those around you, you cannot fail.

In the words of one of the richest, wisest kings ever known:

I perceived that there is nothing better for them than to be joyful and to do good as long as they live; also, that everyone should eat and drink and take pleasure in all his toil— this is God's gift to man. Ecclesiastes 3:12-13

Since we are not God and lack the ability to control all our circumstances, it makes sense to develop the things we can control and learn to enjoy the ride along the way with everything else. We only have one opportunity to fight against evil because once the war is over, it's over.

I must make the decision every morning to enjoy the unpredictability of life. It would be futile to fight against it. So, like you, I will move on from this purpose project and begin to execute my plan. Not everything will work out as I hope and that's ok. One thing I know for sure, I will never regret trying.

And neither will you.