



# CERIC

Advancing  
Career  
Development  
in Canada

Promouvoir  
le développement  
de carrière  
au Canada

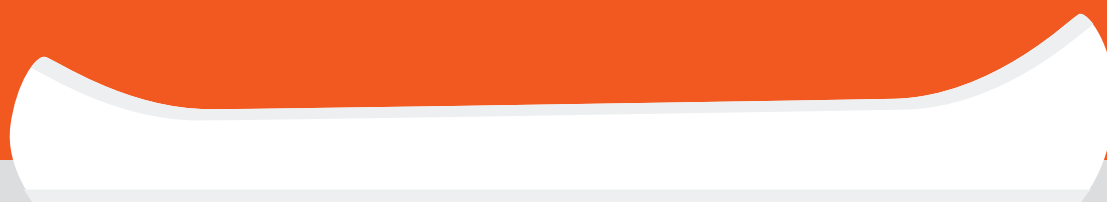
## **Career Work in Action**

Discussions and Activities for  
Professionals

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KAREN SCHAFFER & JULIANA WIENS

**POST-SECONDARY STUDENTS**



**Based on CERIC's Guiding Principles of Career Development**

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Discussions and Activities for  
Professionals

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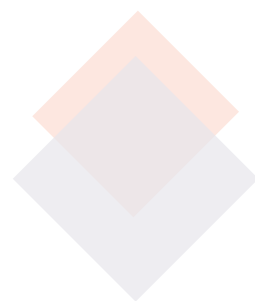
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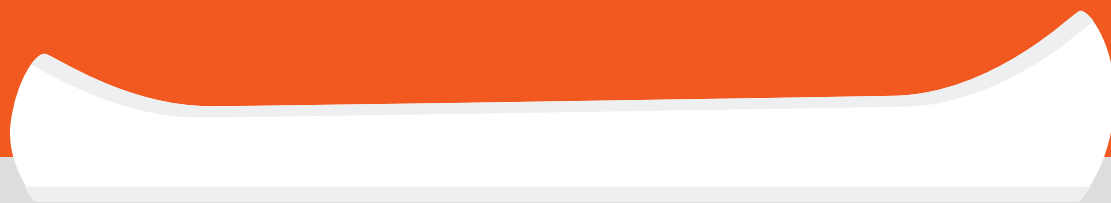
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# **Introduction:** Where we are starting from?





## ■ Purpose

The purpose of this action plan is to provide you - the professional - with insights and ideas for working with your clients that align with the CERIC Guiding Principles of Career Development. We begin by painting a picture of post-secondary students that speaks to how they are situated within the Guiding Principles, and we then suggest discussion questions and activities that professionals can use when providing career support to this particular population. We have grouped these questions and activities according to 5 five key areas of career work, and we anticipate that professionals will draw upon all of these different areas based on client need, and according to the Organic Career Support Framework that we present and define in the *How do we help?* section.

## ■ Definitions

Throughout this document, we use the term **professionals** to refer to the action plan's intended recipients because we recognize that individuals from a wide range of occupations - both inside and outside of the career development field - may provide career-related support to those with whom they work. You will notice as well that we define the demographic group in question - post-secondary students - very precisely. Our intention is not to exclude anyone, but rather, to provide specific enough parameters to allow for meaningful discussion. We recognize that lives and circumstances vary widely, and that not all post-secondary students will identify with the themes and ideas that we discuss. We also recognize that some of the discussions and activities described below could apply to individuals who do not fit within our identified parameters.

“

“This work is not standardized and cannot be scripted.”

“

“Working effectively with clients means recognizing that career is lifelong and complex.”

## ■ Philosophy

As authors, we adhere to certain philosophies in our work that stem from our professional identities as Career Counsellors, and our experiences of working with a range of populations. We believe in the importance of locating ourselves, and for that reason, we identify as white, middle class, and raised in a colonial system. We emphasize that other worldviews, cultures, and social locations are equally valid, and that each professional has a responsibility to understand how their own location impacts their practice.

**Most importantly, we believe that while recognized best practices do exist within the career development field, this work is not standardized and cannot be scripted. Each client is different, and working effectively with clients means recognizing that career is lifelong and complex.** Navigating career work requires knowledge, empathy, patience, compassion, intuition, cultural competence, and the effective use of theories and frameworks. We invite you to engage with this action plan as it works for you and for the client in front of you.

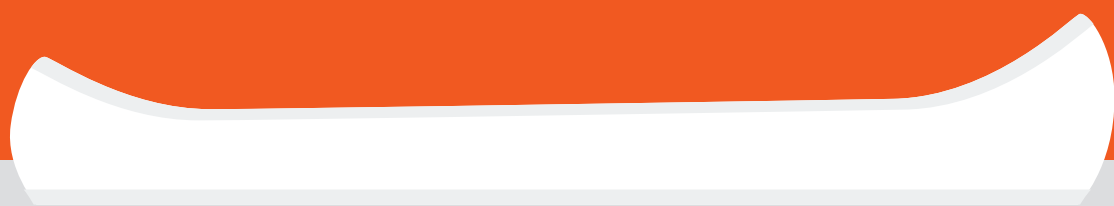
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“Navigating career work requires knowledge, empathy, patience, compassion, intuition, cultural competence, and the effective use of theories and frameworks.”





# **The Guiding Principles:** Situating post-secondary students within the principles of career development



## Who's in Front of You?

### Post-Secondary Students

Students between the ages of 18-25, who come to post-secondary institutions either directly from high school, or after a gap period of one or two years. While the student body of any Canadian post-secondary institution is diverse in terms of age, level of education, and background, young university students form an identifiable demographic group with specific needs and concerns. For that reason, we focus on younger university students specifically, though many of the points listed below may apply to mature students and/or college students as well.

Before getting to the action, let's look at how post-secondary student experiences line up with each of the Guiding Principles...

## CAREER DEVELOPMENT...



IS A LIFELONG PROCESS OF BLENDING AND MANAGING PAID AND UNPAID ACTIVITIES: LEARNING (EDUCATION), WORK (EMPLOYMENT, ENTREPRENEURSHIP), VOLUNTEERISM AND LEISURE TIME.

Most students attend university for career-related reasons (i.e. to get a good job when they're done). Right from the beginning, they're aware that the choices they make throughout their time in university will affect their future paths. Choices around faculties, majors, activities, and specializations such as co-op and Honours are made with a focus on "the eventual job," and any anxiety that emerges around these choices often relates to concerns about post-graduation. That being said, university is ripe with opportunities to become involved in a range of activities that are easily accessible. Students can access volunteer opportunities (independently or through co-curricular record programs), study abroad programs, university societies, intramurals, student politics, lectures, conferences, and other activities, all while being surrounded by their peers. University is a time when an active and engaged student can begin to figure out how to juggle multiple obligations and interests.

## CAREER DEVELOPMENT...

ENTAILS DETERMINING INTERESTS, BELIEFS, VALUES, SKILLS AND COMPETENCIES – AND CONNECTING THOSE WITH MARKET NEEDS.



Post-secondary students are consciously and unconsciously deep in identity work. They may come to new understandings around interests, beliefs, values, and skills as they're exposed to new experiences and differing viewpoints that challenge their assumptions. Opportunities abound - both inside and outside of class - to build new competencies and to reconsider likes and dislikes. For example, a student may assume that they want to work with children based on their teenage work experience, but may change their mind when other opportunities emerge.

As they navigate these various transitions, post-secondary students tend to fall into the trap of focusing exclusively on interests, abilities, and market needs, and may not be aware of the importance of clarifying values and beliefs as a foundation for career decision-making (e.g. "I just want a job I like that pays well"). That said, many students talk about wanting a "meaningful" career path, and when questioned more thoroughly, can name specific values and needs that are central to their future job satisfaction.

## CAREER DEVELOPMENT...



SHOULD BE SELF-DIRECTED;  
AN INDIVIDUAL IS RESPONSIBLE FOR  
HIS OR HER OWN CAREER, BUT IS  
NOT ALONE – WE ALL INFLUENCE  
AND ARE INFLUENCED BY OUR  
ENVIRONMENT.

Many post-secondary students are in a phase of life where they are becoming self-directed for the first time. They are managing their studies, their jobs, their home lives, and their appointments, especially in cases where they move away from home to attend school. This move toward self-direction also takes place in the realm of career. Some students engage in self-directed career development early on in their time at university, while others wait until after graduation.

Self-direction requires the ability to make clear decisions, to network, and to self-advocate. University students are in the process of developing these skills, and some may not yet be able to implement them effectively. For example, they may put decisions onto others, or they may search for information online to avoid speaking to someone directly.



## CAREER DEVELOPMENT...



IS OFTEN SUPPORTED AND SHAPED BY EDUCATORS, FAMILY, PEERS, MANAGERS AND THE GREATER COMMUNITY.

When it comes to career development, post-secondary students move between being self-directed and seeking the involvement of others in a manner that is fluid and dynamic. Students at this phase of life are becoming more self-aware and independent, and are forming their identities as young adults. At the same time, other people play a significant role in their career development. Post-secondary students will often check in with friends, professors, and family to find out if they are moving in the right direction.

Post-secondary students trust their peers, and as such, peers are the number one source of career advice. Students seek advice from their friends as well as from older students and alumni regarding which classes or programs to take, what types jobs are available, and which paths lead to success. Sometimes early work with post-secondary students involves “myth busting” inaccurate or incomplete information that they’ve received from other people.

Parental involvement varies greatly. Some parents provide significant support through regular check-ins and genuine interest. Some parents may wish to provide support but are unsure of how to do so. Students whose connection to family is low or non-existent may receive little or no parental support. International students may have highly supportive parents, yet they are very much on their own in terms of learning how to navigate a new culture. Generally speaking, if a student is highly supported, they will likely discuss their career-related decisions with parents and value the feedback, even in cases where conflicts and frustrations arise.

## CAREER DEVELOPMENT...



IS DYNAMIC, EVOLVING AND  
REQUIRES CONTINUOUS  
ADAPTATION AND RESILIENCE  
THROUGH MULTIPLE TRANSITIONS.

Post-secondary students are experiencing a phase of life that's defined by massive transition. The initial transition from high school to university is significant in itself, as students experience changes in context, expectations, identity, activities, and in many cases peer groups, even when they attend schools in their hometowns and live at home. International students experience an additional layer of transition as they navigate new cultures and languages while far away from home.

Some students come to university with a plan, and then experience significant anxiety if they are unable to meet academic requirements (especially along a path to a chosen field), or if they start to discover that their chosen field isn't what they expected it to be. Resilience is required to navigate new academic and career choices throughout university, not just before and after.

## CAREER DEVELOPMENT...



INVOLVES UNDERSTANDING  
OPTIONS, NAVIGATING WITH  
PURPOSE AND MAKING INFORMED  
CHOICES.

Many post-secondary students are very engaged in their educational pursuits and are committed to exploring options and making informed choices. Students take the initiative regularly to look for answers to their career-related questions, often starting with peers and the internet, and then perhaps widening the circle to advisors and faculty. Post-secondary students often have concerns about the future and can find relief in discussing those concerns with a professional, even if not all of their questions have readily-available answers. University is an excellent time for students to develop purposeful navigation and decision-making skills, as most universities provide supports and resources to help students understand their options.

## CAREER DEVELOPMENT...



MEANS MAKING THE MOST OF TALENT AND POTENTIAL, HOWEVER YOU DEFINE GROWTH AND SUCCESS – NOT NECESSARILY LINEAR ADVANCEMENT.

Post-secondary students often conceptualize growth and success as linear, and often understand their potential as being tied to their degrees. This perception is not surprising, given that they've been moving along a linear path for their entire educational lives. Some students struggle with feeling as though they aren't advancing, particularly in cases where their degrees are taking longer to complete than they had expected.

At this time in their lives, many post-secondary students want certainty, and are uninterested in exploring the notion of multiple career paths over a lifetime. Instead, many would prefer to figure out a plan and be done with it! In some cases, students choose a career direction and remain on that same path throughout university. More often, however, students find themselves needing to re-evaluate initial academic and career decisions, and to perhaps create new plans.

## CAREER DEVELOPMENT...

CAN BE COMPLEX AND COMPLICATED, SO CONTEXT IS KEY – THERE MAY BE BOTH INTERNAL CONSTRAINTS (FINANCIAL, CULTURAL, HEALTH) OR EXTERNAL CONSTRAINTS (LABOUR MARKET, TECHNOLOGY).

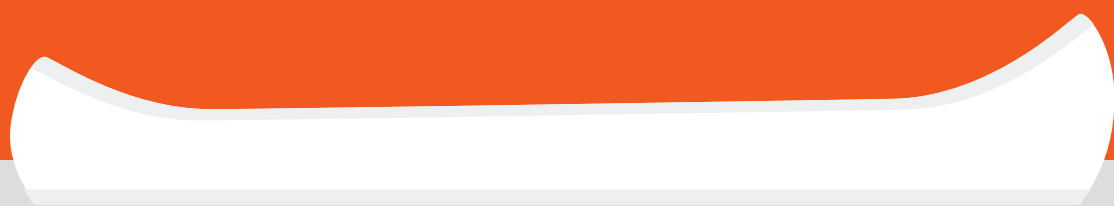


With regard to internal constraints, there exists a societal perception that university students live in a bubble, sheltered from the demands of real life. Students themselves echo this perception when they talk about waiting for their “life to start” or wanting a “real job.” In reality, however, post-secondary students are engaged in a stressful juggling act as they balance academics, personal development, financial worries, and relationships, all while trying to navigate a prescribed path to student success (e.g. maintain a high GPA and gain work experience and get involved in activities and have a great time and form meaningful relationships and make enough money to live and figure out a plan for after graduation). Society compounds student stress through judgemental, fear-mongering messages such as *You can't get a job with an Arts degree, Only STEM leads to jobs, You'd be better off in trades, You'll probably need a Masters*. It is little wonder that stress and anxiety are prominent mental health issues on Canadian campuses.

With regard to external constraints, current and future post-secondary students will have to contend with realities that previous generations did not. Technology will continue to impact the job market in ways that are both predictable and unpredictable. Not only will post-secondary students have to think strategically about the future, but they may not be able to rely on previously established entry points into certain fields. Additionally, many fields and professions are adding layers to their points of entry, demanding more specific certifications and higher degrees. This type of gatekeeping means that post-secondary students may require more time and education in order to acquire the entry requirements of their chosen fields, and some may not be able to afford to do so until a larger number of employers start seeing the benefits of providing financial and educational incentives.



# The Organic Career Support Framework: How do we help?

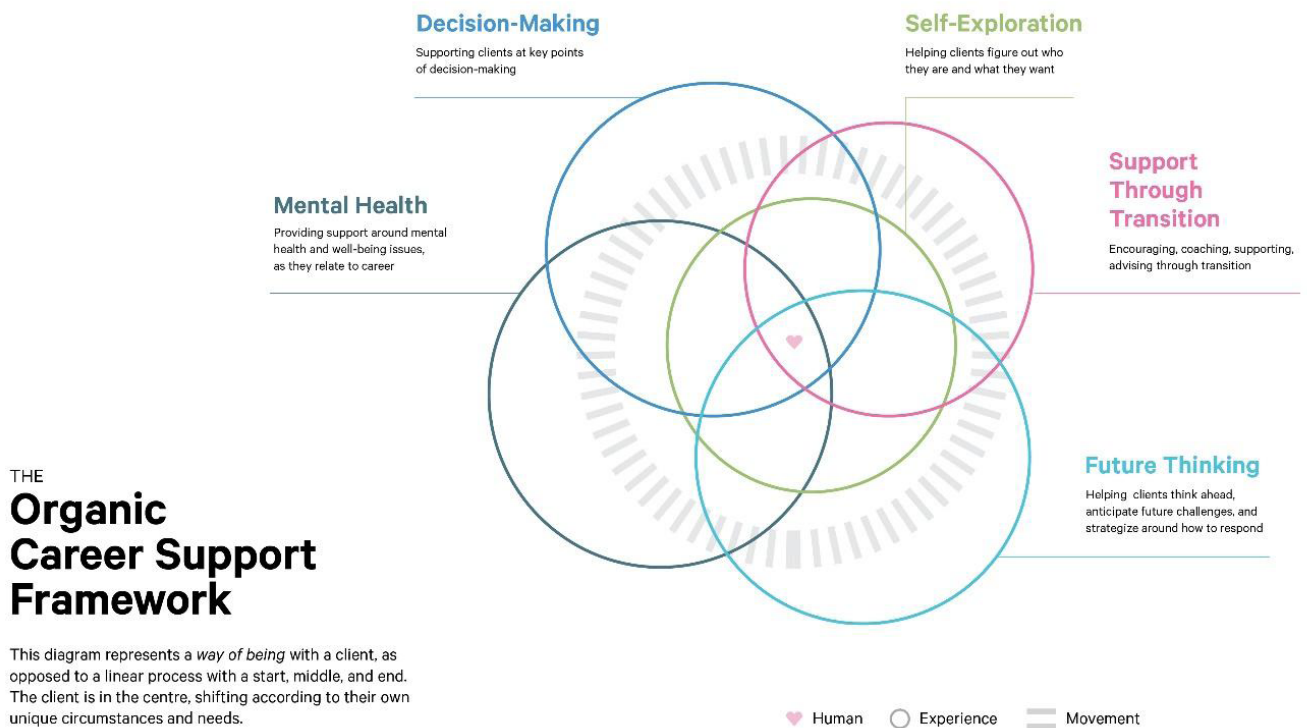




Having situated Post-Secondary Students inside of the Guiding Principles and having seen where this group's particular complexities lie, it may seem as though the next logical step would be to present a "script" of what to do next - a step-by-step process outlining exactly how to deal with identified issues. **We can tell you with certainty that no such script exists, and that no predetermined process can speak to all needs and situations.**

Instead, each professional's style of communication and understanding of what's essential evolves over time. No two professionals will say the same thing in quite the same way - nor should they. The art of career work lies in striving to understand a person's experiences and then working with the presenting need. That need can shift from session to session, or even within a session itself. The role of the professional is to move fluidly among states, and to provide the types of discussions, interventions, and information that will support the client in moving forward.

We capture this fluidity using the Organic Career Support Framework, a client-centered approach that highlights movement among 5 key areas of practice. We then move on to Suggested Discussions and Activities. Our intention is to provide some relevant discussions, conversational starting points, opening questions, concrete interventions, and fun activities for each of the 5 key areas of career support.





This diagram represents a *way of being* with a client, as opposed to a linear process with a start, middle, and end.

The positioning of the client in the middle of the diagram emphasizes the importance of client-centeredness, as each client navigates the world of career development according to their own unique circumstances and needs, while the professional plays a supportive role in this process.

The smaller circles in the diagram represent the 5 key areas that together form the scope of career development support:

- **Self-Exploration:** Helping clients figure out who they are and what they want
- **Decision-Making:** Supporting clients at key points of decision-making
- **Support Through Transition:** Encouraging, coaching, supporting, advising through transition
- **Future Thinking:** Helping clients think ahead, anticipate future challenges, and strategize around how to respond
- **Mental Health:** Providing support for issues around mental health and well-being, as they relate to career

The arrows pointing back and forth represent the multiple ways in which clients can shift among these 5 key areas. *Career is complex, and as such, this movement occurs organically*, sometimes within a series of sessions, sometimes within the space of one session, rarely in a linear fashion, and always according to the unique journey of the individual in question.

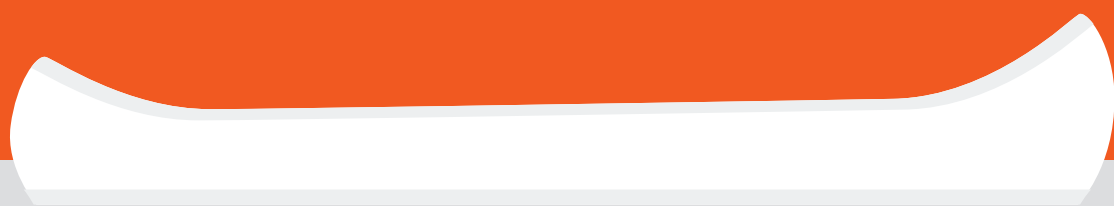
Examples:

- ✓ Jane met with a Career Counsellor during her first year of university, clarified her values and strengths (**Self-Exploration**), declared a major in marketing based on her interests (**Decision-Making**), and proceeded to seek out contacts and opportunities in this field (**Support Through Transition**). After her first co-op term, however, Jane realized that she's not as interested in marketing as she thought, and that her sociology elective is much more stimulating than any of her business courses (**Self-Exploration**).
- ✓ Kai loves the entrepreneurship field, but is trying to decide whether or not to switch career paths (**Decision-Making**) because networking and presentations cause him such severe anxiety that he is sometimes not able to attend classes or events (**Mental Health**).
- ✓ After exploring a few different options, Maya decides to continue to apply for banking jobs (**Decision-Making**), but doesn't have a clear sense of the changes taking place within this industry (**Future Thinking**).

Organic career support is fluid and dynamic, and as such, professionals must be prepared to shift with their clients in and out of these 5 areas, as needed.



# **Guiding Principles in Action:** Suggested Discussions and Activities for use with post-secondary students



## From Principles to Action: Discussions & Activities

### Starter Discussion

Post-secondary students want to know the answer to the following question: “What can I do with my degree?” You will therefore need to establish a framework for your client around what a degree actually is – a flexible, adaptable education that cultivates specific skill sets and opens up a range of career paths both inside and outside of academia. These career paths do not necessarily correlate to majors, as a major is an academic discipline - a gathering of knowledge, not a specific training. Students need to be aware that “getting a career” is not the outcome of completing a degree. Instead, a degree works hand in hand with skills, experience, and the ability to market oneself to employers.

### Value of Degree, Regardless of Major

Some students may consider their degrees a “waste” if they don’t land jobs that relate directly to their majors or fields of study. In reality, the value of a degree lies in the range of opportunities that it opens up in the job market, regardless of major.

### Important Because

Students need to adjust their expectations of what a degree can provide without getting discouraged over the fact that a hard-fought degree will not secure a future by itself. A university education is preferred for many jobs, and provides a foundation for career advancement and further education. When it comes to employability, however, a degree is but one piece of the puzzle.

# Self-exploration: Helping clients figure out who they are and what they want



## Suggested Discussions

### 1. What is Career?

The purpose of this conversation is to help your client broaden their definition and understanding of career. While most students come to university in pursuit of “a career,” many define career very narrowly, as “a professional job with benefits that starts once I graduate.” Explain to your client that career is much bigger than one particular job. Career is a lifelong path of learning and skill building that includes education, paid work, volunteering, and other personal/professional development. Careers involve periods of stability and periods of uncertainty and change, and can move in many different directions.

- **Possible Questions:** How do you define career? How do you understand career progression? What does your career look like right now? What do you want your career to look like in the future?
- **Important Because:** Clients who feel discouraged because “everyone has a plan except for me” may find it helpful to understand that career is so much more than one pressing decision, that their current state of indecision is just one moment in a much bigger journey, and that periods of career uncertainty happen at different times and are normal - for everyone. Clients may also become more engaged in career development if they understand that their careers are happening in the present and include all of their current activities.

### 2. Tell Me About Your Mother(’s Career Messages)

When working with post-secondary students, it can be useful to get a sense of their primary influences - tangible and intangible - when it comes to perceptions of career and work. Clients have been exposed to career messages their whole lives, and at this stage, most of those messages have come from parents and family members. Parents usually set the standard for what is “normal” – work is stressful, or a grind, or something you do for money, or something you love, or something that brings status. Sometimes clients

take these career messages to heart, and sometimes they act in opposition to these messages.

- **Possible Questions:** What do your parents do for work? Do/Did they like their work? What are their educational backgrounds and how do you think they feel about the decisions they've made? What career paths have your siblings followed so far? What career messages, spoken or unspoken, did your parents pass along to you? Do you identify with these messages? Why or why not? Does anyone in your family expect you to pursue a certain type of career?
- **Note of Caution:** Whenever you ask about family, there's always a chance that you will encounter bigger issues, such as the death of a parent, a recent divorce, or an estranged or difficult relationship. If you sense that the conversation is causing pain or has moved beyond your scope of practice, consider making a referral and gently move on to a different topic.
- **Important Because:** Post-secondary students who come directly from high school are in an intense period of transition. Their parents' messages and/or life situations will still hold tremendous influence, yet the time is right for them to start examining unquestioned assumptions in order to figure out what they actually believe. This process can open up new career directions and possibilities.

### 3. Criteria and Possibilities

The purpose of this discussion is to create buy-in for self-exploration (i.e. the process of reflecting on one's values, desires, strengths, skills, personality traits, preferences, interests, etc.). Explain to your client that self-exploration will invite them to think about who they are and what they want in order to pull together a list of "criteria" that they can refer back to when determining the potential fit of career possibilities. To relieve the pressure they feel, most clients will want to make a decision immediately. Encourage your client to remain in a state of exploration as they self-reflect and collect ideas.

- **Possible Questions:** Tell me about who you are and what you want. If you could describe who you are and what you want more confidently, would that be helpful? When it comes to choosing a career path, there are so many ideas out there - how will you know which idea is the right idea for you? What if you could learn more about a career path and also know that it matches criteria that you've identified for yourself already?

- **Set Up Exploration Stage:** Clients who feel a lot of pressure to decide on their futures often find it helpful to allocate a specific amount of time for career exploration. Give them permission to “not decide,” and discuss a timeline for how long this stage will last. This setup provides more of an opportunity for clients to identify possibilities, and creates the space for self-exploration, which makes decision-making easier.
- **Important Because:** Clients often feel pressure to make career decisions quickly and need to understand the benefits of career exploration before buying into the process. This discussion is a starting point designed to create that buy-in and to identify tangible outcomes, and professionals can then encourage deeper reflection once the client is on board. As career exploration unfolds, clients get to know themselves better, and often come to realize the value of being able to articulate what they want.

## 4. Exploring Values

The purpose of this discussion is to help your client reflect deeply on their values, as values are the strongest predictor of career satisfaction. Initiate this conversation at a point in Self-Exploration where your client has identified some of their values already, either through discussion, or with the help of the *Identifying Values* exercise.

- **Questions to Ask:** Why is (value) important? Is (value) something you need in your paid work, or can you satisfy this need outside of your paid work? In what ways does (value) appear your life right now? What did (value) look like for you previously? What does (value) need to look like for you in the future?
- **A Positive Spin:** Encourage your client to speak to their values in the positive, rather than in the negative. For example, if they answer the first question by stating something like “I value community because I hate being lonely,” you might respond with “I can hear that you feel lonely when you don’t have community, can you tell me how you feel when you DO have community?”
- **Importance Because:** Values root us back to our core beliefs and strengths. Clients who are able to connect with their values become better equipped to make decisions based on their authentic selves rather than on their fears.

## 5. Am I Goal-Oriented or Process-Oriented?

This discussion helps your client identify whether they're a goal-oriented person who needs to have a clear career goal in mind in order to feel motivated, or a process-oriented person who prefers to study what interests them and then see what happens.

- **Possible Questions:** How important is it to you to have a career goal in mind? How important is it to you to leave decisions open so that you can be more spontaneous? How does your preference for planning (or leaving things open-ended) guide your decision-making?
- **Drawing Attention to Blind Spots:** Goal-oriented students can get very attached to their ideas. Encourage them to think about what they will do if their interests and desires change so that they can feel more prepared to adjust their plans if needed. Process-oriented students can sometimes miss opportunities because they lack clear focus. Help them to identify milestones and key points of decision-making.
- **Important Because:** This discussion helps with the timing of career decision-making by encouraging students to think about whether it's important to them to identify a career goal early on in their degree, or whether they'd prefer to study what interests them the most and explore possible directions at a later point. Also, once students can identify whether they are goal-oriented or process-oriented, they become better equipped to figure out what kinds of support they might need going forward.



## Suggested Activities

### 1. Five Things Exercise

#### Instructions:

- Fill out as many answers as you can on the Five Things Exercise worksheet (Appendix A). Be aware: this exercise is harder than it looks!
- If you get stuck, generate more answers by asking yourself why you like something (e.g. “I like to play basketball” because “I like competing with a team”).

#### Directions for Professional

This exercise works well as a homework assignment, but if your client struggles to generate answers, you may find it helpful to continue the exercise in session. Use the answers that your client provides to dig in deeper – find out what they like reading, who they like hanging out with, etc. Your client may struggle with the “good at” and “proud of” questions in particular, which gives you some insight into their level of self-confidence. Help them generate answers to these questions by pulling from their stories about things they like to do.

#### Debrief

Use this exercise to encourage clients to think positively about themselves. When reviewing answers, use the follow-up question “Why do you like that?” to highlight areas in which they may need to learn more about themselves before making career-related decisions.

### 2. Skills Identification Exercise

#### Instructions:

- As per the Skills Identification Exercise handout (Appendix B), choose three of the following questions and write out your answers (i.e. stories) in paragraphs or in point form. Try to include as much detail as possible, thinking about the specific tasks that you carried out and the skills that you demonstrated in each case.



1. Describe an experience that makes you feel proud
2. Describe a job (paid or volunteer) that you enjoyed
3. Describe a leisure activity that you enjoy
4. Describe a significant accomplishment in your life
5. Describe an important learning experience in your life (may or may not be related to formal education)

- For each story, review the List of Transferable Skills (Appendix C), and circle all of the skills that you used as part of the activity/experience in question. Use 3 different colours to differentiate which skills relate to which story.

### Directions for Professional

Once your client has completed the exercise (usually for homework), ask them to read each of their answers out loud, and help them identify any skills that they may have missed in their first round.

### Debrief

Clients often underestimate the number of skills they possess/use in relation to any given activity, so take a moment to affirm their range of skills. Draw attention to the skills they've circled three times, and point out that transferable skills can be applied in different ways, not just to current activities, but to new areas of learning as well. Invite your client to identify which skills they'd most like to use in their future work.

## 3. Identifying Values

### Instructions:

- Rate each value on the Values Checklist (Appendix D) using the scale provided. Consider the extent to which each value is important to you in your life as a whole, and not just in your work.
- Make a list of your top 10 values. You can copy your highest scores, and/or add any values that are not on the checklist.

**Directions for Professional**

Emphasize that the Values Checklist is the starting point for a deeper exploration of values.

**Debrief**

Use the *Exploring Values* discussion to debrief this activity. Ask your client to think about their career path, and to identify which values they will need to connect with in their future work in order to experience job satisfaction.

## 4. Be Curious and Open-Minded

**Instructions:**

- Make a list of topics and activities that interest you outside of your current range of pursuits.
- Attend one event/conference/class/activity that you are curious about that has nothing to do with your degree.

**Directions for Professional**

If your client is socially anxious or incurious, this activity may require some persuasion and preparation. Ask them to bring in suggestions of events they might find interesting (e.g. a photo of an event poster from a bulletin board) and then discuss the benefits of trying something new.

**Debrief**

Invite your client to reflect on their new experience. Talk about the connection between curiosity and career advancement, i.e. the need for “input” in the form of exposure to a range of new ideas and experiences. Practical, linear-oriented clients sometimes find it hard to imagine why they would invest time in something that doesn’t connect to career immediately. In reality, however, the practice of remaining open to different ideas, people, events, and learning opportunities is essential for generating the self-awareness that leads to effective career decision-making.

# Decision-Making: Supporting clients at key points of decision-making



## Suggested Discussions

### 1. Reclaiming Your Timeline

This conversation may be useful if your client is racing to complete their degree according to a prescribed timeline, and is struggling with high stress and anxiety as a result. Post-secondary students often come to university expecting to follow a set pace (as they did in grade school), and to finish in four years. Your client may not realize that they now have the power to dictate the pace of their life and the manner of their development. In other words, they can create their own timeline.

- **Possible Questions:** Why is important to you to finish university “on time”? What do you imagine will happen at the end of that time period? What are the benefits of completing a degree in four years or less? What are the costs? What experiences will you need to seek out after you finish your degree that you don’t have time for now? How much stress are you carrying and how much of that stress relates to your workload? How would your decisions be different if you didn’t feel like you had to complete your education within a particular time frame?
- **Important Because:** While five courses per semester is considered a standard full-time course load in most universities, this workload can be very heavy, especially for students who also need to work part-time. Students who carry such a heavy load can sometimes miss out on other experiences and opportunities, such as extra-curricular activities, social experiences, and chances to meet new people and build new skills. There is no one ideal timeline when it comes to post-secondary learning, and your client can make the most of their student experience if they’re able to choose the timeline that works best for them.

### 2. Disproving the Domino Effect

Post-secondary students often struggle with the career myth that “one wrong decision will ruin my life.” They fear that if they make a single wrong choice early on, the dominos will be set to fall in a certain direction forever, and they’ll never have any opportunity to change course. This discussion helps students to understand that academics and careers are rarely linear, and that there are multiple ways in which to circle back to interests.

- **Possible Questions:** Do you ever struggle with the fear that one wrong choice will set you on the wrong career path forever? What might you do if you thought that you made a wrong choice?
- **Next Step:** Find examples of individuals whose career paths disprove the Domino Effect, such as famous people who discovered their callings later in life, or family members whose careers took unexpected turns.
- **Important Because:** This fear that one wrong choice will lead to a lifetime of unhappiness amplifies career anxiety. But the myth isn't true! Life provides endless permutations of career choices. Students can benefit from the knowledge that there is more than one route to career satisfaction.

### 3. Making Good Decisions

Part of learning how to be an adult involves learning how to make clear, coherent, and thoughtful decisions. Post-secondary students need to make multiple decisions around courses, majors, minors, coop, honours, summer jobs, volunteering, friendships, events, and schedules, and as such, they have many opportunities to practice decision-making. The purpose of this discussion is to support your client in developing healthy decision-making skills.

- **Possible Questions:** What are you trying to decide? What information do you need to help you make this decision? Where will you find this information? Who do you need to gather information from, and what are you asking? What does this information mean? How do you feel when you imagine making this decision? How is this decision working out for you?
- **Long-term Skill Development:** By using short-term, smaller decisions as a starting point, your client can practice decision-making skills that include being resourceful and persistent, making sense of information they collect, reflecting on whether or not they've collected enough information, examining their needs in relation to their options, taking action, and determining whether or not further decision-making is required.
- **Important Because:** If your client has opportunities to engage in effective decision-making on a smaller scale, they will develop confidence in their ability to make larger decisions as well, particularly in relation to career.



## Suggested Activities

### 1. Majors Activity

#### Instructions:

- On the Majors Activity Sheet (Appendix E), write down all of the majors you're considering in the column on the left.
- In the middle column, write down all required courses for each possible major, as per your school's academic calendar.
- In the last column, write down any questions you still need answered prior to making a decision.

#### Directions for Professional

Clients often gain clarity once they dive more deeply into actual requirements and options. Encourage your client to meet with an academic advisor or a helpful professor if they require more insight into credit counting or course content. Book a follow-up session once they've had a chance to take courses related to their major.

#### Debrief

While some career paths require a specific major, many do not. Encourage your client to reflect on what interests them enough to keep them engaged in their academics.

### 2. Using Mind Maps to Explore Decisions

#### Mind Map Exercise #1 – Areas of Interest

- Write the words "My Possible Options" in the middle of a blank piece of paper and circle them.
- Write down general areas of interest anywhere on the page, circle each one, then draw lines to link all of your areas of interest back to the centre.
- For each area of interest, dig down one layer, and write down more specific interests that relate to the general area (e.g. "hospitality" ⇔ "front desk," "security," "catering").
- Using a different colour, circle the ideas that interest you the most.
- Brainstorm one or two actions you could take to learn more about each of the ideas that you've circled.

## Mind Map Exercise #2 – Making Space for a Decision

- Write down your impending decision (e.g. “Should I go travelling this summer?”) in the middle of a blank piece of paper and circle it.
- Write down considerations that are part of that decision (e.g. finances, travel companions, other summer job offer) anywhere on the page, circle each one, then draw lines to link them back to the centre.
- For each consideration, write down any related concerns or obstacles (e.g. “travel companions” ⇔ “best friend isn’t available” “who do I pick?”)
- Using different colours, circle considerations that require more information, then circle concerns or obstacles that are outside of your control.
- Review your mind map. What are you seeing?

### Directions for Professional

Mind Maps can help clients consider their options from different angles as they dig down into deeper layers of a particular decision. Introduce this exercise in session. Encourage your client to spread their ideas around the page (See Appendix F). Hot Tip: Make it fun! Use big paper and coloured markers.

### Debrief

Invite your client to reflect on their experience of mind-mapping, and explore with them any insights that may have emerged in the process.

## 3. Focused Career Research

### Instructions:

- Choose one of your career possibilities.
- Read about it on labour market websites (useful site: <https://www.onetonline.org/>).
- Find at least one related article.
- Search through job listings and find related postings of interest (anywhere in Canada and at any level).

- Ask your contacts if they know anyone you could information interview. New entrants and mid-career professionals make ideal interviewees.
- Repeat these steps for each of your career possibilities.

### Directions for Professional

Depending on your client's resourcefulness and comfort level, you may need to support them in doing this research by breaking the process into smaller steps, and by helping them navigate online resources. Many post-secondary students also require in-depth coaching on how to conduct informational interviews. If your client becomes overwhelmed and experiences "information overload," suggest that they research one possibility at a time.

### Debrief

As your client brings in the information they're gathering, encourage them to consider the extent to which each possibility aligns with their identified values. As they solidify their interests, encourage them to look at recommended next steps for transitioning into the field.

# Support through transition: Supporting clients at key points of decision-making



## Suggested Discussions

### 1. Reflection and Check-In

This discussion provides your client with an opportunity to think about the larger decisions they've made in university thus far (e.g. choosing a field of study, starting a new job), and to reflect on how these decisions might open them up to further discoveries and opportunities.

- **Possible Questions:** What's opening up for you as a result of the decision you made? What are you learning from your choices? Do you like your choices? Is it time to consider the next step, or are you content to stay where you are for the time being?
- **Important Because:** Sometimes your client may struggle with a decision and then experience relief once the decision is "done." This discussion continues the process by giving them a chance to reflect on their decisions, consider what they're learning, evaluate how their experiences match up with their expectations, and then think about whether they want to fine-tune their choices, or perhaps make new ones.

### 2. A Decision Isn't Forever

This conversation takes the *Reflection and Check-In* discussion one step further. Its purpose is to help your client understand that all decisions are temporary. New decisions will always arise as life continues to fill in the blanks, and previous decisions will sometimes need revisiting as new information becomes available. Decisions are about being in action, and no decision is forever.

- **For Example:** Your client might decide to do an honours program, then realize once they've started the program that it's not a good fit. Part of your role is then to reassure your client that it's okay for them to change their mind given the new information, and to learn from the overall experience.



- **Possible Questions:** What has come up for you as a result of making this decision and letting people know? What are you thinking about differently? What are you attracted to now that you've made this change? What information have you received that might affect how you move forward?
- **Important Because:** Any decision in life inevitably leads to new information and opportunities, which come with their own decisions. Learning how to manage this next level of information processing and decision-making is part of learning how to manage change effectively.

### 3. School/Work/Life Balance Check-In

Your client is likely juggling many different responsibilities over and above school – work, home, peers, extracurriculars. This discussion helps them review their commitments to ensure that they are receiving enough challenge and stimulation, but aren't feeling too overwhelmed. It also provides an opportunity to bring to light situations in which emotional or physical issues (e.g. concussion, breakup, family illness, anxiety) are interfering with academics.

- **Possible Questions:** What are you involved in this semester? How are you finding the balance of activities (too much, too little, too static)? Is there anything else happening in your life that you'd like to talk about?
- **Important Because:** Post-secondary students are still learning how to maintain balance among all of their important commitments (e.g. going to school and getting assignments done, getting good marks, earning the money they need to stay in school, preparing for a future career through skill-building and network-building, maintaining relationships, etc.), and the balancing act can easily become overwhelming. This check-in can help catch any problems when they first start to arise.



## Suggested Activities

### 1. Pick One Extra Thing

#### Instructions:

- You have a job or program in mind that you're interested in pursuing after your undergraduate degree. List some things you can do to gain the skills or experiences that you will need to pursue this path (e.g. learn a second language to work at the U.N., volunteer with animals to apply to vet school).
- Pick one thing and take action!

#### Directions for Professional

This exercise becomes useful once your client has identified a specific career path of interest, and has determined which key skills or experiences they will eventually need to acquire. If adding an “extra thing” is too much for your client to manage (as per the *Spinning Plates* activity below), encourage them to revisit this exercise once they've graduated, and take the opportunity to talk about realistic timelines for pursuing a particular path.

#### Debrief

Invite your client to reflect on which “extra things” might excite and engage them the most. Remind them that this exercise is all about preparing for what lies ahead. The goal is not to perfect a new activity, but to maintain a larger strategic vision.

### 2. Spinning Plates

#### Instructions:

- On a piece of paper, write down all of the activities that take up your time, spreading them out across the page (e.g. school, studying, work, volunteering, fun, relationship, exercise).
- Circle each item that you've written down, as each item represents a “plate” that you're spinning.
- Write down two numbers for each plate: 1) the number of hours per week that you're spending on this activity currently, 2) the number of hours per week that you wish you were spending on this activity.

- Add plates to represent parts of your life that take up time and space from an emotional standpoint (e.g. a parent in a stressful situation, a relationship break up, a health issue that requires management, financial issues, etc.).
- Consider all of your plates: How much are you handling? Does this load feel manageable? Where are the biggest discrepancies between what you're doing currently and what you wish you were doing?

### Directions for Professional

This exercise can help your client assess visually their current workload and capacity. Use big paper and coloured markers to make the exercise more impactful. Review your client's time estimates for each activity. For clients who struggle with procrastination, this exercise can highlight the extent to which their tendencies to procrastinate stem from feeling tired and overwhelmed.

### Debrief

Once your client has drawn all of their "plates," explore how their feelings of guilt, anxiety, and overwhelm may stem from a lack of recognition around how much they're actually trying to balance. Talk about the extent to which seemingly small emotional issues can take up energy. Remind your client that "down time" is necessary, encourage them to reflect on whether or not they need to make changes, and support them in practicing self-compassion with regard to any shortfalls.

## 3. Accountability Check-In

### Instructions:

- Choose one of the goals you've created in session, and break it up into manageable steps. For example, if your goal is to get a better summer job, your steps might include learning how to update your resume, researching application dates, networking with friends and contacts on campus, practicing interview skills, etc.
- Bring your list of steps to your next session.

### **Directions for Professional**

Clients do not necessarily stop needing support once they've identified a career goal. Many post-secondary clients are still developing the practice of following through despite obstacles, and can benefit from having someone to help them stay on track with (or rethink) their goals, as they learn how to hold themselves accountable. This exercise can also shed light on a client's level of commitment.

### **Debrief**

Invite your client to talk about their progress, and help them explore any obstacles that might prevent them from implementing their decisions fully.

# Future thinking: Helping clients think ahead, anticipate future challenges, and strategize around how to respond



## Suggested Discussions

### 1. Looking for Challenge and Growth

In order to transition into the workforce successfully, post-secondary students need to be able to offer to employers a range of complex skills and experiences. This discussion encourages your client to view skill-building as a progression, and to strategize around how they can build upon what they're done already in each subsequent year of university.

- **Possible Questions:** What would you like to accomplish in the next couple of years? What would you like to learn more about? If you like your job now, what would be a similar job with increased responsibility? How could you build on your current activities and/or seek out new ones? What is a personal goal that you'd like to accomplish at university, over and above graduating?
- **Important Because:** Progressing in job responsibilities and complexity is a skill in itself that takes commitment, energy, and planning. When students understand the need to continue skill-building, they become better positioned to figure out where they need to focus their energies in order to transition into the next stage of development.

### 2. Imagining My Future

This conversation provides clients with an opportunity to “blue sky” imagine what they want in life, and to create an ideal vision of the future.

- **Possible Questions:** If you could wave a magic wand and make everything work out perfectly, what would your future look like? Where do you want to live? Who do you want around you? What do you want to do? What do you want to be an expert in? Do you want a family? What will be important to you in the future?
- **Important Because:** Blue sky dreaming can be energizing, and can encourage your client to remain persistent in the present. Future visioning also guides career decision-making. For example, a client who plans to raise a large family will want to weigh career possibilities with this vision in mind.

### 3. Preparing for the Pace of Change

The purpose of this discussion is to draw your client's attention to the reality of a rapidly changing workforce, and to the impact that artificial intelligence and machine learning will have on a wide range of professions. Provide examples of fields that will change significantly, such as medicine, law, trucking, and energy.

- **What Change Means:** Increasingly, employers will value creative problem-solving abilities, high level people skills and social intelligence, and ability to adapt to changing circumstances.
- **Possible Questions:** How do you feel about change? How do you handle change? What can you do now to develop some of the skills required to navigate a changing workforce?
- **Important Because:** Radical change is happening in the workforce already, regardless of anyone's discomfort. And even though post-secondary students may not be able to know exactly what to expect (especially given that post-secondary institutions can't change as rapidly), having a sense of what may lie ahead may motivate them to develop the skills they need order to better navigate rapid change.



## Suggested Activities

# 1. Artificial Intelligence and Career Predictions

### Instructions:

- Learn more about AI and machine learning, specifically as they relate to your industry. Research technological advances, theories, predictions, and current uses of AI in your field by finding a few articles that discuss the subject.
- **Answer the following questions:**
  - What are the biggest changes and challenges that you're reading about?
  - Is there consensus within your industry of interest around what might change?
  - Do any of the articles speak to the skills or knowledge required to handle these changes?

### Directions for Professional

Encourage your client to reflect on the kinds of skills or knowledge they might need in order to help solve the problems of the future.

### Debrief

Once your client describes where they think their industry might be heading, engage with them around how they might apply that knowledge going forward, even in their conversations with contacts and potential employers. Highlight the value of remaining attuned to the future direction of one's field.

# 2. Strengths I Can Lean On

### Instructions:

- Go to <https://www.authentichappiness.sas.upenn.edu/> and select VIA Survey of Character Strengths from the drop-down menu under Questionnaires. Create a username and password, then complete the assessment.
- Write down your top 5 strengths. Do you agree with your survey results? Why or why not?
- Consider the following: How can these strengths be useful in helping you manage change? How can you draw upon these strengths to feel more confident in any situation?

### **Directions for Professional**

This activity may be especially useful for change-resistant clients. Not everyone is “good with change” but everyone has strengths that can help them cope and even excel in times of change.

### **Debrief**

Encourage your client to reflect on how they might draw upon their strengths when change inevitably happens - e.g. finding humour in a situation, considering the risks of potential decisions, identifying a greater purpose for change.



# Mental health: Providing support around mental health and well-being issues as they relate to career



## Suggested Discussions

### 1. Discouragement and Depression

Post-secondary students may experience discouragement if they feel like they're in the wrong program, don't actually want to be in university but believe they have to be, can't figure out how to get to the career they want, or can't identify a career direction at all. In some cases, prolonged discouragement can lead to depression. If your client shares with you that they feel depressed, talk about how depression can diminish positive or hopeful feelings about the future, and conversely, can arise out of not feeling hopeful to begin with. Use a scaling question to check in with your client from session to session (e.g. On a scale of 1-10, how hopeful/hopeless are you feeling right now?). Refer to supports if feelings of depression become severe or ongoing.

### 2. Generalized Anxiety

Many post-secondary students have either been diagnosed with an anxiety disorder, or self-identify as anxious. If you are doing career work with an anxious client, inquire as to the extent to which anxiety shapes their choices. Do they dismiss career possibilities that interest them because they seem too anxiety-provoking? Also be prepared to break down career exploration tasks and actions into smaller, safer steps. If your client doesn't do their homework, don't assume they aren't engaged in the process. It's more likely that the action in question feels too big and scary. If your client struggles with procrastination, be aware that procrastination is often a manifestation of anxiety, and not a sign of laziness or lack of engagement. Explore anxiety management techniques and confidence-building strategies with your client. Refer to supports if anxiety becomes severe or ongoing.

### 3. Social Anxiety

Social anxiety can affect every aspect of career progression – making friends, talking to professors, attending events, engaging in formal and informal networking, and participating in information and job interviews. As a starting point, identify a small step (e.g. visiting a professor during office hours), work out with your client what they want to say, and then help them prepare for the interaction through practice and role playing. Support every step, no matter how small it may seem. Acknowledge any wins, especially times when clients act outside of their comfort zones. Recall and build on previous wins in order to keep moving forward.

### 4. Exhaustion and Burnout

Post-secondary students often experience exhaustion, and they risk burning out if their stress becomes too heavy and too prolonged. The societal myth of the carefree university experience persists, but in reality, today's students are adults who carry heavy loads of unacknowledged responsibility. Watch for signs of burnout: intense fatigue, frustration, difficulties with concentration, falling grades, withdrawal. Explore with your client ways of engaging in self-care and finding balance (see also *Reclaiming Your Timeline* and *Checking in on School/Work/Life Balance*). Remind your client that procrastination can occur due to feeling overwhelmed, and that the cycle of procrastination can lead to further exhaustion.

### 5. Learning Disabilities and Other Neurological Impairments or Disorders:

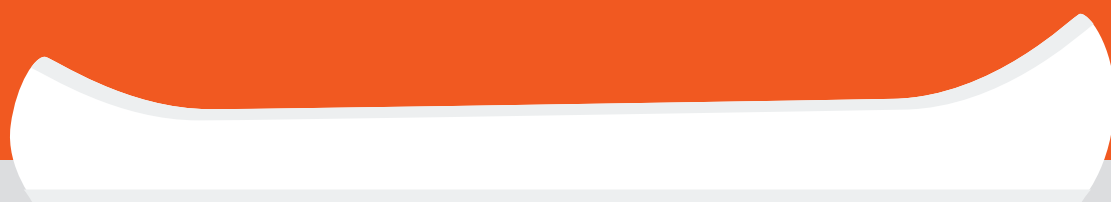
For some students, post-secondary may be a time when issues in brain function become more apparent, and in some cases, become diagnosed as disabilities or conditions. If your client has received a diagnosis (e.g. autism spectrum disorder, learning disability, etc.), they may benefit from a reminder that they're still in control of their career. Possible questions: How will this disability/condition factor into your choices going forward? What supports and resources will you require in order to succeed? How have others with similar disabilities/conditions succeeded in accomplishing their goals?

# Mental health: Steps for the Professional

1. Use scaling questions to evaluate feelings and symptoms. (E.g. “On a scale of 1–10, how anxious are you feeling?”)
2. Support your client in learning more about their issues through local or online groups, blogs, articles, or podcasts.
3. Support your client in identifying when they need to see a doctor for prescriptions, refills, medication adjustments, checkups, changes in symptoms, etc.
4. Provide information as needed/requested on accessible mental health services, including crisis lines and counselling resources.



# Appendices



For a full version of the Guiding Principles infographic, see Appendix G.

# Five things exercise

Write down 5 things for each answer. If you're stuck, do a variation on one thing – e.g. you're happy being on skates, you're good at hockey, and you're proud of making a particular team. These answers can come from any area of your life (work, school, personal, whatever). There is no perfect or "right" answer. If you get stuck, no worries; just do what you can.

## A. What are 5 things that you like doing?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

## B. What are 5 things that give you energy?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

## C. What are 5 things that make you happy?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

**D. What are 5 things you're good at?**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

**E. What are 5 things you're proud of?**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

**If you've completed the above...are you ready for the CHALLENGE ROUND?**

### ■ Challenge Round

If you have completed the above section and would like to challenge yourself to continue, keep going!

#### **A. Name 5 more things you like doing.**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

#### **B. Name 5 more things you're good at.**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

#### **C. Name 5 more things you're proud of.**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

If you have more answers to share in any category, list them here:

## Appendix B

# Skills identification exercise

Choose three of the following questions and write out your answers in paragraph or point form. Try to include as many details as possible, thinking about the specific tasks you carried out and skills you demonstrated in each case. We will use the “stories” you write to identify some of your skills.

- 1. Describe an experience that makes you feel proud**
- 2. Describe a job (paid or volunteer) that you enjoyed**
- 3. Describe a leisure activity that you enjoy**
- 4. Describe a significant accomplishment in your life**
- 5. Describe an important learning experience in your life (may or may not be related to formal education)**



# List of transferable skills

## ■ Communication

- Speaking effectively
- Writing concisely
- Listening attentively
- Expressing ideas
- Facilitating group discussions
- Providing appropriate feedback
- Negotiating
- Perceiving nonverbal messages
- Persuading
- Reporting information
- Describing feelings
- Interviewing
- Editing

## ■ Research and Planning

- Forecasting, predicting
- Creating ideas
- Identifying problems
- Imagining alternatives
- Identifying resources
- Gathering information
- Solving problems
- Setting goals
- Extracting important information
- Defining needs
- Analyzing
- Developing evaluation strategies

## ■ Organization, Management and Leadership

- Speaking effectively
- Writing concisely
- Listening attentively
- Expressing ideas
- Facilitating group discussions
- Providing appropriate feedback
- Negotiating
- Perceiving nonverbal messages
- Persuading
- Reporting information
- Describing feelings
- Interviewing
- Editing

## ■ Work Survival

- Implementing decisions
- Cooperating
- Enforcing policies
- Being punctual
- Managing time
- Attending to detail
- Meeting goals
- Enlisting help
- Accepting responsibility
- Setting and meeting deadlines
- Organizing
- Making decisions

## ■ Human Relations

- Developing rapport
- Being Sensitive
- Listening
- Asserting
- Providing support for others
- Motivating
- Sharing credit
- Counseling
- Cooperating
- Delegating with respect
- Representing others
- Perceiving feelings, situations

(Source: [http://www.quintcareers.com/transferable\\_skills\\_set.html](http://www.quintcareers.com/transferable_skills_set.html))

# Values checklist

Begin by reading the entire list, and then rate each item using the scale that follows:

1 = Very Important

2 = Somewhat Important

3 = Not Very Important

4 = Not Important At all

\_\_\_ **Achievement:** Using my skills and knowledge to accomplish something noteworthy in my work and/or personal life

\_\_\_ **Advancement:** Moving into roles and positions of increasing responsibility

\_\_\_ **Adventure:** Engaging in activities that involve risk-taking and exploration of unknown territory

\_\_\_ **Aesthetics:** Having a sensitivity to and an appreciation of beauty

\_\_\_ **Affiliation:** Being recognized as a member of an organization whose type of work or status I regard as important

\_\_\_ **Artistic Creativity:** Doing creative work in any of several art forms

\_\_\_ **Belonging:** Feeling connected to a group of people, organization, and/or institution

\_\_\_ **Change and Variety:** Engaging in activities that often change or are done in different settings

\_\_\_ **Community:** Living in a town or city where I can get involved in community affairs

\_\_\_ **Competition:** Comparing my abilities against others; being energized by a sense of rivalry

\_\_\_ **Continuous Learning:** Seeking out formal and informal learning opportunities throughout my life

\_\_\_ **Creativity (general):** Creating new ideas, programs, organizational structures, or anything else that has not been developed by others

\_\_\_ **Decision Making:** Having the power to set policy and determine a course of action

\_\_\_ **Excitement:** Engaging in activities that are very exciting or often exciting

\_\_\_ **Fantasy/Play:** Engaging in activities that are playful and imaginative, and that provide personal amusement

- \_\_\_ **Fast Pace:** Working quickly; keeping up with a fast pace
- \_\_\_ **Flexibility:** Changing plans or courses of action as required
- \_\_\_ **Friendship:** Developing close personal relationships with others
- \_\_\_ **Growth/Expansion:** Working toward the development and expansion of an idea or organization
- \_\_\_ **Helping Others:** Helping others directly, either individually or in small groups
- \_\_\_ **Helping Society:** Contributing to the betterment of the world in which I live
- \_\_\_ **Independence:** Deciding for myself what kind of work I'll do and how I'll go about it; not having to do what others tell me to do
- \_\_\_ **Influence:** Being in a position to change people's attitudes and opinions
- \_\_\_ **Intellectual Status:** Being regarded by others as an expert or a person of intellectual achievement
- \_\_\_ **Knowledge:** Seeking knowledge, truth, and understanding
- \_\_\_ **Location:** Finding a place to live (town, geographic area) that matches my lifestyle and allows me to do the things I enjoy most
- \_\_\_ **Moral Fulfillment:** Feeling that my work contributes to and aligns with a set of moral standards that I uphold
- \_\_\_ **Organization:** Bringing order to disorganized environments; being in organized environments
- \_\_\_ **Physical Challenge:** Engaging in activities with challenging physical demands
- \_\_\_ **Power and Authority:** Exercising control over the activities of others
- \_\_\_ **Precision Work:** Doing work that allows little tolerance for error
- \_\_\_ **Problem Solving:** Finding solutions to complex problems and challenges
- \_\_\_ **Profit, Gain:** Earning large amounts of money or other material possessions
- \_\_\_ **Public Contact:** Having a lot of daily contact with people
- \_\_\_ **Recognition:** Receiving recognition for the quality of my work in some visible or public way
- \_\_\_ **Risk Taking:** Engaging in activities that involve calculated risks
- \_\_\_ **Social Justice:** Engaging in activities and/or being involved in groups and organizations that aim to address discrimination and social inequalities
- \_\_\_ **Stability:** Being in situations and circumstances that are largely predictable and not likely to change over long periods of time
- \_\_\_ **Status:** Occupying roles that carry status and respect within society

- \_\_\_ **Structure:** Being in situations where an established set of rules and expectations are in place
  - \_\_\_ **Time Freedom:** Operating according to my own time schedule
  - \_\_\_ **Working Alone:** Doing things by myself, without much contact with others
  - \_\_\_ **Working Under Pressure:** Working in a situation where deadlines and high quality work are required
  - \_\_\_ **Working with Others:** Having close working relationships with a group; working as a team toward common goals
- toward common goals**

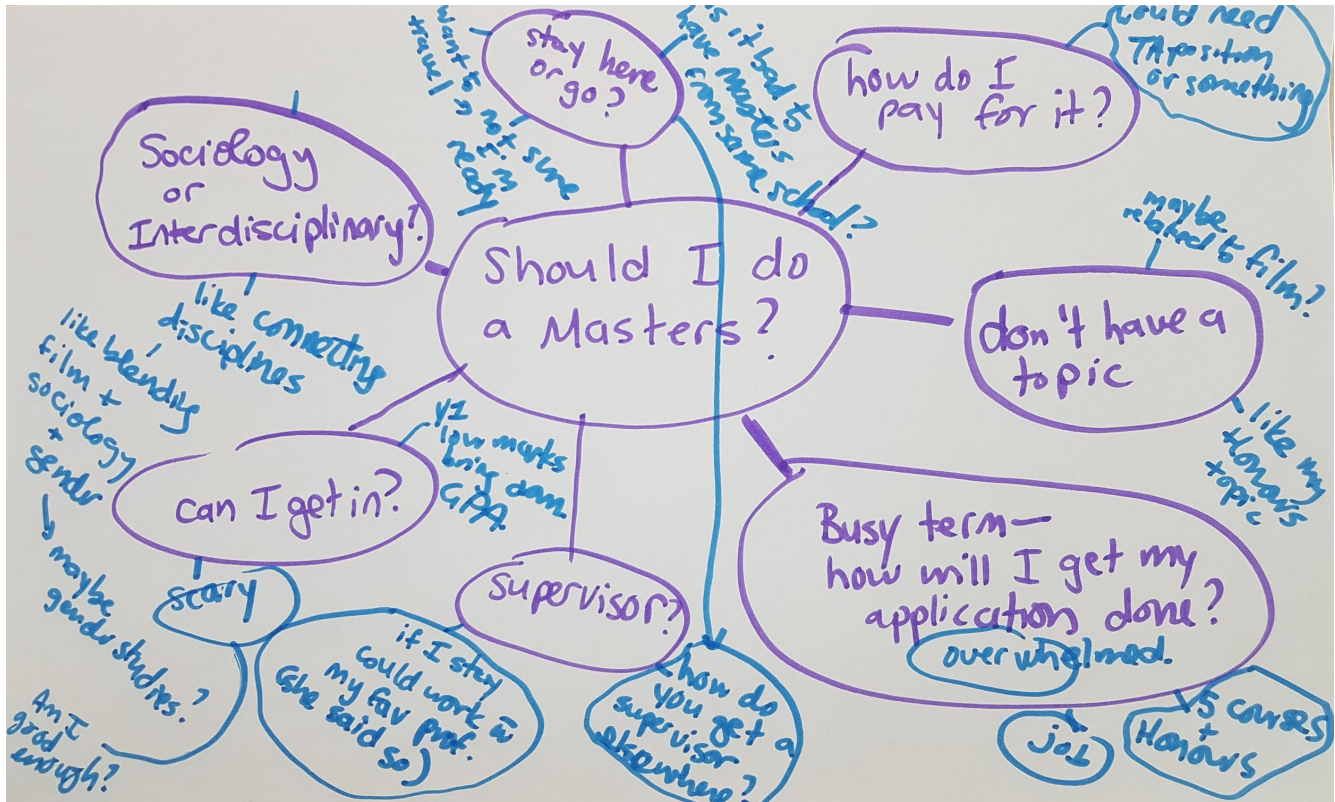
Adapted from <http://www.lehigh.edu/~inalm/download/Checklist.PDF> (overall structure)

# Majors activity sheet

Use your Academic Calendar to complete the table below.

<b>Major</b>	<b><i>List all the required courses you must take for this major</i></b>	<b><i>What electives in upper years look interesting to you?</i></b>	<b><i>What questions or concerns do you have about this major?</i></b>

# Mind map example



# Guiding Principles of Career Development

## Guiding Principles of Career Development



THE WORD "CAREER" COMES FROM THE LATIN FOR CART OR CHARIOT (CARRUS), A MEANS TO CARRY YOU FROM ONE POINT TO ANOTHER. A CAREER IS ABOUT THE LIFE YOU WANT TO LEAD – NOT JUST A JOB, OCCUPATION OR PROFESSION. IT INVOLVES DECIDING AMONG POSSIBLE AND PREFERRED FUTURES. IT ANSWERS: "WHO DO I WANT TO BE IN THE WORLD?," "WHAT KIND OF LIFESTYLE AM I SEEKING?" AND "HOW CAN I MAKE AN IMPACT?"

AS CANADIANS, WE LIKE THE METAPHOR OF A CANOE TO REPRESENT OUR CAREERS – WE USE IT ON OUR JOURNEY, WE STOCK IT WITH THE TOOLS WE NEED, AND WE PROACTIVELY STEER IT TO OUR DESTINATION; SOMETIMES WE FACE RAPIDS, AND AS CONDITIONS CHANGE SO MIGHT OUR COURSE.



### PURPOSE

THIS DOCUMENT IS INTENDED TO BRING GREATER CLARITY AND CONSISTENCY TO OUR NATIONAL CONVERSATIONS ABOUT CAREER DEVELOPMENT. THE GUIDING PRINCIPLES UNDERPIN CERIC'S VISION TO INCREASE THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL WEALTH OF CANADIANS THROUGH CAREER COUNSELLING AND CAREER EDUCATION. THEY ARE A STARTING POINT TO INFORM DISCUSSIONS WITH CLIENTS, EMPLOYERS, FUNDERS, POLICY-MAKERS, FAMILIES AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS, AND A BASIS FOR COLLABORATION.

### BENEFITS

RESEARCH SHOWS CAREER DEVELOPMENT IS ASSOCIATED WITH MANY EDUCATIONAL, SOCIETAL AND FINANCIAL BENEFITS. INDIVIDUALS REALIZE GREATER WELL-BEING AND SATISFACTION IN LIFE. SCHOOLS LIFT STUDENT SUCCESS AND GRADUATION RATES. ORGANIZATIONS FILL SKILLS GAPS AND IMPROVE EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT AND PRODUCTIVITY. GOVERNMENTS REDUCE UNEMPLOYMENT, BOOST SOCIAL MOBILITY AND STRENGTHEN ECONOMIC GROWTH. AGAINST THE BACKDROP OF AN INCREASINGLY FREELANCE ECONOMY AND THE RAPIDLY SHIFTING NATURE OF WORK, CAREER DEVELOPMENT MATTERS MORE THAN EVER.



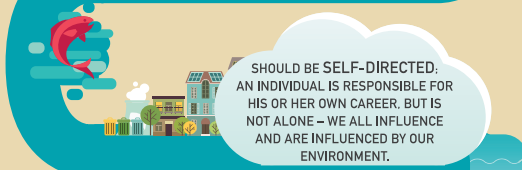
## 8 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

CAREER DEVELOPMENT...



IS A LIFELONG PROCESS OF BLENDING AND MANAGING PAID AND UNPAID ACTIVITIES: LEARNING (EDUCATION), WORK (EMPLOYMENT, ENTREPRENEURSHIP), VOLUNTEERISM AND LEISURE TIME.

ENTAILS DETERMINING INTERESTS, BELIEFS, VALUES, SKILLS AND COMPETENCIES – AND CONNECTING THOSE WITH MARKET NEEDS.



SHOULD BE SELF-DIRECTED. AN INDIVIDUAL IS RESPONSIBLE FOR HIS OR HER OWN CAREER, BUT IS NOT ALONE – WE ALL INFLUENCE AND ARE INFLUENCED BY OUR ENVIRONMENT.



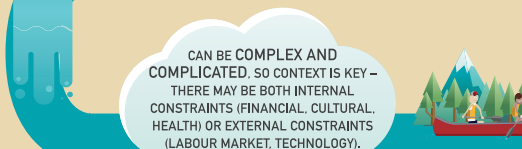
INVOLVES UNDERSTANDING OPTIONS, NAVIGATING WITH PURPOSE AND MAKING INFORMED CHOICES.



MEANS MAKING THE MOST OF TALENT AND POTENTIAL, HOWEVER YOU DEFINE GROWTH AND SUCCESS – NOT NECESSARILY LINEAR ADVANCEMENT.



IS OFTEN SUPPORTED AND SHAPED BY EDUCATORS, FAMILY, PEERS, MANAGERS AND THE GREATER COMMUNITY.



CAN BE COMPLEX AND COMPLICATED, SO CONTEXT IS KEY – THERE MAY BE BOTH INTERNAL CONSTRAINTS (FINANCIAL, CULTURAL, HEALTH) OR EXTERNAL CONSTRAINTS (LABOUR MARKET, TECHNOLOGY).



IS DYNAMIC, EVOLVING AND REQUIRES CONTINUOUS ADAPTATION AND RESILIENCE THROUGH MULTIPLE TRANSITIONS.

THESE GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF CAREER DEVELOPMENT REFLECT MULTIPLE VOICES FROM CERIC.



[ceric.ca/principles](http://ceric.ca/principles)



# CERIC further resources: Where can I find more information?

We have provided a basic overview of circumstances you may encounter when working with post-secondary students, as well as some accessible discussion questions and activities. At this point, you may wish to go deeper, and to gather more information. The CERIC website contains a rich array of career development resources:

- For information specific to working with post-secondary students, check out Career Crafting the Decade After High School: Professional's Guide (Campbell and Dutton 2015) <https://ceric.ca/publications/>
- CareerWise by CERIC is an ongoing initiative that provides up-to-date career related news and information. Visit <https://careerwise.ceric.ca/> to subscribe, browse, or conduct a site search on "post-secondary," "students," "university," "college," "transition," etc.
- For additional information that is primarily research based, try a similar search through the Canadian Journal of Career Development archives: <http://cjcdonline.ca/>
- CERIC's publications page features a wide range of resources pertaining to career development theory and practice: <https://ceric.ca/publications/>

# About the authors



## ■ Karen Schaffer

Karen Schaffer is the author of three books on careers (*Hire Power*, *The Job of Your Life*, and *The Complete Book of Resumes*) and writes screenplays in her spare time. She has been a Career Counsellor for over 20 years, for the last 10 at Saint Mary's University in Halifax, Nova Scotia, and is currently doing narrative research in the career development field. Karen holds an MA in Counselling Psychology from the Adler School.



## ■ Juliana Wiens

Juliana Wiens is a Registered Counselling Therapist (RCT) with experience in career development, counselling, facilitation, management, research, and writing. She is currently employed as a Career Counsellor at Saint Mary's University in Halifax, Nova Scotia. Juliana holds an MEd in Counselling from Acadia and an MA in Women's Studies from Dalhousie. She is passionate about helping others navigate meaningful career paths, and is happiest when the sun is shining.



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