

wlpg



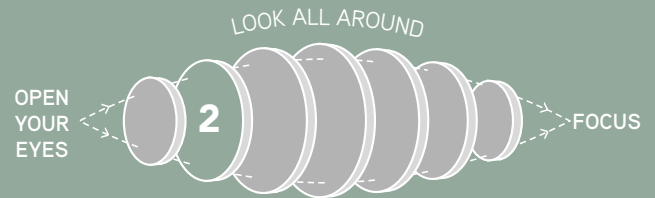
# STAGEtwo

I can picture the life I want

STEP 1 – MY FUTURE IS BECOMING CLEARER

STEP 2 – I CAN MAKE IT HAPPEN

STEP 3 – THIS WILL BE THE DAY!



WHEN WE PLAN OUR HOLIDAYS, WE HAVE A CLEAR PICTURE OF WHAT WE WANT – RELAXING IN THE SUN, WATER SPORTS, CULTURE, GOOD FOOD AND ENTERTAINMENT TO NAME BUT A FEW. BUT JUST IMAGINE IF YOU HAD A CLEAR IDEA OF HOW YOU COULD REALLY ENJOY THE OTHER 50 WEEKS OF YOUR YEAR TOO!

## OVERVIEW

You've now discovered your WLPG can help you shape the life you want. But how do you see that life? Your picture is probably still fuzzy and blurred. This stage will help you sharpen it up and add colour and detail.



### YOU CAN HAVE IT ALL

Having had a fulfilling role in a health care business, Maura O'Donnell knew she had to act when the firm was taken over and other people started controlling her WLPG.

Her vision became clearer as she realised she could join two ex-colleagues to form their own small family business. She now combines a directorship with family commitments. She can spend her time with people she likes in a place that energises her and using the skills she loves.

'Playing, giving and learning now form a natural part of my day'



**STEP 1 >** GETS YOU THINKING ABOUT THE SIX Ps THAT FORM YOUR LIFE ESSENTIALS – YOUR PRIME SKILLS, PASSIONS, PURPOSE, PLACES, PEOPLE AND PAYOFFS

**STEP 2 >** HELPS YOU BRAINSTORM WAYS OF MAKING YOUR PICTURE COME TO LIFE

**STEP 3 >** INVITES YOU TO TAKE A LEAP INTO THE FUTURE AND VISUALISE AN IDEAL DAY IN YOUR LIFE FIVE YEARS FROM NOW

## HOW STAGE 2 WILL HELP YOU

Don't worry if you find some parts of this stage difficult. You'll still get real benefits and insights that help you to:

- See your future more clearly
- Make future decisions
- Promote yourself better to others
- Enhance your job satisfaction
- Avoid being sidetracked and wasting your life
- Steer clear of a quick fix that may soon go wrong
- Work towards a long-term solution
- Create a unique picture that will inspire you

'The clearer you can make your picture, the quicker you'll get there'

'With no vision, life can be like doing a thousand-piece jigsaw without the front cover'





PHOTOGRAPHY / MCCOY WYNNE

There are moments in all our lives when we enjoy a mountain-top experience – that rare moment of insight when the route ahead seems so clear that we can see for miles.

Sadly too much of our time can be spent down in the valleys wandering around in a fog. Being able to create a vision of the way forward – and trusting in it – is a very special life skill and valuable in itself.

## STEP 1 – MY FUTURE IS BECOMING CLEARER

Step 1 will help you to start picturing your ideal future by thinking about the six key essentials that shape your life – and ways they can work together.

You can think of these six life essentials as your six Ps.

### PRIME SKILLS

Your strongest skills and the ones you love using most.

### PASSIONS

The things that really interest and excite you in life.

### PURPOSE

The guiding ideas and values that inspire and drive you.

### PLACE

The working and living environments that really energise you.

### PEOPLE

The kind of people who inspire you, help you come alive and bring out your best.

### PAYOFFS

The rewards that make living – and working – worthwhile.

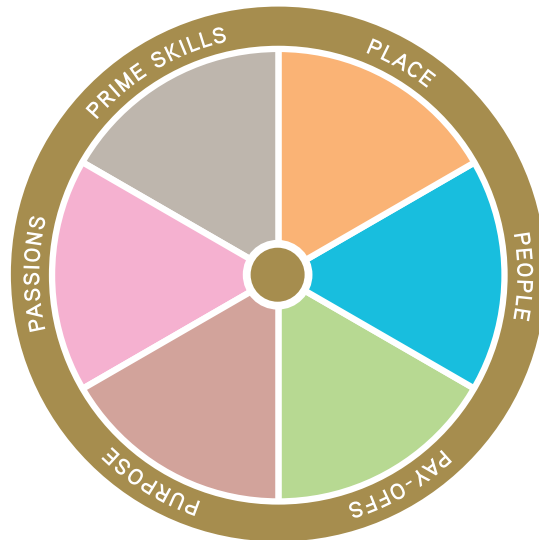
You may have never given much conscious thought to this before – but your subconscious certainly has. And it's already done much of the hard work; you have been making decisions about these key pieces of your life almost since you were born – often without realising it. Now you'll be thinking consciously and clearly about what's really important to you in life. You will look at each of these life essentials – your six Ps – in turn. The exercises are designed to help you explore and then prioritise your ideas.

It is a stage of self-discovery and you may find some of the exercises highlight things you are concerned over – don't worry. The WLPG process will then help you to decide what you wish to do as the next steps once you have this information. This information will then be recorded on your Life planner.

You will then be able to piece together a clear picture of where you are going. Your picture needs to be as sharp as you can make it – and that will depend on how deeply you explore each of the six Ps. To have the strength to change your life, you need to be open to new ways of thinking.

And that's easier if you have a vision of your future to inspire you.

'The most successful people are those who do all year long what they would otherwise do in their summer vacation' – Mark Twain



### PUT FIRST THINGS FIRST

When he became a father, Eunan Higgins realised job security had to be his key pay-off. He turned down a riskier marketing job on higher salary but used the opportunity to renegotiate his role and pay with his current employer.



### I LOVE MY JOB

Halil Bullit enjoys every minute of his catering job as it meets all his six essentials, blending his prime skills and passions in a place and with people he really likes.



First you'll focus on the skills you've already picked up in life. And you may be surprised to learn there are far more than you think. In fact you're a very special person with a unique collection of over 500 skills.

**These have been developed over the years whether through work, college or school or informally through the million-and-one experiences you've been exposed to from the moment you were born.**

Like all of us, you've been acquiring and improving these skills all the time – often without noticing – as you've gone through life working, playing, learning and giving.

They often come through the challenges you've taken on, the problems, you've overcome and even the mistakes you've made.

You're adding to them all the time, not just through your work experiences or even training and formal achievements but through your leisure and sporting interests as well as your social life, voluntary work and community involvement. Your real focus though needs to be on your prime skills – those you shine at and which you love using.

They're the ones that give you a real buzz. And they're easy to recognise because whenever you're using them, you feel time is standing still.

These are the skills that will be the most valuable for your future. This exercise will give you the first – and perhaps the most important – piece of the picture you're creating of the life you want. It also gives you lots of useful information to help you promote yourself at work in your CV and interviews.



#### BELIEVE IN YOURSELF

Amanda Highfield had a typical unplanned approach, collecting lots of skills but failing to value them. As a result she took on jobs that didn't use her prime skills – the ones she both loved and was good at.

It was only when she talked to other people on a personal development course that she woke up to how many skills she actually had, particularly through her voluntary work. She has now sorted her prime skills and found an Assistant Occupational Therapist job which matches them perfectly.



'Believe in yourself. You have lots to offer and far more skills than you think, even from simple things like doing the housework and caring for the family'

'Wisdom does not come simply from living. If we are too busy to reflect on our lives, the events of our days become not a connected whole but a pile of beads without a string' – Sam Lloyd

## e I can map out my skills

1. Reflect on 'I've learned a lot already' exercise (Stage 1 p2) and review the list of your magic moments – those major achievements where time stood still in your life, whether you were working, learning, playing or giving. Consider what you were doing and the skills you were using – you may like to chat these through with friends.
2. Take your skills cards and place the ones marked 'love using', 'quite enjoy' and 'don't enjoy' vertically as shown.
3. Shuffle the skills cards and then place them in a pile beside one of the three title cards depending on whether you think:
  - I love using this skill
  - I quite enjoy using this skill
  - I don't enjoy using this skill

Don't simply think about work situations; remember those magic moments of learning, playing and giving too. If any skills you have are not mentioned, create extra cards of your own.

4. Take the three cards marked 'needs developing', 'reasonable' and 'good' and place them horizontally as shown.
5. Consider the three piles of cards in turn, take each card you've already sorted and position it horizontally depending on whether:
  - I'm good (above average) at this skill
  - I'm reasonable at this skill
  - I need to develop this skill further
6. You will now have a 3 x3 matrix as follows:



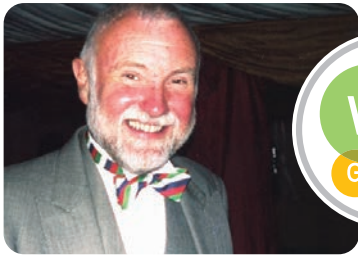


7. Focus on the top right-hand pile – the skills you've identified as 'love using' and 'good'. These are your prime skills and are likely to be where you make your greatest contribution at this point in your life. If this pile is not as big as you would like, can you move any from 'love using' and 'reasonable' or create your own cards?
8. Place these cards in priority order in terms of which you'd like to spend most time on. It's crucial you do this as the relative weighting and combination of your prime skills will have a major effect on how they are best used. To help you do this, follow the instructions below.

### Priority profile

This will help you to identify the priority of any of the six Ps you may have, before you record them on Your Life's Essentials poster. You may need, therefore to use this technique a number of times within Stage 2 to help you.

- Select your most important out of the six you have. This is priority number one
  - From the remaining five select the one you feel is least important. This becomes number six
  - From the remaining four ask yourself which is the most important. This becomes number two
  - From the remaining three which is now the least important. This becomes number five
  - You will then be left with two. Decide the positioning of these as either three or four
9. You now have a list of your six prime skills in priority order. Record these on Your Life's Essentials poster.



#### BUILD ON WHAT YOU LOVE

As a car mechanic Mike O'Sullivan realised his prime skills were persuading and influencing people. He built on these by studying law at night school and is now a senior barrister.



#### DO WHAT GIVES YOU A BUZZ

Rosanne Gunning realised her greatest skill and passion is fitness instructing. She is currently managing a wine bar to fund the qualification she needs.

Here are some more ideas you might use to develop your thinking:

10. You may have wondered what the colours mean – each indicates a family of skills.

Almost any organisation needs people with one or more of these skill families.

**People with creative skills** are needed to develop new products and services.

**People with exploring skills** can help discover new ideas and markets.

**People with enterprise skills** will drive the company forward.

**People with 'people' skills** promote good relationships and smooth running.

**People with practical skills** are the ones who make things happen in a firm.

**And people with processing skills** are often the unsung stars who keep the wheels turning and maintain quality day in and day out.

So where do your prime skills lie – and what does this tell you?

## Skills families

### CREATIVE SKILLS

Skills relating to visioning, thinking laterally, creating, designing, making, connecting, adapting, seeing the whole picture and working creatively with media

### EXPLORING SKILLS

Skills relating to researching, interviewing, observing, solving problems and identifying possibilities

### ENTERPRISE SKILLS

Skills relating to selling, leading, championing, strategising, managing resources, marketing and networking for organisational or economic gain.

### PEOPLE SKILLS

Skills relating to communicating, relating, caring, empowering, teamworking, giving and helping people

### PRACTICAL SKILLS

Skills relating to preparing, operating, making, nurturing, fixing and co-ordinating

### PROCESSING SKILLS

Skills relating to administration, processing, controlling, maintaining quality, reviewing and managing finances

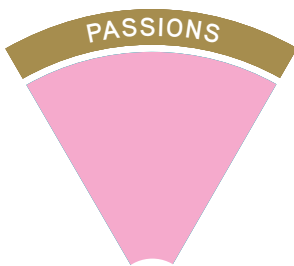
11. Think how you can develop and use skills identified as 'love using/reasonable' and 'love using/needs developing'.
12. Assess the extent to which your current role uses your skills. Look at ways to minimise your 'don't enjoy' and maximise your 'love using' skills in your current and future roles. If this cannot be achieved through work, look creatively at learning, playing and giving.
13. Collect evidence of your prime skills. Write stories, list successes and collect certificates. Feedback from other people, particularly past employers, is extremely useful.
14. Put yourself in the shoes of employers. What would be the essential skills they are looking for and how do they compare with your prime skills? Identify three skills you need to develop that will make you more employable.
15. Be prepared to compromise. Every job will entail mundane roles and require skills you don't enjoy. You may also find that the less-liked skills make you more employable and provide stepping stones to more fulfilling positions.

You will now recognise you are a special person – and in reality you have far more skills than you ever realised. So just think how great it would be to use these skills in an area that gets you really excited. Now you have prioritised your skills, your picture is becoming clearer.

'The most important person you can ever get to know is yourself – so get networking' – David Baird

'With the chisel and the mallet of circumstance pounding on our lives, we need to remember that we are not being destroyed, we are being made' – Spencer Rice





You should now understand more about the skills that are going to matter in your life. But can you imagine making the most of those skills in an area of activity about which you're absolutely passionate? Just think of the energy and enthusiasm this would create!

If you were actually being paid for it, life would feel like one long holiday. This might sound like a pipe-dream but lots of people have made it come true.

The truth is that every one of your passions has the potential to earn you an income. Whatever your interests, they all link to potential areas of employment. Take football for example. We don't all have to be a superstar! In the professional game there are literally hundreds of related areas, ranging from sponsorship, advertising, teaching, T-shirt manufacturing, media coverage, health and fitness and gambling through to administration and management.

The trick is to think more broadly and openly about your real passions in life and look creatively at how you can spend more time enjoying them. Remember that your working life may not offer scope for all your passions – that's where your learning, playing and giving can come into their own. The following exercise helps you begin the process. The rest is up to you!



#### LIVE YOUR PASSIONS

When Katherine Gibbons found herself expecting her first child she had to rethink her career as a West End actress. Her real passion in life is flowers – and with contacts in the hospitality business she soon realised she could make a living from them. She now balances childcare with flower arranging for weddings and social events and has developed her interest in card design. Based at home she has far more time and flexibility with no long daily trip to London. While her acting career may be revived, she has created an ideal Plan B.

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#### These are my passions

Your challenge here is to build a list of at least 24 things you are really interested in.

1. Take a piece of paper and list your answers to the following prompts. Give yourself 15 minutes to generate as many ideas as possible. List all the things you are passionate about – your interests, hobbies, sporting activities – anything that really fires you up. Think about what really excites you in each area of your life – your working, your learning, your playing and your giving.
2. Add to the list by considering the following:
  - You have five minutes in a bookshop. Which topics do you go to first?
  - What do you talk about with passion over a pint or a coffee with friends?
  - If you won the lottery, what would you spend your time doing?
  - What section of the paper do you read first?
  - If you had your time again, what would you be?
  - What do you look forward to at the weekends?
  - Looking through the A-Z overleaf. What areas of interest jump out at you?
  - If you were to go on a quiz programme, what would be your specialist subjects?
  - If friends were asked to say what makes you come alive, what would they say?

If you struggle, don't worry, the following A-Z of passions may help you identify further ideas.

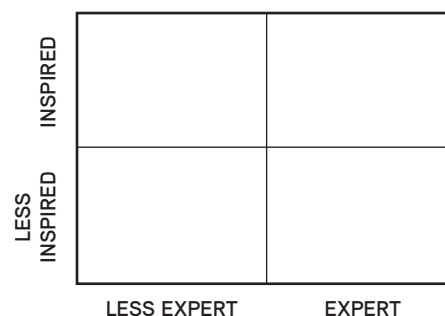






## Now prioritise your passions

4. Try to get at least 24 passions and then decide which of those inspire you most. Take some Post It® notes and write each passion on one Post It®.
5. Now take a piece of paper and draw a line horizontally on it. Place the Post It® notes above the line if you feel really inspired by them and below the line if they inspire you less.
6. Now consider your expertise level within these passions. How much do you know. How competent. How much do you understand about these passions? Draw a line on the same piece of paper, this time vertically until you have a box like the one opposite. Now move the Post It® notes either side of the vertical line dependent on how much of an expert you are about these passions.
7. Now identify those passions you believe you are most inspired by and most expert in. These should be in the top right hand box. You may also have passions in the top left hand box which may really inspire you but in which you need to build up your expertise. You need to get about six passions which form an essential part of your WLPG and then identify the priority order. Use the priority profile on page 5 to help you. Make sure you record these on Your Life's Essentials poster.



Think hard about your working, learning, playing and giving and try to find easy ways of blending two or more of these areas to create opportunities that involve those passions. Now you have prioritised your passions, your picture will be becoming clearer.



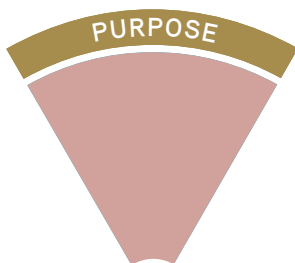
### BEING PAID FOR YOUR HOBBY

Vip Bhatt has used his experience in a number of marketing roles to secure one that ideally combines his prime skills and passions. He loves marketing, developing people and entertaining, and is passionate about sport. As Marketing Controller for Stanley Leisure it's like being paid for his hobby. Vip enjoys the friendly company ethos and positive relationship with suppliers. Since his greatest passion is speaking up for people without a voice, this might open up a new pathway in the future.



'If you don't take time to figure out what you want to do with your life, you will be at the mercy of all those forces out there today'

'Remember that things you are passionate about don't have to be confined to play time. Inject playing into working, learning and giving'



You've now looked at your prime skills – and at the passions and interests to which you could apply them. These are vital pieces in the picture you are building up of the life you want.

Blending your skills with your passions in even the smallest way will give you new energy and enthusiasm. And that energy needs to be channelled into a purpose that really inspires you. If not, it could easily ebb away and be lost – particularly on those dark, dispiriting mornings.

The next piece of the picture to consider is your purpose in life. This is what drives you through every day, every relationship and every experience, good or bad. Without a purpose in life you may feel as if you're drifting aimlessly. So what do you see as your purpose? And how are you going to use your unique talents and interests to leave your mark on this world? Don't worry if you don't have an instant answer. You're already way ahead of the crowd by even considering it.

Below you'll find a choice of four exercises designed to stimulate thought. Think about trying one or more and see how you get on. You don't have to do them all – just any that appeal to you.

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## My purpose in life

### OPTION 1 – I can find clues to my future in my past

1. Divide a piece of paper into four columns. Mark column 1 special achievements and list all of them in your life to date. Take your most magic moments from 'I've learned a lot already' (Stage 1 p2).
2. Mark column 2 'special challenges' and jot down major problems, challenges, mistakes or events that have shaped your life – whether it's just a disappointment, a dramatic change in your circumstances, a disaster or even someone's death. Remember we all have unique special needs which make us who we are. They may be personal, educational, emotional, physical or motivational and may also relate to people around us.
3. In column 3 record the lessons you've learned and gained from these situations. Look positively at what you have gained, eg: greater strength of character, an understanding of the grieving process, creative ways of overcoming setbacks etc. Remember we often learn more from our special needs than our special gifts. We also gain special gifts from our special needs.
4. In column 4 look to the future and ask how are you going to apply your achievements and lessons learned to make your world a better place. On the basis of your answers in columns 1-3, if you had no regrets, looking back over your life, what would you like to achieve to make a real difference? Here lie the clues to your purpose in life. Write down your answers – they may be a list of points, a sentence or a paragraph.

1 Special Achievements	2 Special Challenges	3 Lessons Learned	4 Special Purpose
Passed University Ran marathon Helped friend Found ideal job	Failed 11+ Poor eyesight Unemployed Split with girlfriend.	Appreciate what I've got Empathy with special needs I can do anything.	To help people realise their full potential To give every day To smile.

## OPTION 2 – I can meet many needs

Imagine other people celebrating your life as one that was extraordinary and packed full of fun. Which of the following would you like to be remembered for (tick and expand on as many as appropriate)

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Realised potential and talents          | <input type="checkbox"/> Gained fame, status or recognition                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Was a good friend and listener          | <input type="checkbox"/> Made a difference in the community                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Helped family, friends, neighbours      | <input type="checkbox"/> Helped improve the environment                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Had a vision and turned it into reality | <input type="checkbox"/> Created an impact and made change happen          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Was always ready to share               | <input type="checkbox"/> Created or ran a business or saw projects through |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Was a wise or spiritual person          | <input type="checkbox"/> Spoke up for the underprivileged                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Saved lives or helped people in need    | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please add)                                |

## OPTION 3 – I can sort out my skills

Your prime skills can often provide you with clues to your purpose in life. You may find it more helpful to think about this if you try sorting them.

**SPECIFIC** Be as specific as possible and avoid using vague title such as 'communication'. Think more precisely about what you mean by communication, eg: translation skills etc.

**OBJECT** How exactly do you see yourself using these skills and who will benefit, eg: working with asylum seekers in my community?

**RESULT** How will your skills make a difference and what outcomes are you hoping for, eg: improving job prospects and integration into local community?

**TRAIT** How do you see the unique style or manner in which you apply a particular skill, eg: diplomatically, sensitively?

## OPTION 4 – I can use my instinct to guide me

Going with your gut feeling can be a useful approach. Make sure you avoid putting judgments or negative thoughts in the way. If you're still struggling for ideas, one of the following may help:

- Look at your real passions and prime skills, your purpose may be about engaging in them in a particular way
- Imagine yourself walking down the street in 10 years time. What words would you have on the back of your T-shirt to explain 'Why on earth I'm here'
- Someone challenges you on the street to explain the words. How would you answer?
- Design your own motto and symbols for your coat of arms
- Write out your personal mission statement
- Draw a picture of your purpose in life. Explain it to someone and ask them to record what you say
- Write your own epitaph
- Think of, or create, a song, poem or lyric that sums you up
- Write your own entry in Who's Who



## Prioritise your purpose

1. Use whichever of the previous exercises you've completed to create your top six priorities.
2. Try to make each as specific and measurable as possible.  
(Use your priority profile on page 5 if required).
3. You may find that you haven't a number of priorities – it may be a short statement or paragraph about your purpose. Whatever it is make sure you record it on Your Life's Essentials poster.

Remember there can be more to life than worrying about what you do for a living and trying to have loads of money. It's about being true to yourself and sharing what you have with other people.

Now you have prioritised your purpose, your picture will be becoming clearer.



### TAKING A RISK

Sikha Mookerjee realised she'd missed her true purpose in life when her dream career turned into a nightmare. She'd become a highly paid senior change manager in a major bank only to discover her heart and soul were not in it. She began to question what made her happy – and unhappy – and decided to risk taking a year off doing volunteering and seeking professional guidance. She recognises that her purpose is to help people help themselves and has started her own coaching company.



'I now realise the greatest risk of all would have been to put things off and stick in my old role'

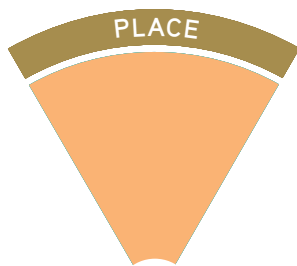


### KEEP IT SIMPLE

Jimmy Connolly has a simple purpose in life – to make people happy through music. Playing his jazz guitar he gives life to people's lives.



'Everyone can draw beautiful pictures: we do it every day on the inside of our minds. Bringing them to the outside brings forth the natural artist in each one of us'  
– Brian Mayne



**You can only make the most of your prime skills, passions and purpose when you are in an environment that is right for you.**

**The right surroundings are not only vital for your work but can greatly influence your approach to learning, playing and giving as well.**

**The next two exercises are designed to help you consider what's really important to you.**

#### **e This is my ideal WLPG environment**

You can make a big difference to your future happiness if you take more control of the environment in which your working, learning, playing and giving take place. Many of us fall into jobs without fully considering if that work environment will suit us – no wonder millions of employees feel undervalued and uninspired.

Just imagine spending over 350,000 hours (the average working life) in a place you love rather than one you tolerate or even hate. Now think of the knock-on benefits to your health, energy and happiness in the rest of your life if your work is enjoyable.

We actually have more control over our WLPG environment than we imagine. The key is to be clear about what's important to us in the first place rather than merely drifting into it.

Below are two exercises to help you identify what your priorities are in your WLPG environment. Think about doing one or other of them to help you identify this.

#### **OPTION 1**

List all the various environments that would make life miserable for you. These could range from a tiny firm (or one that is just too big) to a highly pressured company culture – or simply being stuck in airless, artificially-lit offices.

Identify the things you hate most then look at the opposite, eg: a medium-sized firm with a relaxed culture and bright, well-ventilated premises.

Try to think of about six factors that really matter to you.

#### **OPTION 2**

The exercise on the opposite page highlights potential environments you may like to spend your time in. Think carefully about how crucial each ingredient is, ticking those that are really important to you.

**'Plan for the future – because that's where you're going to spend the rest of your life'**

**– Henry Ford**

## 1. What type?

What type of environment would you like to spend most time in?

- ☐ VOLUNTARY/NON-PROFIT-MAKING
- ☐ COMMUNITY-BASED
- ☐ PUBLIC SECTOR
- ☐ COMMERCIAL
- ☐ EDUCATION
- ☐ INDUSTRIAL
- ☐ MANUFACTURING
- ☐ SERVICE
- ☐ PROFESSIONAL SERVICES
- ☐ MULTI-NATIONAL
- ☐ WELL-KNOWN
- ☐ FAMILY-OWNED
- ☐ SELF-EMPLOYED
- ☐ PARTNERSHIP
- ☐ FREELANCE WORK

## 2. What physical environment?

- ☐ INDOORS
- ☐ OUTDOORS
- ☐ OFFICE-BASED
- ☐ HOME-BASED
- ☐ OUT ON THE ROAD
- ☐ CLOSE TO NATURE
- ☐ CLEAN
- ☐ SAFE
- ☐ NATURAL LIGHT
- ☐ WINDOWS WITH A VIEW
- ☐ TRADITIONAL
- ☐ MODERN
- ☐ COMFORTABLE
- ☐ WELL-RESOURCED
- ☐ QUIET
- ☐ BUSY
- ☐ WARM
- ☐ TIDY
- ☐ PROFESSIONAL
- ☐ UNSTRESSED
- ☐ SOCIABLE

## 3. What atmosphere?

- ☐ PRESSURISED
- ☐ FAST-PACED
- ☐ CHALLENGING
- ☐ STEADY ROUTINE
- ☐ AUTONOMY/FREEDOM
- ☐ TEAM-ORIENTATED
- ☐ INDEPENDENT
- ☐ SET OWN PACE
- ☐ CREATIVE/INNOVATIVE
- ☐ FORWARD THINKING
- ☐ OPEN MANAGEMENT
- ☐ PROFESSIONAL
- ☐ UNSTRESSED
- ☐ PRACTICAL/HANDS-ON
- ☐ PROJECT-BASED
- ☐ OPEN COMMUNICATION
- ☐ HIGHLY STRUCTURED
- ☐ FLEXIBLE
- ☐ OPEN
- ☐ RELAXED

## 4. What values?

- ☐ TRUSTING
- ☐ APPRECIATIVE
- ☐ PERSONAL
- ☐ ETHICAL
- ☐ EMPOWERING
- ☐ FAMILY-FRIENDLY POLICIES
- ☐ EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL
- ☐ INVEST IN STAFF
- ☐ VALUE STAFF
- ☐ REWARD PERFORMANCE
- ☐ GIVING
- ☐ OTHER – IN LINE WITH YOUR PERSONAL VALUES (LIST)

## 5. What type of learning environment do you enjoy most?

- ☐ ACTIVE – chance to get actively involved
- ☐ REFLECTIVE – time and opportunity to sit back and think things through
- ☐ PRAGMATIC – learning through practical experiences
- ☐ THEORETICAL – opportunities to look at underlying principles and concepts

## 6. What size and shape of organisation?(If working is important)

- ☐ MICRO (1-10 employees)
- ☐ SMALL (11-49 employees)
- ☐ MEDIUM (50 – 249 employees)
- ☐ LARGE (over 250 employees)

*Remember there are literally thousands of unadvertised jobs in small businesses who can provide greater variety, responsibility and challenge.*

- ☐ HIERARCHICAL (lots of layers of management)
- ☐ FLAT (few layers - easy communication between top and bottom)
- ☐ SINGLE – or MULTI-SITE
- ☐ LOCALLY, NATIONALLY OR INTERNATIONALLY BASED
- ☐ HEAD OFFICE (at hub) or periphery

## 7. What location?

- ☐ CLOSE TO HOME (HOW FAR)
- ☐ RURAL, TOWN OR CITY-BASED
- ☐ ACCESSIBLE BY WALKING, CYCLING, CAR
- ☐ ACCESSIBLE TO AMENITIES
- ☐ GOOD PUBLIC TRANSPORT LINKS
- ☐ EASY CAR PARKING
- ☐ PARTICULAR GEOGRAPHIC REGION

## 8. What learning and development opportunities?

- ☐ CLEAR CAREER PROGRESSION
- ☐ GENUINE HELP WITH CAREER MANAGEMENT
- ☐ DEDICATED TO PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT
- ☐ COMMITTED TO FLEXIBLE WORKING AND WORK/LIFE BALANCE
- ☐ ACTIVE COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT
- ☐ EASY ACCESS TO LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

## What else?

*Are there any other really important things you need to consider?*



## Prioritise the places that inspire you

### IF YOU HAVE COMPLETED OPTION ONE

1. Prioritise the six factors that really matter to you about your working environment. Again use the priority profile on page 5 to help you.
2. Record your six priorities on Your Life's Essentials poster.

### IF YOU HAVE COMPLETED OPTION TWO

1. Review all the ingredients you have ticked. Group them into similar themes, separating those you could manage without and those that are not negotiable – you have to have them.
2. Now pick the six most important to you from the non-negotiable group. Place these in order of priority (use the priority profile on page 5) and record on Your Life's Essentials Poster

## My present working environment

You may also wish to consider how closely your current working environment matches the needs you have identified as a priority for you.

1. Allocate 0, 1, 2, or 3 using the following criteria  
0 = Not satisfied at all. 1 = Some satisfaction.  
2 = Mostly satisfied. 3 = Very satisfied
2. Make a note of those factors that you or others can and can't change.  
Remember be as creative and imaginative as possible. You have far more control over things that you think.



### GO YOUR OWN WAY

Elaine Wilton had always had the support of living with groups of other people. She realised that what she really wanted was a flat of her own. By attending a local course she built up the confidence and living skills to become independent and now takes pride in her new home.



## e My ideal living environment

Your living environment may well have a major impact, particularly if you are unsettled at home. Whether you love where you are or feel trapped, you never know what possibilities lie around the corner. The clearer you are about your ideal living environment, the more chance you have of finding or creating it.

**DESCRIBE YOUR HOME** – What type? How old? How many rooms? Size of garden?  
View from windows? Sounds and smells around you?

**WHERE ARE YOU LOCATED?** – Village/town/city/country

**FAVOURABLE CLIMATE** – How warm? What's the weather like? How fresh is the air?

**CLOSENESS TO FAMILY** – How close by are your family, close relatives, in-laws?

**GOOD AMENITIES** – What's available – culturally, socially, shopping, entertainment? How far away?

**ENVIRONMENT** – How clean? What would a ten-minute walk around your neighbourhood reveal?  
Describe the colours shapes, noises and smells you'd find.

**LEARNING PROVISION** – Are good schools, universities, libraries and colleges readily accessible?

**CRIME LEVELS** – Is it safe?

**COMMUNITY SPIRIT** – How active is the local community? How friendly?

1. Consider these prompts and if they are important to you, jot down your answers to create a picture of your ideal.
  2. Try to prioritise your top six key ingredients (see priority profile on page 5) and think of locations which meet these.
  3. Record these priorities on the place section of Your Life's Essentials poster.
- Now you have prioritised the places that inspire you, your picture will be becoming clearer.



People will play a large role in making your dreams a reality. They can provide you with a vast number of things you need for your ideal life – motivation, support, a sense of purpose, a listening ear – not to mention fun and enjoyment. They may be colleagues or clients you meet as part of your working life, family and friends you are involved with in giving and playing, or people who help you develop or provide your training and education. Work dominates most of our lives and good colleagues are seen as a big factor in job satisfaction. Whether they're people you choose to spend time with – or people you decide to devote your time to – they all have a vital role to play in your life. The key is to find the blend that's right for you.

Below are two exercises to help you identify what the characteristics are of the people you like to spend time with. Think about doing one or other of them to help you identify these.

e

### These are the people I like to spend time with

#### OPTION 1

1. Spend five minutes completing the following sentence "I prefer to be with people who are..." Think about preferred age group, gender mix, economic, social and cultural backgrounds, personalities, types, values, skills, expertise, traits, characteristics etc.
2. Now pick your top six.
3. Use the priority profile on page 5 to prioritise them and record on Your Life's Essentials poster. If you need more help you could try option 2.

#### OPTION 2

1. Spend time listing all the most annoying or repulsive characteristics you could imagine finding in people. The following list may help you.

Aggressive	Condescending	Over-friendly
Dishonest	Poor personal hygiene	Abusive
False	Moaner	Lazy
Unapproachable	Unmotivated	Uncommunicative
Bad-tempered	Bully	Two-faced
Self-opinionated	Bad personal habits	Indiscreet
Sexist	Negative	Poor listener
Self-important	Easily flustered	Disloyal
Racist	Depressed	Over-competitive
Incompetent	Unpredictable	Selfish
Boring	Cynical	Inhuman
Crude	Know-all	Vindictive
Miserable	Disorganised	

2. Identify your six worst characteristics and then look at the complete opposite to create your six favourite characteristics, eg: greedy becomes generous, false becomes genuine, negative becomes positive.
3. Prioritise your list using the priority profile on page 5 and record it on Your Life's Essentials poster.

## e These are the people I like to give time to

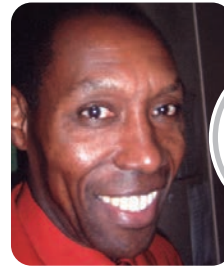
Although you may spend a lot of time helping people, think carefully about the kinds of people you are both best suited and most motivated to support. Create a list.

1. WHAT AGE GROUP?
  - Babies or young children
  - Primary school
  - Secondary school
  - Young adults
  - People in their thirties
  - The middle-aged
  - The elderly
  - The retired
  - All people regardless of age
  - Various ages
2. WHAT PARTICULAR BACKGROUND?
  - Cultural
  - Economic
  - Social
  - Educational
  - Religious
  - Gender
  - All people regardless of background
3. WHAT KIND OF PEOPLE?
  - Disabled
  - Disadvantaged
  - Highly motivated
  - Poorly motivated
  - Easy to work with
  - Challenging to work with
  - Certain kinds of people (white-collar, blue-collar, executives etc)
  - From a particular place or sector, eg: teachers, sportsmen, artists
4. WHAT HELP WOULD YOU PROVIDE?
  - Practical
  - Financial
  - Emotional
  - Educational
  - Physical
  - Spiritual
  - Informational
  - Technical
  - Medical
  - Political
  - Motivational
  - Entrepreneurial
  - Other (add)
5. Prioritise the six main factors from this exercise using the priority profile on page 5 if needed. If you haven't got a specific preference that is fine.
6. Record on Your Life's Essentials poster.



### DON'T WAIT TO BE TOLD

Steff Doyle administered criminal records for the police but nobody ever told her she was good with people until she did some voluntary work. Being around positive people motivated her to go back to college and she now enjoys advising hard-to-reach clients on their careers.



### PEOPLE - NOT PRESSURE

As a ticket collector on London buses John La Rocque enjoyed dealing with people but hated the robotic pressure of rush hour. Today he's on Platform 2 of Preston station in a job he loves and spending more quality time with happier people.

'If what you're  
doing isn't working  
try something else'





Just think how great it would be to:

- Make the most of the skills you love
- For a purpose that inspires you
- In the environment you prefer
- And with people you really enjoy being with

Imagine doing all this and being rewarded for it as well!

Your reward might not even be in the form of money. It may be something you really value, such as gaining a flexible approach to working hours and achieving recognition of some kind.

The following exercise will help you focus on what kind of pay-offs really matter to you in your working life.



#### A SMILE TELLS IT ALL

Jim Little had the perfect pay-offs as an Army Officer – the role combined his interpersonal skills with a passion for exercise in a place that offered challenge and discipline. But duties abroad destroyed the work-life balance by leaving little time for his newborn child Katie and wide circle of local friends. Jim put family and friends first, left the army and transferred his financial skills to the actuarial profession. Jim now combines work with learning for exams and enjoys far greater quality time playing and giving with the people who matter to him.



‘The smile of someone you love means more than anything. Don’t let work deny you this’

#### e These are the pay-offs I’m looking for

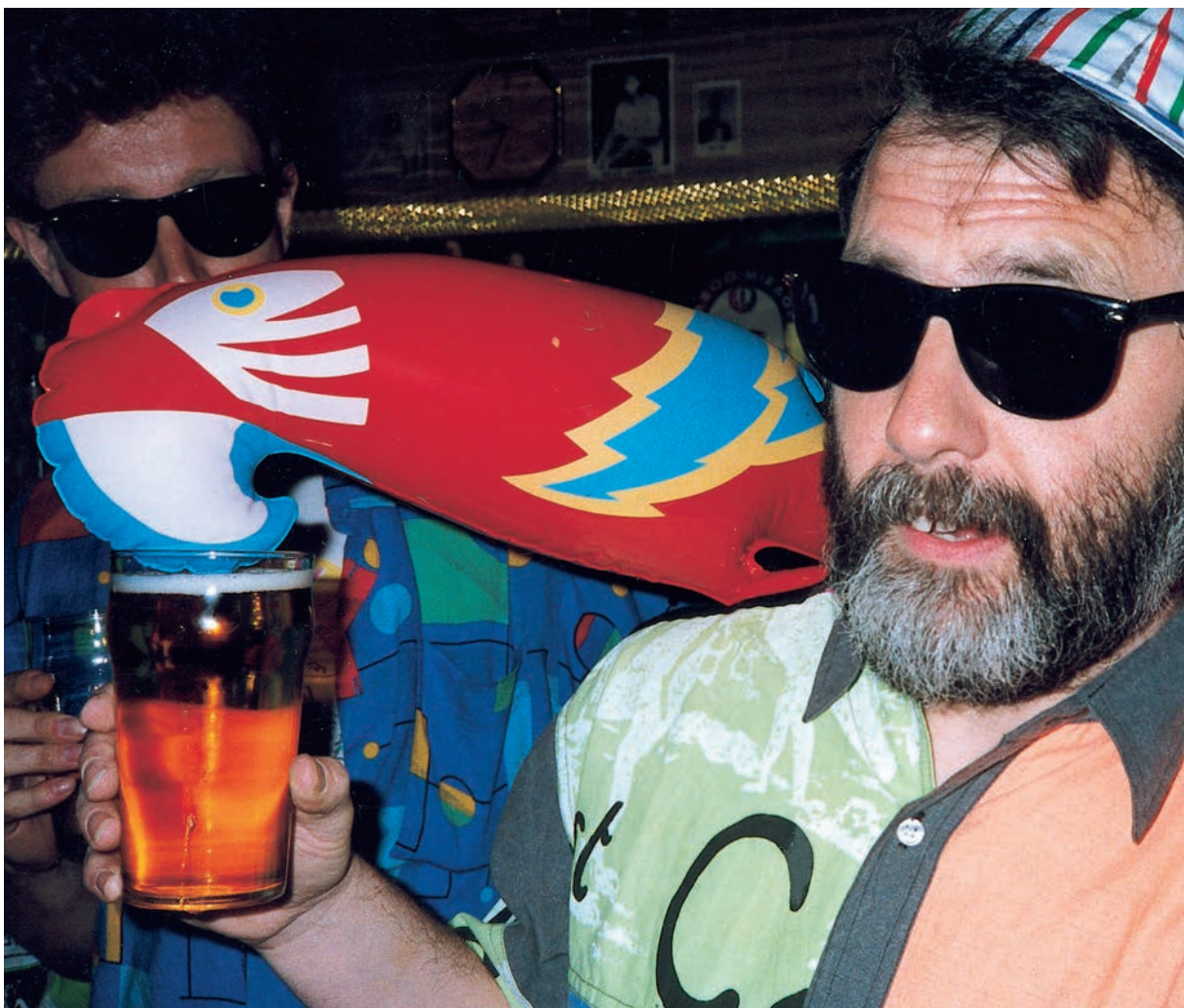
The profile overleaf lists a number of factors that you may value in life.

1. Complete the exercise, rating how important each pay-off is to you. Try to avoid simply choosing the middle ground. Think which pay-off would cause you to look for another job if it was taken away from you.
2. Prioritise your top six (use the priority profile on page 5)
3. Make each as specific and measurable as possible and note it down, eg: If money is important, how much do you need to earn?
4. Now you have prioritised the payoffs that you are looking for, your picture will be becoming clearer. Record your ideas on Your Life’s Essentials poster.

## What do you want from your life?

Example: I think freedom to make my own decisions is important in my future (tick as below )

		ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL	VERY IMPORTANT	IMPORTANT	FAIRLY IMPORTANT	NOT IMPORTANT
AUTONOMY	Freedom to make my own decisions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Being autonomous	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Freedom from rules and constraints	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Ability to define my own tasks, schedules and procedures	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Pursuing an independent life on my terms	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
STABILITY & SECURITY	A clearly mapped-out career path	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	A life that is highly predictable	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Long-term security and stability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Relatively low levels of geographical movement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Regular predictable income and benefits	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ENTERPRISE	Creating new organisations, products and services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Building my own business	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Owning something developed from my ideas and efforts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Producing things that people associate with me	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Showing people I can build a fortune	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
SENSE OF PURPOSE	Providing a service to help others	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Contributing to the wider community	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Dedication to a particular course	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Doing something of real value	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Making a difference in the world	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
BLENDED LIFESTYLE	Quality time for family, friends and pastimes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Flexible working hours and practices (able to work at home)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Getting fun from everything	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Learning from your bad experiences	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Giving in all aspects of my life	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
EXPERTISE & CHALLENGE	Developing a specialism to a high level of excellence	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Being recognised as an expert	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Ability to use my special skills and talents	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Solving complex problems	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Regular challenges to stretch my abilities and skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
REWARD & RECOGNITION	Having a high standard of living	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Being recognised for my achievements	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Having a highly paid job	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Being highly valued by others	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Reaching a respected social status	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
AUTHORITY & INFLUENCE	Responsibility for making major decisions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Advancement up the organisational ladder	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Ability to influence, supervise, lead people	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Being in positions of authority and influence	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Accountability for finances and resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



### e I'm clear on my life essentials

Congratulations – you've taken a massive step forward. You have completed all the six Ps – your life's essentials – and prioritised all your ideas. This will have helped to make your picture much sharper. You maybe feeling a mix of emotions having completed this and that's understandable. This shows you have really thought about it and the importance of what you are doing. You now have unique information about yourself and it's time to make all that hard work pay off.

Imagine yourself at the top of a mountain. You can see all around you.

1. Spend some time reflecting on the details of the picture you can now see. Look at what you've written on Your Life's Essentials poster.
2. Talk it through with a colleague or friend.
3. Reflect on;
  - What you have learned about yourself
  - Any themes that are emerging
  - Why particular elements are more important than others
  - Where areas can be combined
  - How you can make this vision a reality
4. Make a note of any points you believe are important.





#### I'M LEARNING WHAT TO DO WITH THE REST OF MY LIFE

Helen Hawkins got a major shock when she realised she was totally in the wrong job, working in a ruthless business environment, spending more time on office politics than people and feeling no passion for the product. The exciting thing is she now has a clear picture of where she's heading (see opposite page). Her first positive steps were to explore 'people development' possibilities and volunteer at a local playgroup in her spare time. She's also started information interviews with friends to find out about work in teaching, training, careers guidance and social work.



## MY LIFE'S ESSENTIALS

### PRIME SKILLS

EMPOWERING  
MANAGING SELF  
GIVING  
CARING  
RELATING  
HELPING

### PLACE

UNSTRESSED  
APPRECIATIVE  
FLEXIBLE ENVIRONMENT  
CLOSE TO HOME  
RELAXED  
OPEN AND SOCIABLE

### PASSIONS

FAMILY  
GIVING  
SUPPORTING  
TALKING  
VOLUNTEERING  
FUN STORIES

### PEOPLE

POSITIVE  
FRIENDLY  
THINK OF OTHERS  
ENCOURAGING  
HONEST  
PRAISING

### PURPOSE

SHARING  
GIVING OF MYSELF  
IMPARTING CONFIDENCE  
IMPROVING LIFE  
OFFERING LOVE  
ADDING FUN

### PAY-OFF

JOB OF VALUE  
MAKING A DIFFERENCE  
REGULAR CHALLENGES  
RECOGNITION  
BALANCED LIFESTYLE  
SOCIAL STATUS



## STEP 2 – I CAN MAKE IT HAPPEN

You now understand more about your real life essentials. This step will help you to start opening your eyes to the possibilities now in front of you.

And you'll be amazed to hear that everything in your picture is out there waiting for you. You just have to realise it.

The next exercise will help you to think creatively about the various pieces in your picture and generate ideas of the ways they could work together to make that picture come to life. It's not just about your working life either. In your learning, playing and giving as well you'll find countless ways to turn the vision into reality.

Once you combine several pieces of your picture, they work together in an amazingly powerful way and give you a terrific surge of energy.

The ideal is to find possibilities that bring together all six pieces of your picture.

But you also need to be realistic. You'll probably have to build the final picture up over time and be ready to make some compromises along the way.



### TAKE THE LEAP

Pete Hanniford hated his administration job but watched everybody else leave until one day, after a couple of pints, he enrolled on a nursing course. Through a mixture of training, practical experience and voluntary work, he has developed a specialism in resuscitation and now manages hospital-wide training and policy in this field. Taking the leap has also impacted on Pete's play as one of his best friends is the person he sat next to the day he enrolled.

'The real voyage of discovery consists not in seeking new landscapes, but in having new eyes' – Marcel Proust

### GET YOURSELF THINKING

Let's imagine for instance that you have prime skills in dealing with people, your passion in life is sport and you enjoy the buzz of being in a small informal group.

Unfortunately you're stuck in a large insurance office as a human resources manager.

You could try creatively thinking of all the sports-related jobs where such skills are vital and concentrate on smaller organisations with less formal management structures.

Already you'll be focusing on making your prime skills, passions and place preferences work together.

And once you start thinking like this, you'll soon realise that the possibilities are endless. You can use the same process to develop your learning, playing and giving possibilities.

'Remember that self-knowledge is the key to a successful future'

## e I can generate possibilities

Use Eamonn's example below to generate ideas.

1. Draw five circles as shown.
2. Take your top three prime skills and top three passions.
3. Think creatively how you can mix these together through working, learning, playing or giving.
4. Create as many ideas as possible, listing them as WLPG in the appropriate circle. Find a few people to help generate possibilities.
5. Review your ideas and combine the most attractive ones in the centre circle.
6. Look at practical steps you can take to make these ideas real now.

If you get the hang of this exercise you may wish to add some more of your **life's essentials** into the process, eg: people, purpose, places or pay-offs.



Eamonn is now working as an IT Project Manager for an international bank in Bangkok. He always regrets not pursuing his career as a DJ, but is really keen to help his niece pursue her musical ambitions.



### STEP 3 – THIS WILL BE THE DAY!

You now have far deeper levels of self-awareness that will help you make the most of the WLPG process. This step asks you to imagine yourself five years on from today. Pretend you're completing a diary that records the most extraordinary day in your life. You are actually living your vision – and more. You're doing all the things you've always wanted to do; achieving more than you ever expected and feeling truly happy and fulfilled. To ensure success, it's vital to start with the end in mind and have a clear picture of what you are aiming for. And the clearer your picture, the quicker you'll get there. For example if you want to love gardening, don't think of the weeds and hard work – focus on a picture of the garden in full bloom to inspire you.

Once you do that, the drudgery and routine work will be a joy. Think of a professional golfer playing a chip shot. He is picturing the precise part of the green where his ball is going to land – not worrying about the effort of lifting the club and swinging it.

#### **e** I've made it – This is my Golden Ticket to the life I want

1. Take a piece of paper and put the date – five years from now – in the top right corner.
2. Write in as much detail what the last five years have been about. You've had a great time with all your goals realised, achieving your life's essentials, and doing that by blending your WLPG. You really have been living the life you want. It's all been fantastic. Your picture needs to be as positive, creative, big, bold and clear as possible.
3. **BE POSITIVE AND IMAGINATIVE.** As you start this exercise, you'll hear two voices in your head. One says "You can't do that... it's not possible... be careful... no it's too risky... hold on a minute."

This is the 'safekeeping' self which can sometimes be too over-protective. The other voice is shouting out, "Go for it... You can do it... There's loads of possibilities... How about... Here's another idea." This is your 'experimental' self.

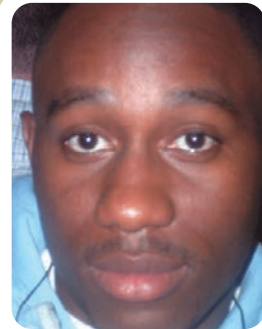
For this exercise to work, shut the safekeeping self up – give it a holiday. Only listen to positive and creative ideas, and write them quickly down before giving yourself a chance to knock them.

Be as imaginative as you can and look beyond current boundaries. Focus on 'I can' and forget 'I can't'.

4. **THINK REALLY BIG.** Double, treble, quadruple the size and scope of your goals. Be as wild and extraordinary as you can. Aim for the stars and you could be amazed at how far you can go. Your reach should always exceed your grasp for real growth to happen.
5. **MAKE IT JUMP OFF THE PAGE.** Be as clear as you can. What, where, how, who will you work, learn, give and play with? Describe things in as much detail and colour as you can. Remember – the clearer the picture, the closer and quicker you'll come to it.

So go for it – You'll be amazed by what you create in 10 minutes.

It's been the most amazing five years of your life to date. You pause the celebrations for one minute and complete the following sentence.



#### **REALLY BELIEVE IT!**

Obot Itiokiet's vision is to become a breakdancer. His first step was to believe in it. His second to mix around people who are living their dreams. It's now down to focus and determination.

1

*In achieving all my goals, the biggest obstacle I overcame was .....*

(It wasn't the smallest or medium problem but the most enormous obstacle that you actually overcame. Looking back what was it?)

2

*I overcame this by .....*

(What did you do? What practical steps did you take?)

3

*The people who helped me were .....*

(Who really helped and how did they make a difference?)

Whatever picture you've created is great. Some things may be crystal clear others hazy. Remember there's no rights or wrongs. This is only a first draft – but it's a very valuable one. You can sharpen this picture further by recording what one day in this life would be like:

e

### This will be a day in my life...

1. Take a piece of paper and start your diary by putting the date – five years from now – in the top right corner. Begin with the words "I woke up..." and end with "... I went to sleep".
2. Look at all the details you see making up your ideal day. Try to see clearly how you could be blending your work with your learning, playing and giving to achieve as many of your six Ps as possible. Make sure you build into it as much as possible of the vision you have been developing. Things you may like to include:

#### WHAT?

What can I hear and see around me? What are my senses aware of – colours, shapes, noises, smells? What is the environment like around me? What am I doing? What am I achieving? What difference am I making? What am I feeling? What am I thinking?

#### WHERE?

Where am I working, learning, playing and giving? Where am I maximising my skills passions and purpose? Where am I making a real difference?

#### WHO?

Who am I spending time with? Who am I working for? Who is helping me?

#### HOW?

How am I going about my working, learning, playing, giving? How am I dividing my time? How am I blending various WLPG areas? How am I really making a difference? How happy am I?

#### WHY?

Why am I so happy? Why are people happy around me? Why has this been the best day in my life?

3. If you don't enjoy writing, try to sketch out your day. Another option is to create a collage using pictures or words from a magazine – or record yourself saying it out loud. Your picture needs to be positive, creative, big, bold and clear.



### CHARLIE'S REALLY LAUGHING

Charlie Casey worked in a garage for six years but always had a passion for entertaining. He found he loved amateur dramatics and decided life was too short to spend in a job that didn't use the skills he really enjoyed. Although turned down originally as a redcoat, he managed to persuade them they needed a singer. He soon realised he had a talent for making children laugh and added clowning to his show. Over the years he began doing clown shows at weekends for children's parties and his success let him give up the other job. He's now gained a freelance contract as a clown with a theme park and combines this with private bookings. Charlie is now happily blending his working, learning, playing and giving together at the same moment in time.



You are now in possession of something very special. You have a vision of your future. You may well wish to share that picture with someone else. Take care to choose someone who will celebrate it with you rather than make cynical comments, someone who will help you keep it in focus rather than make fun.

Remember that the details in your picture will always be changing subtly as your ideas change and your life develops. You could also make a conscious effort to review it at regular intervals. In addition you might consider creating a shared vision of your future with your partner.



#### FRIENDS MAKE IT REAL

Sarah Gorin (middle) always wanted to use her research skills to make a difference in her community. But it was sharing her ideas with supportive friends that made her vision a reality. It's been their encouragement and enthusiasm that has helped her get a job as a social researcher with a local charity.



#### CLIMB THAT MOUNTAIN!

Lynne O'Dwyer felt she was facing a mountain when she found herself sidelined at work. She climbed the mountain and looked at her life from a different perspective. She could then see it was possible to pursue her dream of setting up a children's nursery.

CONGRATULATIONS, YOU NOW HAVE A CLEARER PICTURE OF WHERE YOU WANT TO BE IN THE FUTURE. STAGE 3 WILL HELP YOU MAP OUT THE BEST ROUTE TO GET THERE.

## IT'S MY LIFE!

Collect and consider everything you've gained from this stage in a file or notebook. Use your Life planner to:

1. Check you have done all the exercises.
2. Record the lessons you have learned and what you found surprising or puzzling.
3. Note down any ideas that could form part of your plans for the future.



THE WINDMILLS APPROACH TO  
WORKING, LEARNING, PLAYING & GIVING

‘When the wind blows, some people  
build walls – others build windmills’

**Windmills is about dealing positively with the winds of change in your life.**

The Windmills approach to working, learning, playing and giving will open your eyes to possibilities you never dreamed existed. You'll discover it's far easier than you imagined to achieve the life you really want and deserve. You'll find out how to make some plans for the future that will begin to make that ideal life a reality.

#### THE WINDMILLS PARTNERSHIP

Windmills is a partnership between The University of Liverpool's GIEU (Graduate Into Employment Unit) and Dr Peter Hawkins. It has evolved from extensive delivery programmes funded by National LSC, NWDA, Greater Merseyside LSC, IAG Partnership, ESF, DfES and GONW.

#### DR PETER HAWKINS



Dr Peter Hawkins is a Fellow of The University of Liverpool and a world expert on career and life management.

As a visiting lecturer at Harvard University and advisor to UK Government, he writes, speaks and consults on an international basis.

Peter is the author of seven books, including the acclaimed 'Art of Building Windmills' and enjoys working with a range of partners including VSO, KPMG, Unicef, European Commission, BBC, DfES and the Association of Graduate Recruiters.

Passionate about working with people with special needs, Peter leads a charity for adults with learning difficulties and is an advocate for individuals with disabilities.

#### THE WINDMILLS TEAM

The Windmills team is part of GIEU, based at The University of Liverpool. Team members, in particular Helen Wakefield and Sharon Nicholson, have significantly contributed to the concepts, development and writing of this resource.

Windmills was developed through the team's experience and its success has included; increasing the employability of 20,000 under-employed and unemployed individuals; enhancing the competitiveness of 2,000 businesses; creating 1,250 entirely new jobs, and adding over £30 million value to the economy.

Windmills includes a portfolio of job, career, work and life resources together with tailored training programmes. The process has been successfully used with a range of clients, including women's groups and graduates, as well as for staff development, public, voluntary and commercial organisations and career and life practitioners.



For more information visit our website [www.windmillsprogramme.com](http://www.windmillsprogramme.com) or contact:

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