



Guiding Students on Their Purposeful Journeys – A Service Approach

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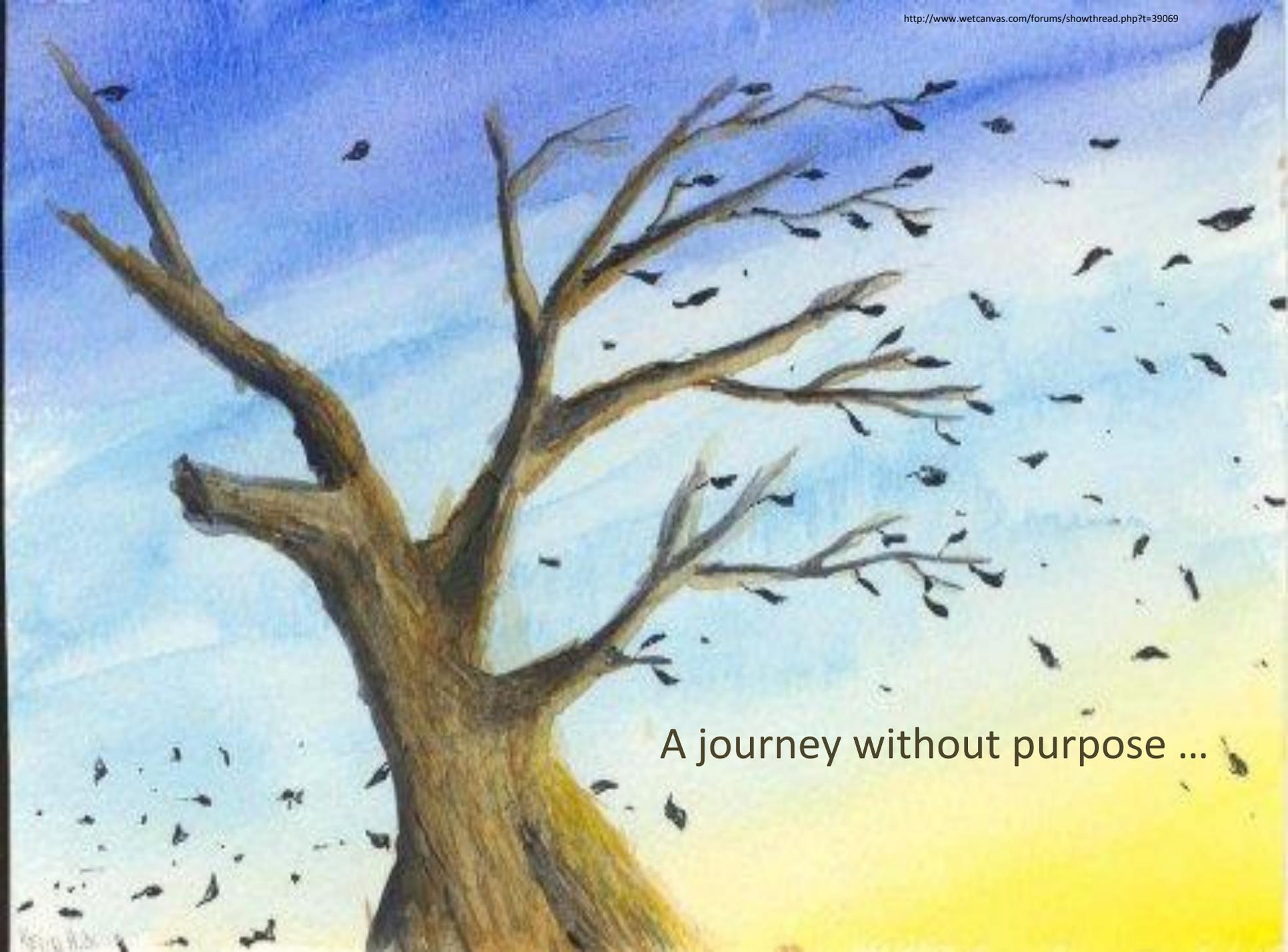
Gallup Poll looked at need to feel part of something larger and more important than ourselves.

83% said “very important”.
15% said “fairly important”.

Results suggest 98% to whom a meaningful life was at least “important”.

Wagner, Rodd & Harter, Jim (2012). The Eighth Element of Great Managing. *Gallup Business Journal*. Retrieved November 20, 2012, from <http://businessjournal.gallup.com/content/103084/Eighth-Element-Great-Managing.aspx>





A journey without purpose ...

Kevin W. ...

A close-up photograph of a stone archway. The arch is made of light-colored stone with a decorative keystone featuring a central fleur-de-lis and symmetrical scrolls. Below the arch, the words "ENTER TO GROW IN WISDOM" are carved into the stone in a serif font.

ENTER
TO GROW IN WISDOM

Above a stone arch entering Harvard

Choosing Major as Path to Career or Vocation



It's Going To Be A Leap Of Faith ...



What Will
Be Your
Guiding
Light?



Familiar Ways of Making Career Choice

1. What would make me happy?
2. What am I interested in?
3. What am I good at?
4. What jobs are in demand?
5. What jobs pay the most money?
6. What jobs allow me to wield power and influence?
7. What careers are most respected by society?
8. What career path do people think I should follow?

Too Much Emphasis?

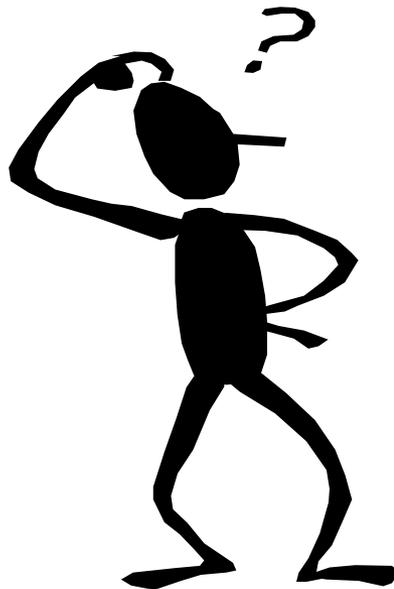




Overemphasis
creates greater
proneness to fall
into illusions which
can conceal
academic/career
choice pitfalls.

I know I would be happy doing that!

Pleasure vs. Happiness



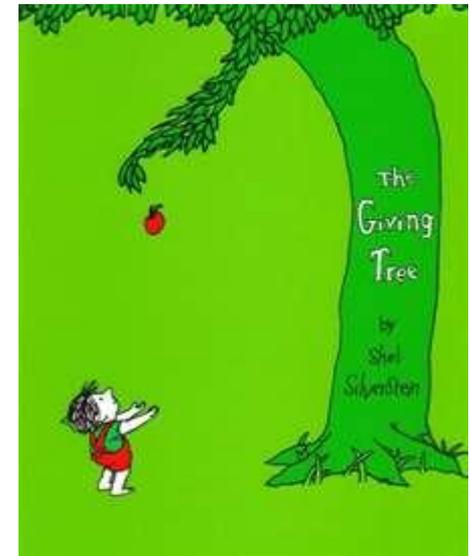
Pleasure

- From External Sources
- Possessions
- Short-lived



Happiness/Joy

- From Internal Sources
- Love, Appreciation of Others
- Enduring



But, it interests me ...



Own interests an obvious consideration, but too much emphasis ...

But, I am good at so many things ...



While pursuing multiple degrees, majors, or minors can be advantageous, it is also very important to carefully consider any pitfalls, including:

- Extension of time to college career
- Financial feasibility
- Lack of time to work while in college
- Lack of time for social activities
- Lack of time for internships or study abroad

<http://www.collegeparentcentral.com/2011/02/should-my-student-choose-a-double-major-in-college/>



I heard I can get a job doing that ...

Job demand another understandable consideration, but too much emphasis ...



... like trying to put shapes in nonmatching holes.

Wow, I could make a lot of cash ...

The Relationship of Money and Happiness





<http://www.endpoverty2015.org/en/aggregator/categories/3>



<http://listsplenty.com/blog/?p=11282>

Surveys have found ...

- Nearly the same level of happiness between the very rich individuals on the Forbes 400 and the Maasai herdsman of East Africa.
- Lottery winners return to their previous level of happiness after five years.

I've got the power?



The Stonecutter, a Chinese folk-tale of unknown authorship



In the legend, a poor stonecutter is satisfied in his labor until he wishes to become ever grander things. With help from a mountain spirit, he becomes a prince, the sun, clouds, and then eventually a mountain. A stonecutter, however, makes the mountain shudder in the end.

The Stonecutter, a Chinese folk-tale of unknown authorship

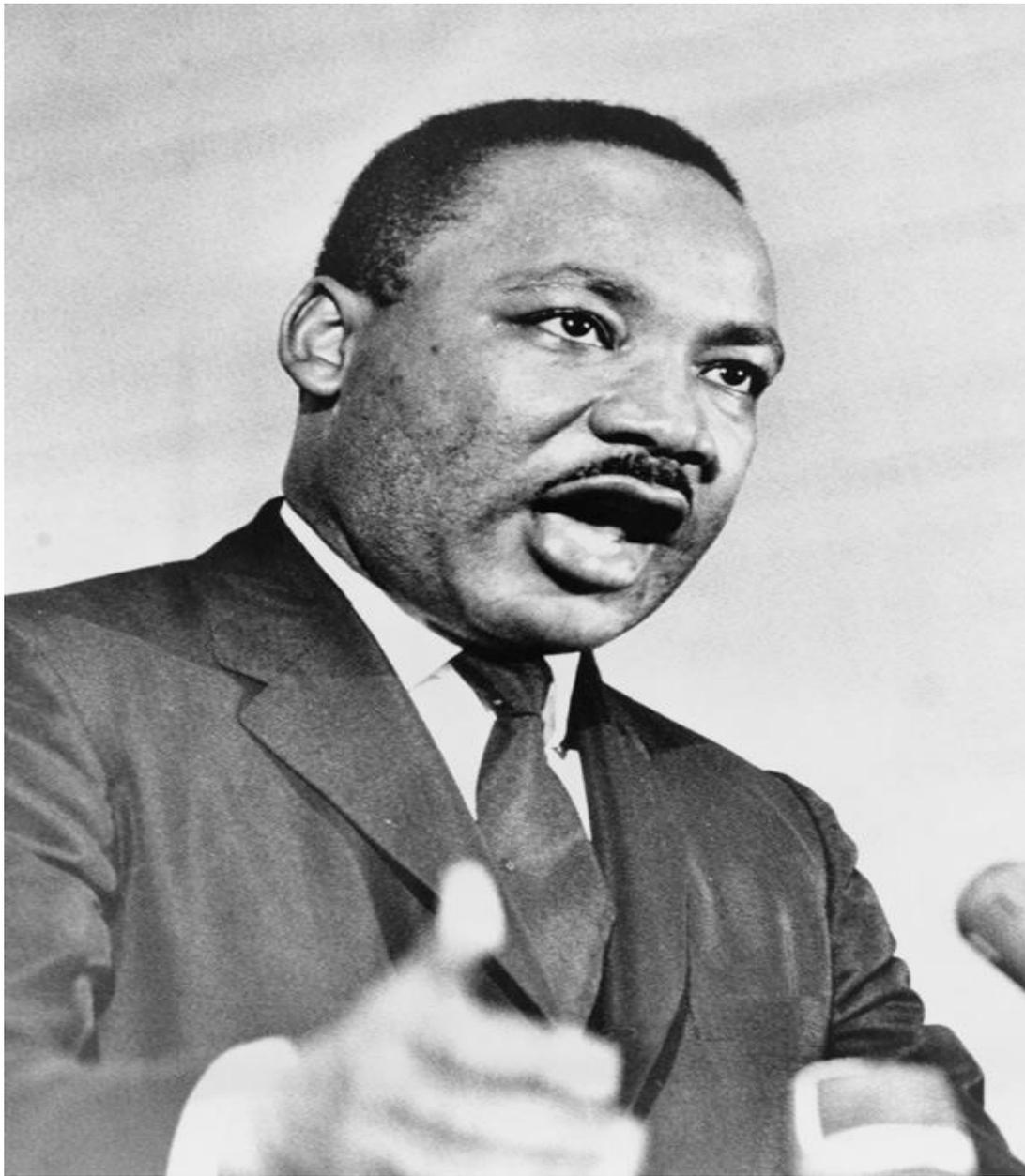


Moral of the story:

Greedy pursuits are in vain
because power is relative.

I want people to think I am all that!

Dignity of labor as how much we respect all kinds of jobs and how we don't feel that one job is less or more important than another.



“All labor that uplifts humanity has dignity and importance and should be undertaken with painstaking excellence.”

Martin Luther King Jr.

Credit: "[Rev. Martin Luther King, head-and-shoulders portrait, facing right, speaking at a rally in Crawfordville, Georgia]." United Press International telephoto, 1965 Oct 11. Prints and Photographs Division of the Library of Congress.

I have to live up to expectations ...

Expectations ...



- Stem from influence of family/friends and society/culture throughout your life, reflecting agendas by others transferred to you to live up to or fulfill.
- You feel driven by obligation and sometimes fear to live up to others' expectations which are often times uninspiring and disempowering as they are a reflection of their needs rather than yourself.

What's your advising story?

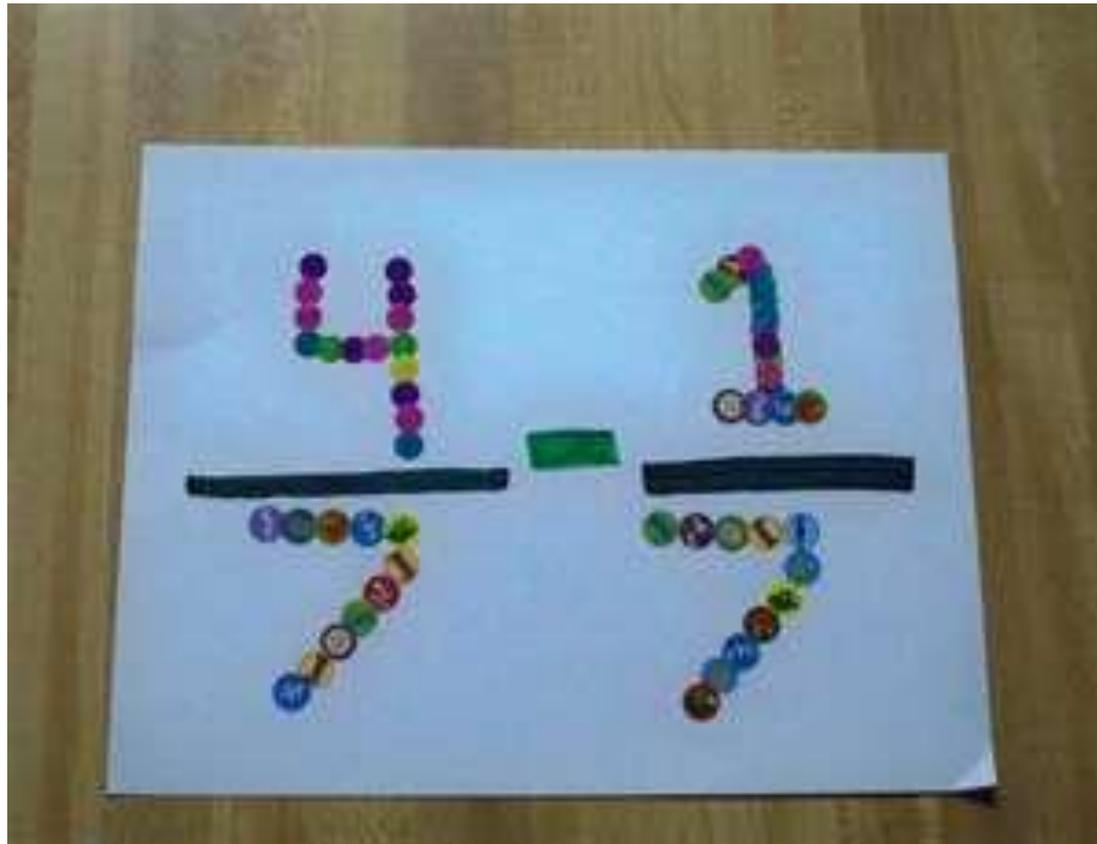


Is there a road
less traveled in
choosing a major
as a path to
career or
vocation?



<http://ecocatlady.blogspot.com/2011/07/one-snowy-night-that-changed-everything.html>

Common Denominator of all Careers?





All
provide
some
level of
service to
people or
society as
a whole.

BRIEF ACTIVITY

Take a couple minutes to try and come up with a career that does not in some way service others or society as a whole.



General Social Survey (GSS)
National Opinion Research Center
University of Chicago

People looking for jobs that bring satisfaction and happiness should concentrate on professions that focus primarily on serving other people.

Important to show how all jobs can positively impact others or society!

"I ~~ju~~st install furnace ducts."

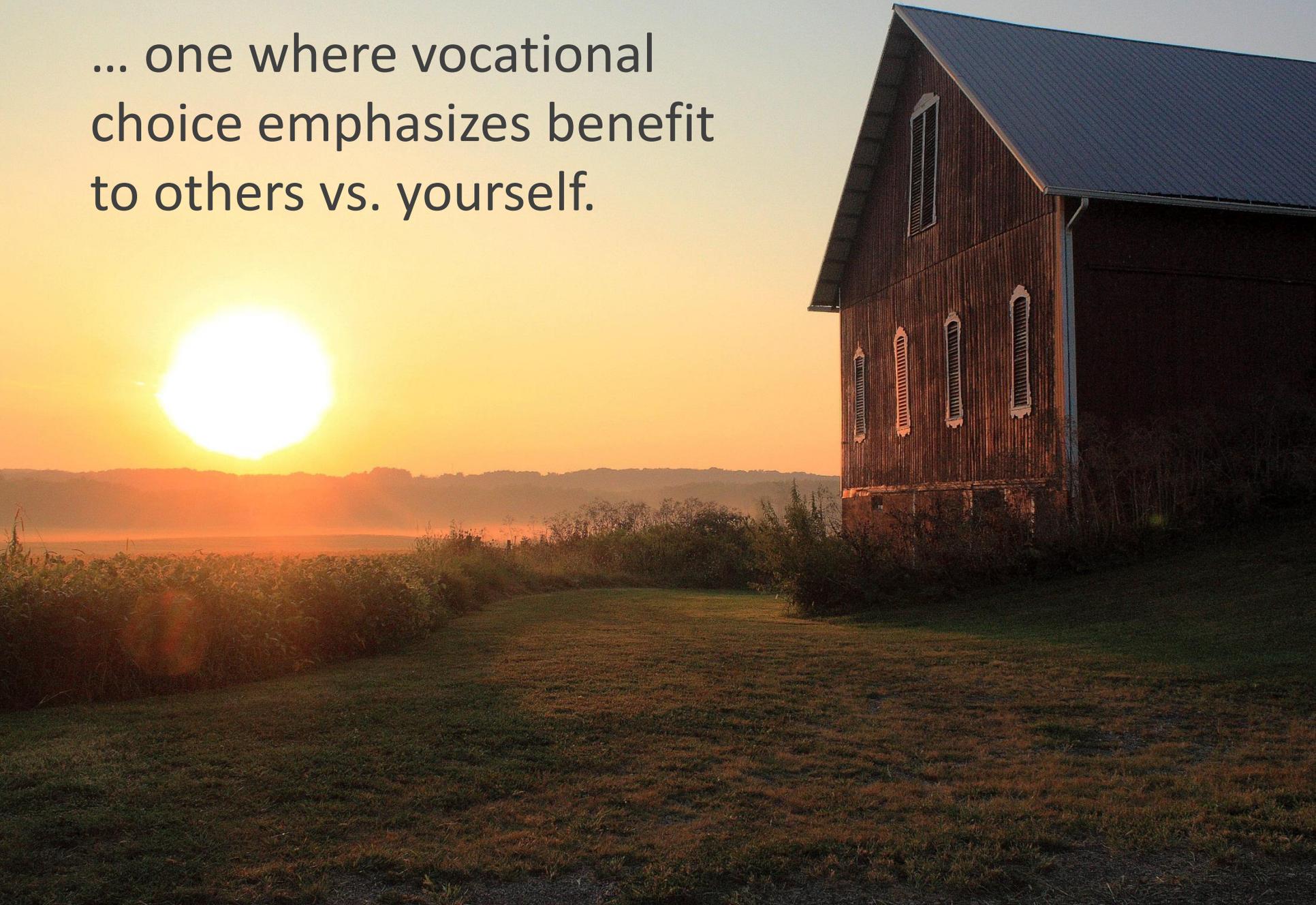
"I ~~ju~~st waitress at a diner."

"I ~~ju~~st roof houses."



A fresh perspective emerges ...

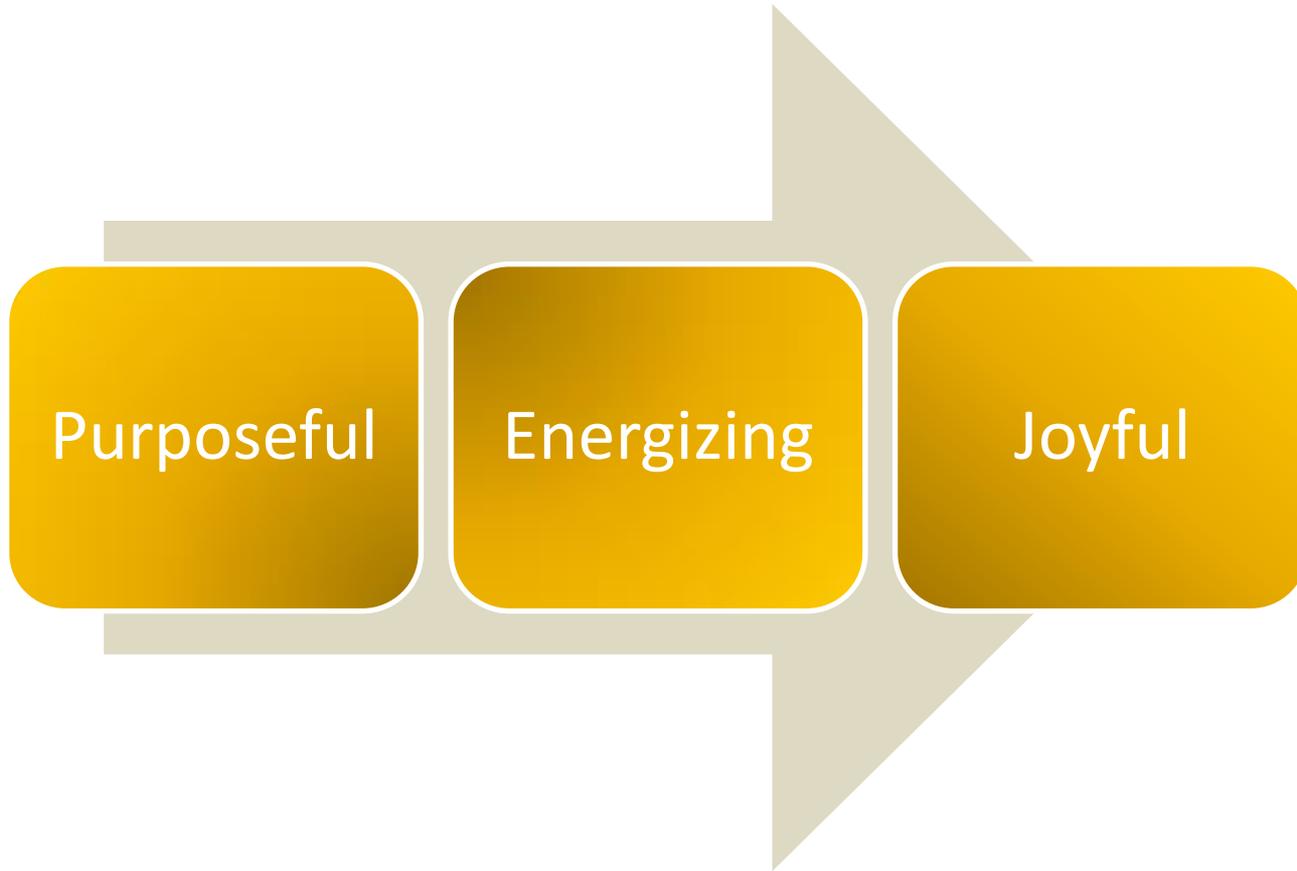
... one where vocational
choice emphasizes benefit
to others vs. yourself.



In what career role can my gifts, talents and abilities best serve others or advance a particular group of people or society?



Thinking more along these lines can become:



... ironically giving yourself
the best chance at
prospering materially as
well.

Still, you do not totally divorce
other ways of making career choice.

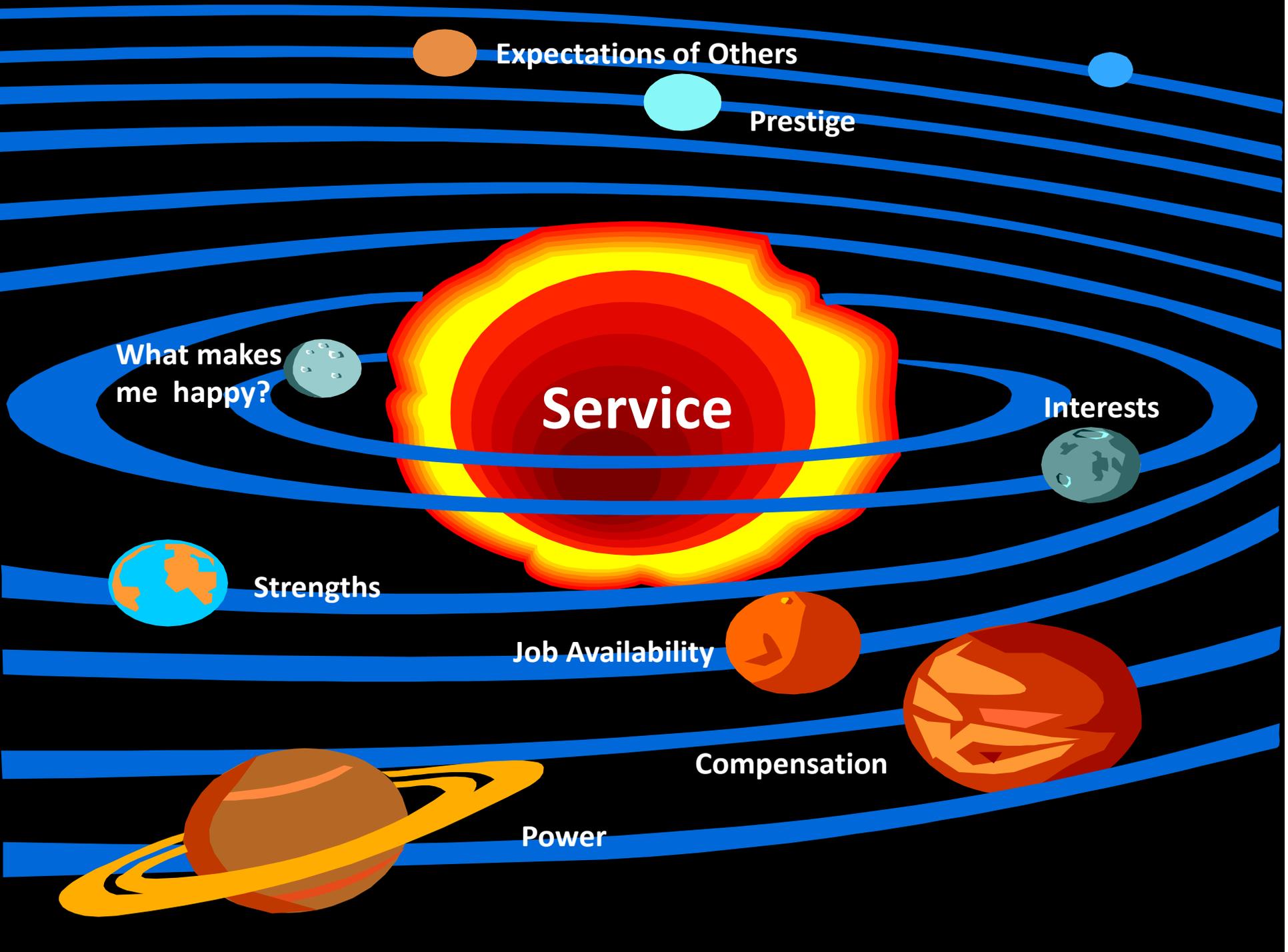


They get a voice and should be used in the decision making process.

Service perspective, however, gets to make the final call.



Putting it all in perspective ...



Expectations of Others

Prestige

What makes me happy?

Service

Interests

Strengths

Job Availability

Compensation

Power

Comparing the process to a storm ...

Service



What makes me happy?

Interests

Strengths

Job Availability

Compensation

Power

Prestige

Expectations of
Others



Storm causes filtration process that goes to core of person's purpose.

Duration of Storm?

The storm can pass quickly for some ...



“It was like I was given the last piece of a puzzle.”

- University of Akron Student



For others, the storm can last longer ...

Answer Anxiety with the Question:



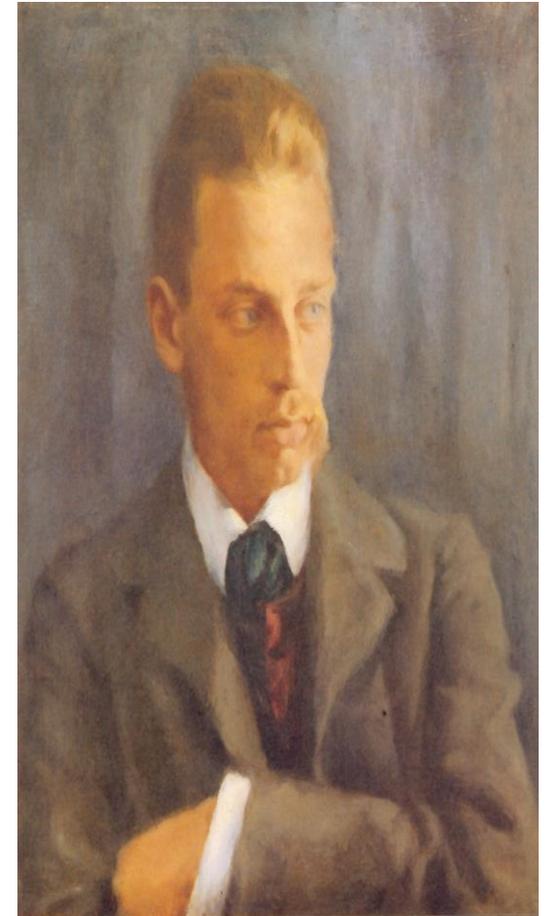
Answer Anxiety with!

In what career role can my gifts, talents and abilities best serve others or advance a particular group of people or society?



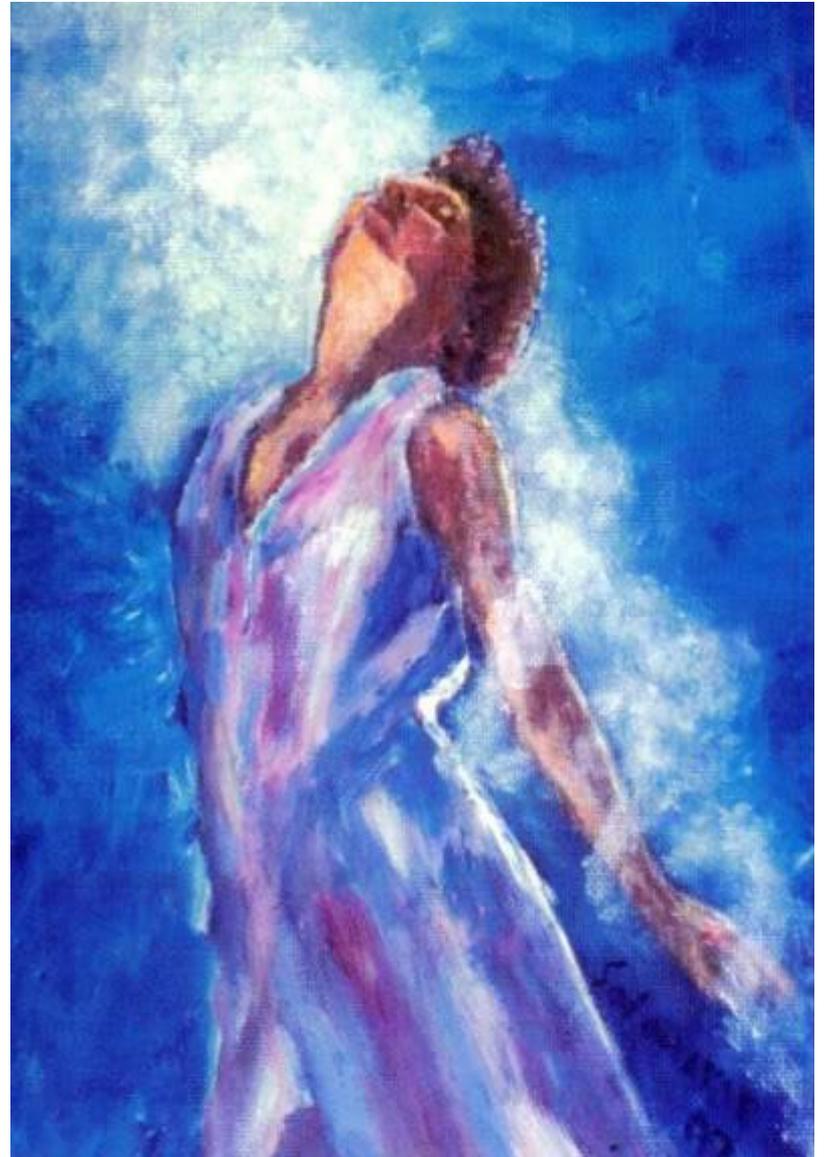
Have patience with everything that remains unsolved in your heart. Try to love the questions themselves, like locked rooms and like books written in a foreign language. Do not now look for the answers. They cannot now be given to you because you could not live them. It is a question of experiencing everything. At present you need to live the question. Perhaps you will gradually, without even noticing it, find yourself experiencing the answer, some distant day.

Rainer Maria Rilke (German poet)



Spiritual side and how this
factors into the question ...

Spiritually speaking from a career standpoint, surrender of your will to that of God, the Universe, or a higher intelligence to accomplish His (It's) will/purpose through you, even when you are blind to it.



In a nonspiritual context, this approach still works quite well because of the agreement that all careers or jobs have this main purpose of helping/advancing others.



Possible pitfalls with this approach?

Saint/Martyr Illusion

Process gets twisted around in that your serving others is a means to serve your belief in how wonderful you are.



Saint/Martyr Illusion

Remind yourself that you are simply doing what you are supposed to be doing with the talents, gifts, and abilities you were born with.



Serving others at
the total expense
of taking care of
yourself can lead to
burnout.



Appropriate forms
of rest and
relaxation are vital
to this approach so
energy levels stay
high to allow for
fulfillment of
vocation to others.



Supporting the process ...



- Career Center
Simmons 301
- Counseling Services
Simmons 304 and 306
- Clinic for Individual and Family Therapy
C.P. and Cornelia Chima Family Center



Possible reflections ...

Create personal mission statement ...

... keeping in mind Mission of The University of Akron's Vision 2020

To ensure student success and leverage our region's unique assets in the creation of knowledge and application of research that benefits humankind.

A black and white tuxedo cat is sitting on a windowsill, looking out at a cloudy sky. The cat is positioned on the left side of the frame, facing right. The background is a large window showing a bright, overcast sky with soft, white clouds. The cat's fur is dark with white markings on its chest and paws.

Observing a group of
people may prove
insightful.

Vocationally speaking, there are people waiting for you to positively impact them.

Do not let that group down by taking your vocational journey lightly.



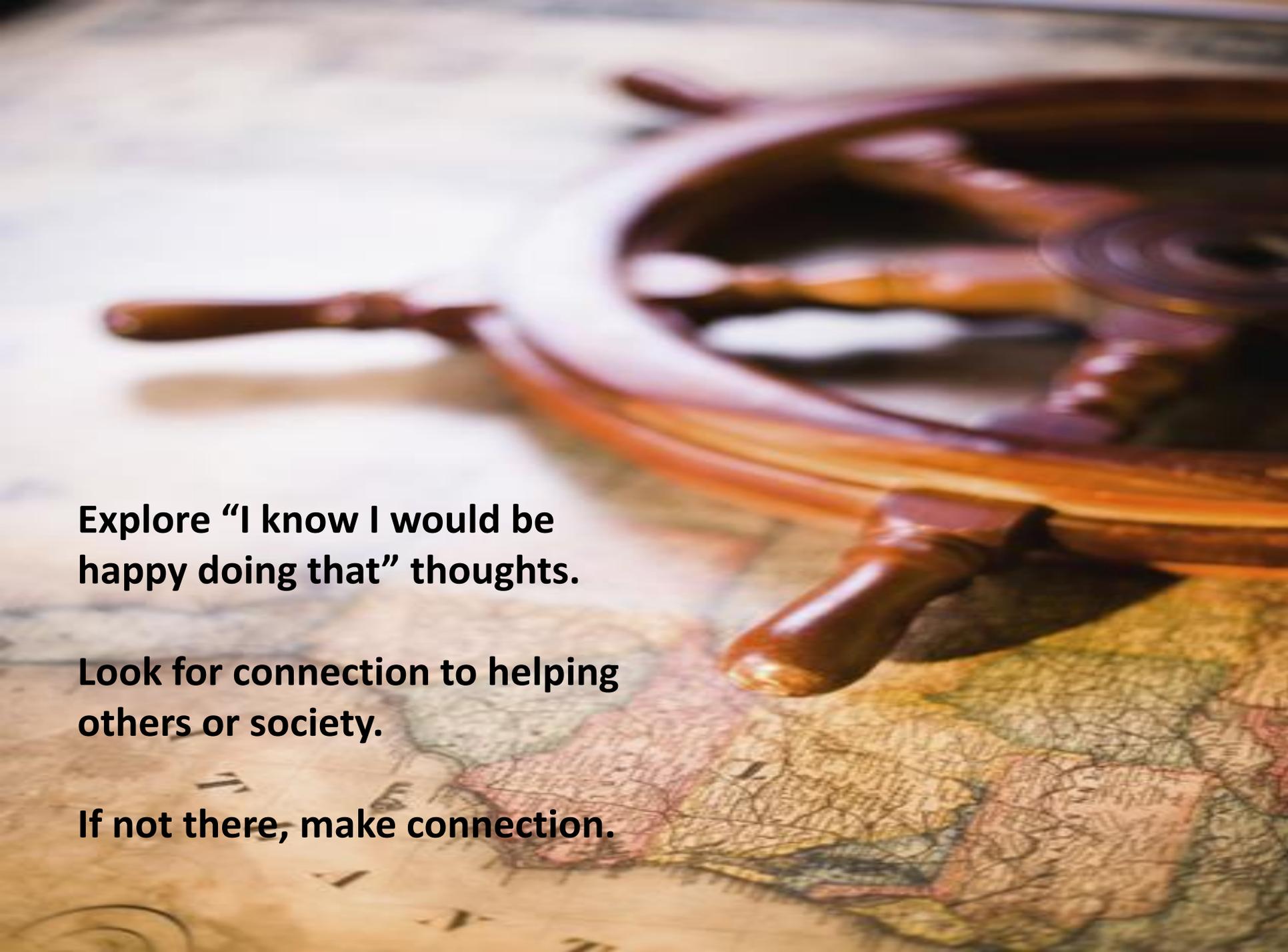
Getting outside of own mind?

“Only from the standpoint of me helping others, what job would be my best match in your opinion?”



The image shows two tall, dark industrial smokestacks on the left side, emitting a large, billowing plume of white smoke that rises and spreads across the upper half of the frame. The background is a clear, bright blue sky. The text is positioned in the lower right quadrant of the image.

Avoid pollution of answer with others' illusions and fears by emphasizing **'Only from the standpoint of me helping others ...'**

A close-up photograph of a polished wooden ship's steering wheel resting on an old, weathered map. The wheel is the central focus, with its spokes and rim clearly visible. The map beneath it shows various geographical features and colors, though they are slightly out of focus. The lighting is warm, highlighting the texture of the wood and the paper.

Explore “I know I would be happy doing that” thoughts.

Look for connection to helping others or society.

If not there, make connection.

Exploring your own struggles ...

Possible indication of population to be best served?



What do you
do well that
other people
come to you
for help with?



In Conclusion ...

- Reflect on gifts, talents, and abilities.
- Begin thinking about how those may best match up in service to others vocationally speaking; thus, creating purpose, energy and joy.
- Don't divorce other ways in choosing career path; however, service perspective gets to make the final call.
- See through illusions such as money, power, and prestige about pursuing a certain path that could have otherwise been devastating on a vocation journey.