



Exploration through Reflection

“We don’t learn from experience...we learn from reflecting on experience.”

- John Dewey

Why is reflection important?

Reflection is an intentional process of exploration and examination of yourself, your experiences, and your perspectives. Spending time in reflection gives you the opportunity to gain insight to help you move forward. In career decision making, reflection helps you learn more about your values, strengths, interests, and personality and the environments in which you could thrive. This will help you build an internal compass to guide you through ambiguity and uncertainty.

Vital Signs & Callings Questions

The following reflection activity is from *Vital Signs: Discovering and Sustaining Your Passion for Life* and *Callings: Finding and Following an Authentic Life*, by Gregg Levoy.

Below are a series of questions to help prompt reflection. As you answer them it is important that you do not over think your responses. There are no right or wrong answers and you are encouraged to write without self-judgement and lean into your initial thoughts. It is also important to be specific in your responses. For example, if your response is friendship, do not write friendship, name specific people.

1. Italian writer Albert Moravia said it is important to know “the one problem you were born to understand.” What might that be for you?

2. Name an experience you consider among the high-points of your life. This could be as simple as sitting in front of a sunset or as elaborate as traveling in Europe for a summer. Write the ingredients list of this experience. What were the factors that made this experience a high-point for you?

3. If I were to say to you, “Just go for it!” what might the “it” in “go for it” be?

4. The original definition of the word adventure was “something about to happen”—as in Advent, which celebrates the birth of Christ. So a sense of adventure is related to a sense of *anticipation* about life, which helps immeasurably if you always give yourself something to look forward to. Name some activities or involvements that you most look forward to doing.

5. In the book *Corner Office*, 700 CEO's were asked what qualities they see most often in people who succeed. Number one on their collective list was passionate curiosity. What are you most passionately curious about? What do you love to study, research, write about, investigate, and try to understand?

6. What is your favorite quality about yourself?

7. Name a time in your life when you were unusually bold. Boldness is defined by your own standards.

8. Where in your life—thinking about in what places, doing what things, with which people—can you say, “I like myself here”?

9. Imagine you are standing at a crossroads. There is a signpost in front of you with two signs on it, pointing in different directions. What is written on each of the signs?

10. What decision could you make today that your future self would thank you for?

Spend some time going through your responses to the reflection prompts and identify patterns by circling all recurring themes and list them below.
