

wlpg



# STAGEone

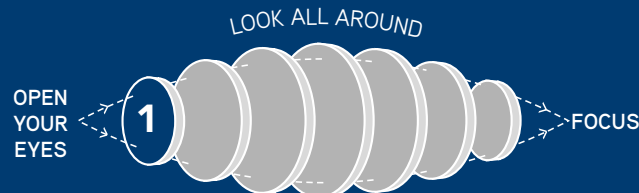
This is my life

STEP 1 – THIS IS MY PRESENT LIFE PATTERN

STEP 2 – MY LIFE CAN START IMPROVING RIGHT NOW

STEP 3 – I CAN BREAK DOWN THESE BARRIERS

STEP 4 – AM I READY TO START?



WE DECIDE WE NEED A HOLIDAY – AND SPEND TIME AND EFFORT PLANNING IT – BECAUSE WE FEEL IT WILL MAKE OUR LIFE BETTER. YET A HOLIDAY LASTS A MERE COUPLE OF WEEKS A YEAR. JUST IMAGINE HOW THE SAME EFFORT COULD IMPROVE YOUR LIFE EVERY DAY OF THE YEAR...

## OVERVIEW

It's your life – if you're dissatisfied with it, you can change it. We all have the power within us to do this. And it can be easier than we think. The WPLG process shows how you can use your working, learning, playing and giving to achieve a life that really inspires you. And the first step is to understand yourself.

*So in this stage you'll take a hard look at your past life and think about where you are today. You'll then be in a position to shape the future you really want.*

Remember you're not alone – there's lots you can learn from other people's experiences. And don't worry if some parts seem tough or you feel it's not for you – this is all part of the process.



### ENJOY LIFE TO THE FULL

After 18 years at sea, Billy Hughes put family and friends first and sacrificed career progression for quality time with his three young children.

As a ship's captain he could find no shore job which fully used his skills until over a pint a football friend mentioned a port controller's position.

Despite a pay cut Billy and his wife agreed he should go for it and he now combines intensive shift work with life as a part-time house husband.

*'I've seen too many people sacrifice home life for work. You're dead a long time, so I'm putting family, friends and fun first'*

**STEP 1** > LOOKS AT YOUR PRESENT LIFE PATTERN IN TERMS OF YOUR WORKING, LEARNING, PLAYING AND GIVING.

**STEP 2** > SUGGESTS 10 WAYS YOU CAN START IMPROVING IT.

**STEP 3** > EXPLAINS HOW BREAKING DOWN THE BARRIERS PEOPLE OFTEN CREATE BETWEEN THEIR WORKING, LEARNING, PLAYING AND GIVING CAN START CHANGING YOUR WHOLE LIFE.

**STEP 4** > CHECKS YOU'RE FIT TO START ON THIS WPLG PROCESS.

### HOW STAGE 1 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:

- Discover the pattern of your life now
- Realise how you can blend WPLG to enrich your life
- Become fitter to live the life you want



### YOU CAN DO IT!

Use the WLPG process to reflect on what's really important to you; and the things that bring real purpose and meaning into your life. You have far more potential than you'll ever imagine so make the most of every day of your life. Few people ever regret going for their dreams – but thousands regret not pursuing them.

## STEP 1 – THIS IS MY PRESENT LIFE PATTERN

In Step 1 you're going to look at the pattern of your present life in terms of your working, learning, playing and giving. But first you will step back and think about some of the most satisfying and rewarding moments of your life so far. The aim is to recall those times when you found that two or more areas of your working, learning, playing and giving were overlapping.

e

### I've learned a lot already

Look at your life story so far.

1. Start by asking yourself how you became the person you are today. Allocate some time to thinking about the precious memories of your life journey to date.
2. Take a piece of paper, draw a large circle and then divide it into four. Label the four quadrants working, learning, playing and giving. The diagram opposite may help.
3. Now look back over the past twelve months or the last few years – even your whole life – whatever suits you best.

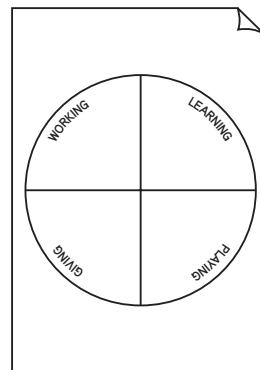
Jot down your most precious memories and all your achievements, large or small. Focus on those magic moments when two things happened: when you felt you achieved something and you loved every minute of it.

For example you might have built a garden shed that's still standing. Or you may have got up on stage with a local drama group, learned to speak French or perhaps organised a really memorable party for a friend. As each idea comes, write it in the box you think it fits best. Make sure you dig deep – you'll soon realise you've done far more in your life than you first thought.

4. Next review each moment you've listed one by one to see which areas of WLPG were occurring at the same time. The grid opposite may help.

#### You may find:

- One WLPG area involved, eg: I was promoted at work. (W)
  - Two WLPG areas involved at same time, eg: I developed some new skills as part of my job. (WL)
  - Three WLPG areas involved at same time, eg: I gained confidence by doing a fun presentation at work. (WLP)
  - All four WLPG areas involved at same time, e.g: I had great fun – and gained new skills – organising a works fundraising event for charity. (WLPG)
5. Take a look at the examples where all four WLPG areas were involved at the same time (where your WLPG is completely blended). Consider the following – you may wish to make a note of these:
    - What made each so special?
    - Can you spot any patterns or themes between each?



#### MAGIC MOMENTS

	W	L	P	G
<i>promoted at work!</i>	✓			
<i>organised a social event for friends</i>		✓	✓	✓
<i>befriended a lonely neighbour</i>			✓	✓
<i>learned to salsa</i>		✓	✓	

'It is never too late to be what we might have been'

– George Eliot





### I'M FREE TO MAKE CHOICES

Tommy Brown had no formal qualifications and spent the first chunk of his life in unfulfilling work. After the death of a parent he re-evaluated his life, began volunteering at a social club for adults with learning difficulties and enjoyed learning, playing and giving at the same time.

After 10 years he suddenly realised he was already blending his LPG but could do much more in a job where he could mix it with his work. Boosted by the support of other volunteers he gained a 'care in the community' position. Starting as a support worker, he progressed to managing a number of community houses and built a bundle of qualifications around his practical skills.

Tommy now has the freedom to choose a whole range of new paths.

Ask yourself what have you learned already about blending your working, learning, playing and giving. What is this information telling you?

You have probably noticed that it's those magical moments when various areas of WLPG combine that make life special and give it meaning. You may also realise that you are already blending elements of your WLPG more than you thought.

Just think how much better your life would be if you could enjoy such moments more often! And that's exactly what this WLPG process is going to help you to do.

## TAKE A LOOK AT YOUR PRESENT LIFE

The next exercise looks at your working, learning, playing and giving in turn to assess what kind of life pattern they are creating for you.

As a rule, people are reactive – they only start asking such questions when confronted by a crisis of some kind. By doing this now, you can start thinking proactively about the whole of your life (rather than the 'hole' in it).

You'll realise that working, learning, playing and giving are closely inter-related. And the more they blend, the more fulfilling your life is likely to be.



### JUST PLAY AND HAVE FUN!

Chiz Onoura fills his day with as much play as possible. Playing basketball not only is his passion, but it has created a whole new social life. Chiz realises that he can also gain a living in the sports sector by coaching youngsters.



### MIXING PLAY AND WORK

While celebrating her A-level results, Michele Crawford-Jefferson reflected on what matters to her and decided to fund her way through medical school by teaching and playing the harp at weddings and social events. Her dream is to make it big in the music business and blend this with her medical experience. She's still working out how to do this.

'The biggest obstacle to achieving my vision is not me, but other people's expectations of me'

e

## I understand my life pattern

Opposite are twelve questions relating to each area of your WLPG. By answering these you can assess your present life pattern.

Rate your answers between 0 – 10 (0 = low, 10 = high) for each and mark your scores on the chart.

Now review your present life pattern and decide where you score highest and lowest. What is this telling you?

Remember that some areas – whether it's working, learning, playing or giving – will give you energy while others will drain it.

Think about the points at which this happens. Ask yourself if the blend of WLPG is right for you now and in the future? What do you need more or less of and where can things be blended?

'I believe that all aspects of my life link together and make me the 'whole person' that I am'  
– Alison Shacklady

## MY LIFE PATTERN



**REALISING POTENTIAL**  
How well does your work realise your true potential?

LOW				MEDIUM				HIGH		
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

**FULFILLING AND FUN**  
How passionate are you about your work?

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

**RECOGNITION AND REWARD**  
Are you getting enough personal recognition and rewards in areas important to you?

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----



**PERSONAL GROWTH**  
How self-reliant, self-aware and self-confident are you?

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

**SENSE OF PURPOSE**  
How clearly do you know your values and true purpose in life?

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

**EMPLOYABILITY**  
Do you have the right mix of skills and experience to meet future labour market needs?

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----



**PERSONAL WELL-BEING**  
How much quality time and commitment are you giving to yourself?

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

**INTERESTS**  
Are you spending enough time and energy on the things that excite you?

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

**SOCIAL LIFE**  
Are you receiving enough help, friendship, support, love and encouragement?

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----



**PARTNERS AND FAMILY**  
Are you giving enough love, help, friendship, support and encouragement to your close partners and family?

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

**RELATIONSHIPS**  
Are you giving enough quality time and energy to your wider circle of friends?

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

**COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENT**  
How much are you giving to your wider community?

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

## STEP 2 – MY LIFE CAN START IMPROVING RIGHT NOW

You've now assessed your present life and how far you're satisfied with it. Whatever your scores for each area of your working, learning, playing and giving, don't worry. Life does not have to be about achieving high scores in every WLPG area.

You'd be amazed how many successful business people end up wishing they had spent more time with their children when they were younger. And how many people work hard to establish a career only to discover they wished they'd done something else. The exciting thing is that by understanding your WLPG you can take control of your own future so you avoid such mistakes.

And you can start right now by looking at some simple ways of enhancing your life pattern. You'll then be ready to discover how you can use your working, learning, playing and giving to create the kind of life that's really right for you.

### e I can enhance my life pattern

Look at the following ways you could begin improving the quality of your current life. Then pick one or two that you could act upon. These ideas are based on the experiences of people who have followed this same process and you should find one that could work right now for you.

#### I can tackle these gaps

When you have read through them, go back to 'My Life Pattern' on page 5 and look at ways you could improve your scores. Do any ideas for action come to mind? Take a piece of paper and make a note of any that stand out.

#### RELAX

*Are you busy doing nothing? Or busy doing the wrong things? This can be disastrous for your quality of life. Here are a few different kinds of busyness in the business of life. What are you busy doing? Tick as many as appropriate. And do you need to slow down and relax?*

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="radio"/> Busy doing work I hate?                         | <input type="radio"/> Busy doing work I love?            |
| <input type="radio"/> Busy chasing the wrong things in life?          | <input type="radio"/> Busy going in the right direction? |
| <input type="radio"/> Busy worrying about the future?                 | <input type="radio"/> Busy creating my future?           |
| <input type="radio"/> Busy worrying about the past?                   | <input type="radio"/> Busy celebrating my achievements?  |
| <input type="radio"/> Busy worrying about what others think about me? | <input type="radio"/> Busy just being myself?            |
| <input type="radio"/> Busy thinking of myself?                        | <input type="radio"/> Busy caring for others?            |
| <input type="radio"/> Busy receiving and not giving?                  | <input type="radio"/> Busy giving?                       |
| <input type="radio"/> Busy thinking the world owes me a living?       | <input type="radio"/> Busy making things happen?         |
| <input type="radio"/> Busy wishing my life away?                      | <input type="radio"/> Busy loving every moment?          |
| <input type="radio"/> Busy waiting for things to get better?          | <input type="radio"/> Busy making a difference?          |

*If you were busy being happy, fulfilled and making a real difference, what would you be doing in terms of your working, learning, playing and giving?*

#### BE THANKFUL

*Be grateful for what you've got – or how can you expect anything else!*

*Look back over your life and the working, learning, playing and giving that has shaped it.*

*Then ask yourself: What do you take for granted?*

*Whom do you need to thank?*

*Now jot down a list of things you are grateful for.*

*Why not buy a new diary and every day list three things you are thankful for?*

*Keep this as an ongoing record.*

#### TAKE RESPONSIBILITY AND FIND HELP

*It's up to you to take control of your future – and no-one else. So start today and focus on whichever areas of your WLPG could make the biggest difference to your life. Don't worry about where to start. It's amazing how useful it can be to talk it through with other people. Find a critical friend or coach to help, someone you can trust to be non-judgmental, positive and honest.*



## GIVE A LITTLE

*The quality of your life depends as much – if not more – on giving as on receiving. It's about making the most of your greatest gift – the 'precious present.'*

*Each second is an opportunity to give in a small way – it may be as simple as listening to someone or giving positive feedback. Do you put something worthwhile into the world around you or are you always taking? In what way can you give a little today?*

## LEARN TO LEARN

*The most important subject to learn about is yourself. So invest at least 10% of your income in learning. Look at what skills will make you more employable and improve your life pattern. If you're not prepared to invest in yourself, who else will?*

*You may have had a bad experience of learning from school. Failed exams may have left you disillusioned or bitter. Today you'll find learning is more flexible. You can study from home or with support from others. For a small amount of money you can find books packed with useful tips from the experts. You may even create your own learning programme or simply learn through feedback from others.*

## REVIEW YOUR RELATIONSHIPS

*Are you giving and receiving enough from the people around you? One of our greatest special needs is for 'relationships'. As we go through life, learning, working, playing and giving, a whole range of people partner us along the way. Some hold our hands, others put money into them. Some employ us, others depend on us.*

*Some stay with us throughout our lives, others pop in and out. How we choose – and manage – these relationships has a dramatic effect on our lives. But we cannot do this successfully on our own, we need people close to us to help. A good friend is someone who will:*

- Actively listen
- Believe in you
- Be compassionate and understanding
- Be non-judgmental
- Offer unconditional love

*How many true friends do you really have? Half a dozen people if you're lucky! Still it's great to have a handful of friends with just a few of these qualities – we're all human. Special people are truly special gifts. But treasure them for who they are – not what you would like them to be. And ask yourself what new relationships you need to build.*

## CREATE SPACE AND MAKE THINGS HAPPEN NOW

*To succeed you must avoid two further traps. First you must create the space to make things happen. Think of the Condor. In the air its amazing wings let it glide gracefully. On the ground though it needs the space to run, spread its wings and take off.*

*Hunters simply clear a tiny space in the undergrowth and lure the birds down with food, leaving them trapped with no room to take off. That's what can happen to us. Possessions and pressures soon accumulate and trap us in jobs we hate, unable to lift off.*

*Make sure you always have the space to take off – the big risk is to have potential you cannot realise. The second trap to avoid is the 'some-day never' scenario. "Someday I'll do this, sometime in the future things will get better..." We all know it never happens.*

*Just make the most of today – the present is precious – and start acting now with no regrets.*

## HAVE FUN

*We can put in endless hours at work or home, chase that extra business, work for more qualifications... and for what? Can you genuinely say you're fulfilled? How often do you wake up feeling truly energised and inspired by the day ahead?*

*If you are struggling to remember, you may need to change something in the day ahead And it doesn't have to be as radical as changing your job. How about re-inventing it?*

*Start by just creating five minutes of excitement – taking a different route to the shops or phoning an old friend.*

*Many of us can count the number of inspiring days on our fingertips – holiday, Christmas, big sports events, night out, birth of a new child, first date, new job, birthday, wedding etc.*

*So what about the rest of the time? Are we merely robots programmed to find work a dull routine and destined to worry about things out of our control as we slog away for 50 weeks every year to enjoy two weeks holiday? Surely not!*

*Now's the time to stop and get off the conveyor belt of life. Just ask yourself the question, "How can I bring more fun and excitement into my daily life?"*

## BE HONEST

*Be clear on what success really means to you. Write out your definition of success. Does your current WLPG match this? Where are the gaps? And what changes do you need to make? Be honest with yourself about what you want and what's stopping you.*

## BLEND YOUR WLPG

*Probably the most effective ways of enhancing the quality of your life is to find ways you can blend the four areas of your life – working, learning, playing and giving.*



PHOTOGRAPHY // STEVE ALAND

## FOOD FOR THOUGHT!

You are a unique and special person with many talents. But are you really happy with your life?

Try thinking of life in terms of a meal. Most of us take it one course at a time. We see learning and working as the main courses then try to manage some playing and giving if we still have room.

But how about seeing it differently? Think instead of life as a Chinese banquet. Everything – working, playing, learning and giving – is right in front of you at the same moment.

It sits there on a rotating table ready for you to blend in any combination you wish – and to share with the people around you. At first all that choice can seem confusing. But just imagine the combinations you can try!

### STEP 3 - I CAN BREAK DOWN THESE BARRIERS

By now you will be realising that your WLPG can hold the key to your future.

But before you can make the most of your working, learning, playing and giving, you need to understand the ways you can break down the barriers we tend to build round these areas. Such barriers often reflect prejudices or perceptions rather than the reality.

It's understandable if a person stuck in a narrow role they have tuned their brain to clocking-off time. And if you did badly at school or had uninspiring teachers, you may see all learning as dull and boring rather than exciting.

But often people with far more interesting jobs or learning opportunities still box their working, learning, playing and giving into separate compartments.

Yet there's no rule that says you have to divide your life up into four distinct areas and spend your time trying to balance one with another. You can often be working and learning at the same time. Or learning and playing. Or playing and giving. In fact any combination is possible.

And once we recognise the barriers we set up around our WLPG, we can start breaking them down.

Overleaf we list some of these barriers together with ways they can be removed by simply changing our mindset.

'Try to focus on the little things that could bring even more happiness to your life' – Sally Cross

**It's not just around our WLPG that we set up barriers. We often do this – not least in the way we respond to change. It's too easy to build walls against the forces of change in life – instead of harnessing that energy to our advantage by 'building windmills'.**



\* The Art of Building Windmills is published by the Windmills Team – visit [www.windmillsprogramme.com](http://www.windmillsprogramme.com)



#### BAR JOB BROKE DOWN BARRIERS

Natalie broke down the barriers around her WLPG when she took a bar job in a gym for people with learning disabilities. It blends all areas – she has a new social network, she's giving to the disabled community and has gained skills and income for her media degree.



#### LEARNING FOR YOURSELF

Although he struggled at school, Tim Rhodes has graduated from what he sees as the 'University of Life'. Owner of an air-freight business, he creatively balances the books in three ways, giving his time, skills and money to his staff, family and a special needs charity.

## Take a fresh approach

As so often in life, it can be our frame of mind that makes all the difference. It's the spirit in which we approach our working, learning, playing and giving – not the activity itself – that counts. If we see work as dull and boring, we can't be surprised if it turns out that way. If we only see weekends as fun and exciting, what do we create with the other five days? To get more out of life, you may need to approach it in a complete new frame of mind.

OLD APPROACH	NEW APPROACH
 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Doing what you're given</li> <li>• Rigid job</li> <li>• Real drudgery</li> <li>• Earning a living</li> <li>• Filling time</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shaping your own role</li> <li>• Unique bundle of projects, roles, tasks and skills</li> <li>• Fun, exciting and energising</li> <li>• Making a life</li> <li>• Adding value</li> </ul>
 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In the classroom</li> <li>• Academic knowledge</li> <li>• Formal qualifications</li> <li>• Intensive study, set route and exam pressure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Everywhere</li> <li>• New skills and experience</li> <li>• Learning for life</li> <li>• Choice, freedom and flexibility</li> </ul>
 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What I did as a child</li> <li>• Happens in my spare time</li> <li>• Only with my friends</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What I do every day</li> <li>• Enjoyed everywhere</li> <li>• Embracing everyone</li> </ul>
 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Giving money</li> <li>• Discreet charitable act</li> <li>• Giving to look good</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Giving myself every day – with family, friends, colleagues and the wider community</li> <li>• Giving wisely – using my best talents, skills and knowledge where I know I can make a difference</li> </ul>



### A FRESH LOOK AT LIFE

Lynda O'Rourke was sitting by a swimming pool when it struck her she did not have to go on working like a robot as a school cook. She took a fresh look at her life and realised she could volunteer to help with art classes which she loved and improve her reading and writing at night-school. She also listened to her son who said she had bags of skills. She's never looked back and realises how much is out there for her.



On average we wake up to the alarm 27,000 days of our life and go off to play our role in the hectic daily round. But do we approach each day as a boring treadmill or an exciting new possibility? All too often we tell ourselves there is no time for giving or playing today because we're too busy with work. And that's one of our big mistakes – we're simply balancing our WLPG – not blending it.



It's not surprising that your working, learning, playing and giving are so inter-related. We all know that pressures at home can affect your work. And all work and no play is a notorious recipe for disaster.

Once you take a fresh approach, you'll be breaking down the barriers and this can dramatically affect the quality of your life each day. The exciting thing is that this is always within your control – even if you hate your job.

You can start blending your WLPG simply by thinking differently.

It might be going into work with a smile on your face, saying something positive to a colleague or finding common ground with someone you find it hard to get on with.

Injecting learning, fun, love and excitement into daily routines can mean you live every day more fully – instead of simply wishing it was over.

With this approach you can move on through the process and learn to use your WLPG in a creative way to shape the life you really dream of.

### How does your WLPG shape up?

Trying to blend your WLPG is highly creative because you can be having fun, learning, earning and sharing at the same moment. And the more you blend two or more of these WLPG areas, the more you expand your chances of happiness. You've now looked at your life pattern and you understand the need to break down barriers and blend these four WLPG areas.

What you need now is a way of seeing at a glance how well you are doing this. Luckily it's easy – all you have to do is make a simple sketch. This lets you map out your WLPG in a few seconds and shows clearly just how you're doing.



### DRIVEN BY A DREAM

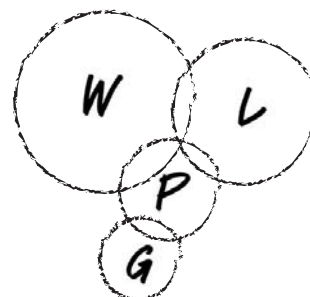
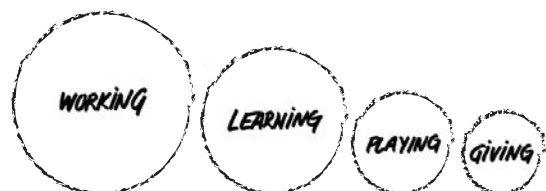
PJ Roe works 100 hours a week on the surgical wards but his vision of creating an outdoor career helps him cope with the pressures his work puts on the rest of his life.

Once qualified, he plans to do some volunteering in mountain rescue then create his own niche providing outdoor medical support in Wales, Scotland or the Lake District. Plan B is to do the same abroad.

e

### I can sketch out my own WLPG

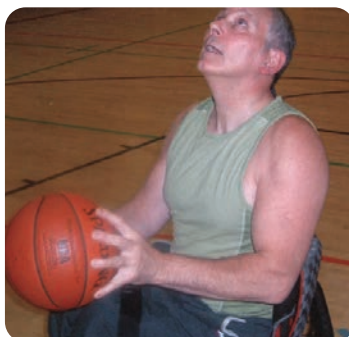
1. Take a piece of paper and start by sketching four separate circles of different sizes dependent on how much time you spend on each (large circle = a lot of time, small circle = small amount of time)
2. Think about your own working, learning, playing and giving. Focus on each area in turn and consider ways you may be already blending two or more of the areas.
3. Now sketch out your four circles again, ensuring they overlap wherever they are being blended. Try to make the size of each area match the time you allocate to it in your life. Don't worry about this or try to be precise. There's nothing scientific about it – it's simply a rough guide designed to help you think. Before starting on your own sketch, you may find it useful to look at the following case studies as a guide to how to do it.





### WORKING IN THE FAST LANE

Phil Wakefield's diagram reflects how much of his life revolves round his job as a director of a construction company – because it uses his skills and passions it's enjoyable and fulfilling. Giving is only a small part but it does overlap with play – he coaches his son's football team and plays guitar in a band which does fundraising. Learning is the smallest dimension but it does overlap with his WPG.



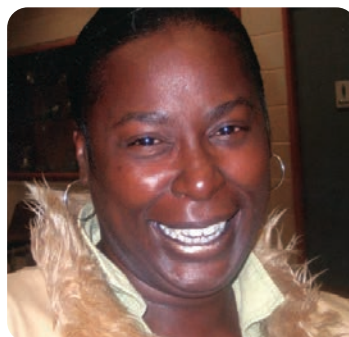
### A WELL-BLENDED LIFE

Gerry Kinsella loves sport, has the passion to empower disabled people and combines these with his work. As an entrepreneur he could have made millions but with his social conscience he decided to create a unique disabled sports academy. Supported by wife Anne as a volunteer, he might spend a typical day coaching in basketball, fundraising and working on wheelchair design. Despite all the obstacles, Gerry's life journey is as much about stickability as having a vision. He's learned that life is full of what-ifs. And if you don't do it, who will?



### GIVING COMES FIRST

Sally Cross is getting to the bottom of what makes her content, whether that is re-aligning her work role to match her skills and preferences, improving her guitar skills or buying a new fridge/freezer. Sally both works hard and gives hard. Her giving takes on many forms from getting involved with her local church to organising a shoebox appeal at work for a children's charity. One of the highlights of the year which she feels puts life into perspective was a two-week children's camp in Eastern Europe. Here her singing, training and playing skills combine with putting her Christian faith into practice – the purpose behind all that she does.



### WLPG UNDER ONE ROOF

Julie Hughes decided to work, learn, play and give under the same roof. With her family she bought and modernised an old rundown house and they then applied to be carers for adults with mental health problems. They took on three new residents for short-term placement and used their previous nursing and training experience to provide emotional and independent living support. The new householders now enjoy everything from cooking lessons to trips to Wales together. Julie has learned an incredible amount, not just about personal development but also about financial management, legal issues and social service policies. Julie's long-term vision is to create her own community of several homes.

## STEP 4 - AM I READY TO START?

You should now understand how you can start improving the quality of your life through the WLPG process. But what are you going to do now? Tell yourself 'someday, sometime' and keep putting it off? If you want to use your WLPG to give yourself a better future, you should start now. But first you need to look at how well equipped you are to begin. And that involves checking your current life fitness.

Think of the next exercise in terms of your local fitness club. The instructor assesses your current level, sets you an enjoyable and challenging plan and you're soon surpassing your expectations. The WLPG process will help you do this for your whole life.



### I KNEW I COULD DO THIS

Sue Nugent knew she needed to change her WLPG but was afraid to get started. She finally decided to find a more rewarding job at less pay to free up her time and enrolled on a family history course at her local college. Now she enjoys sharing her knowledge to help others explore their family trees.

'People told me what I wanted to do with my life was not possible but they were just transferring their fears on to me. Fear is contagious – you can catch it down the phone! At last I've listened to myself and am well on the way to living my dream'



'It's no good waiting until you retire to live your dreams. You need to take control and re-design your life now' – Charles Handy

'Go for it! It's never too late. I was 40 when I made the change and I would not go back' – Thomas Turner

e

### I need to check my life fitness

1. On the page opposite, take each question in turn and score yourself between 0 (very poor) and 10 (outstanding). Try to be as honest as possible with yourself – avoid taking the middle ground.
2. Review the scores, focusing on your highs and lows. What do your scores tell you? Don't worry about your total score; try to prioritise those areas that will make the greatest impact on your life.
3. Read the information provided on the opposite page to help you improve your fitness levels for the WLPG process. You'll be able to build on the strengths you've identified and work on those areas where there is still room for improvement.



## MY LIFE FITNESS

	LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH
THINKING	1. ATTITUDE How positive and motivated are you?	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7	8 9 10
	2. BELIEF Do you really believe in yourself, even when you have setbacks and knocks?	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7	8 9 10
	3. SELF KNOWLEDGE How well do you know your skills, strengths, values and motivations in life?	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7	8 9 10
	4. IMAGINATION Are you creative and imaginative enough about what you can really achieve in your life?	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7	8 9 10
	5. VISION How creative and positive is your vision of your future?	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7	8 9 10
ACTING	6. SUSTAINABILITY Is everything in place to keep your vision going?	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7	8 9 10
	7. PROACTIVITY Are you making the most of working, learning, playing and giving opportunities?	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7	8 9 10
	8. SELF PROMOTION Are you good at promoting yourself on a day-to-day basis?	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7	8 9 10
	9. SUPPORT COMMUNITY How effective are your support network and networking skills?	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7	8 9 10
	10. COMMITMENT Are you really committed to making things happen, even when inevitable setbacks, rejection and mistakes occur?	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7	8 9 10

## e I can improve my fitness

To improve your fitness level you could...

1. Focus on the high scores in your fitness plan and build on these strengths.
2. Identify areas for development (the lower score) that with a small improvement will make a significant difference to your overall performance.
3. Think about whether your scores on questions 1-5, the 'thinking' questions were higher than the scores on questions 6-10, the action questions. You may for example be great at thinking about yourself and your future but never turn this into action. On the other hand you may be frantically doing all sorts of things without any focus or direction.
4. Take action. The exciting thing is that every item is within your control. Here's how this resource can help if you have identified areas for development.

THINKING

- 1 **ATTITUDE**  
Stage 4 is crucial for you. Focus on putting these ideas into action rather than simply reading about them.
- 2 **BELIEF**  
As well as Stage 4, remember how much you've already achieved (See the exercise 'I've learned') and the skills you have (Prime skills, Stage 2).
- 3 **SELF-KNOWLEDGE**  
Stage 2 will enable you to gain greater depth of self-knowledge than ever before if you put the time and effort in. Be honest with yourself and revisit Stage 1.
- 4 **IMAGINATION**  
Find a creative person to work with, particularly on Stage 2 Step 2. Allow yourself to be as imaginative as you can in your 'Day in my life' scenario. Remember there are countless different WLPG routes to your vision (Stage 3).
- 5 **VISION**  
Depth of self-knowledge and breadth of imagination will shape your vision. Focus your energy on Stage 2.

ACTING

- 6 **SUSTAINABILITY**  
Stage 3 will enable you to explore different ways of sustaining your vision. Stage 6 provides three broad routes forward.
- 7 **PROACTIVITY**  
Having learned the importance of taking control in Stage 4, Stage 6 provides a range of practical tools and leading techniques to make things happen.
- 8 **SELF PROMOTION**  
Practical advice is provided in the enclosed Job booklet.
- 9 **SUPPORT COMMUNITY**  
Stage 5 is designed to help you identify who you need your support from and help you create your own back-up team.
- 10 **COMMITMENT**  
Stage 7 will enable you to design your own life project. Remember to be honest about the barriers that prevent you realising your potential (Stage 4 Step 4).

Try to apply the lessons from each case study to your own situation. It may be one simple learning point that generates a really useful new idea.



Want to change  
someone's life?  
Then why not start  
with your own

WELL DONE, FOR THE FIRST TIME YOU MAY HAVE STOPPED TO THINK ABOUT WHAT'S REALLY IMPORTANT TO YOU. STAGE 2 WILL HELP YOU GAIN A DEEPER UNDERSTANDING OF THIS.

'It's good to know I am not alone in wanting to change my life. All the tools I need are within reach; I just have to use them' – Rachel Southworth

'Thank you so much for this – it has really brought home what matters to me' – Helen Bromley

## 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:

The Windmills Team, GIEU. T: +44 (0)151 709 1760 // F: +44 (0)151 709 0576 // E: [mail@gieu.co.uk](mailto:mail@gieu.co.uk) // [www.gieu.co.uk](http://www.gieu.co.uk)