

EXPLORE LIFE

CONNECT YOUR FAITH AND YOUR FUTURE



LIFE TRANSITION JOURNAL

A FIVE-DAY JOURNEY TO FIGURE OUT WHAT YOU WANT AND
WHO YOU WERE MEANT TO BE



CONNECT

MID-ATLANTIC CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

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WELCOME...

to the rest of your life.

I am sure by now you have figured out that being a young adult is not for wimps. Balancing daily demands of life with the never ending questions of what your future will look like is a job in itself. Add in the crisis of a global pandemic and you get to learn early on that life doesn't always stick to "the plan". Maybe you were given an idea of what life "should" look like from other people. This journey is not for them. This is for you! Whether you already have a blueprint or not, it is up to you to discover God's plan for your life....and no pressure, but the life you choose affects us all. You are the next generation.

We believe this world needs who you are now and who you are becoming! This five day journey will help you have more confidence in your faith and your future. You can use this guide at your own pace, by yourself or with a friend or group. We encourage you to have a pen and journal near to collect your thoughts and answer the activity questions. There is a beautiful, messy adventure waiting for you, this guide will help you carve your path!

Let's go!

EXPLORE YOUR OPTIONS

There used to be a "traditional" pathway laid out after high-school. Today, we realize that there are more options to be explored. What do you think of when you think of exploration?

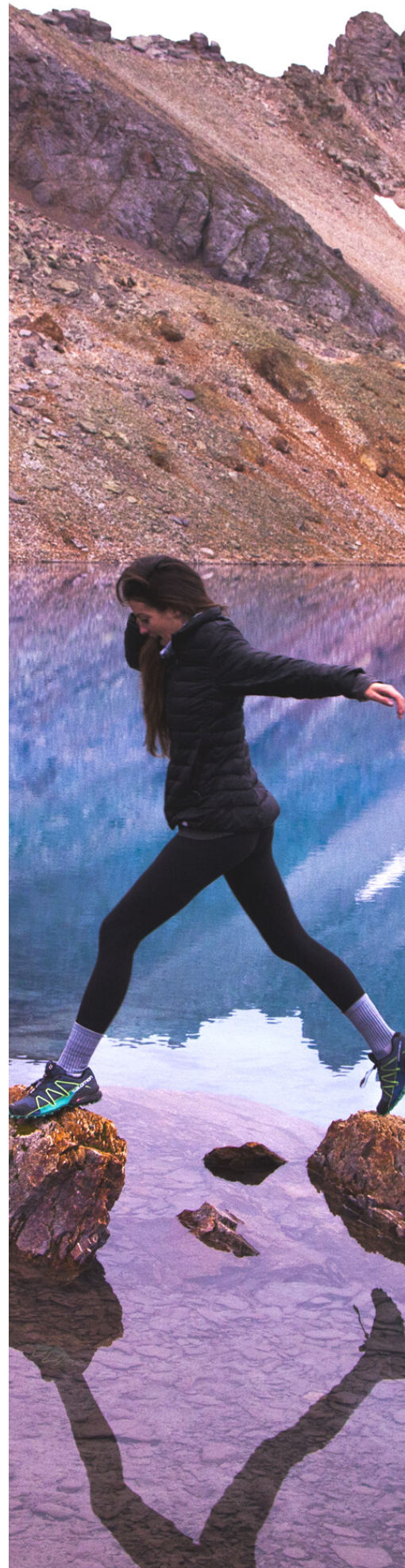
"Exploring" conjures different feelings. If you love adventure maybe you pictured a journey to a far away land. If you value stability and planning, maybe exploring sounds overwhelming! Guess what, both are equally right! Let's get this straight early on... there is no "right way" to explore your journey. This is your life and the best and the worst thing is that YOU CAN'T MESS THIS UP! It takes far too long for most people to realize this, but it is true.

Certainly, making good choices tends to lead to less pain and a more direct path toward a life you love. But here is a **Pro-Tip: God uses all of you!** God does not dissect your strengths and weaknesses or your good days and bad days. Whether you have a squeaky clean past or are trying to forget some things, God wants all of you! The challenges, joys and adventures you experience and the threats and temptations Satan may throw your way can all be used to awaken your soul and draw you closer to your truest self in God.

When you truly start to grasp the overwhelming love and strength He gives you, there is less fear and more freedom. You have a fierceness that God placed in you to take this journey. Have the courage to move! Every good thing that happens and every time you make a mistake are all just stepping stones on your path. God is much more concerned with who you are becoming than what you end up doing.

6 TIPS FOR EXPLORING

1. Explore your faith for yourself
2. Explore fears, limits and challenges
3. Explore new things
4. Anticipate changes & plan to be flexible
5. Keep trying, you may try 10 things before you find what you want to do
6. Keep God in the mix- faith and wisdom increase together!



EXPLORE YOUR OPTIONS

READ

Proverbs 16:4
Proverbs 19:21
Psalm 33:11
James 1:1-6

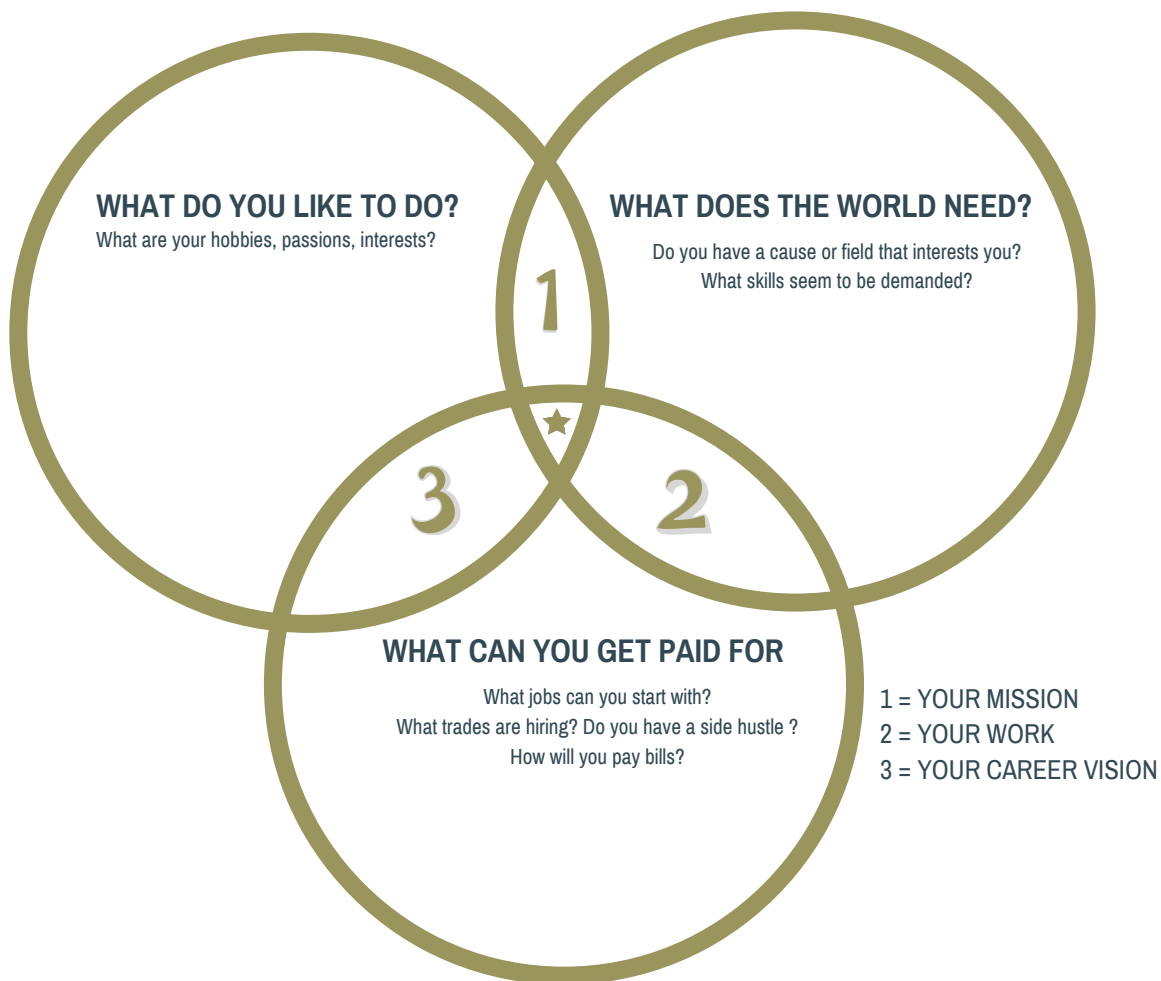
LISTEN

Dont Waste Your Life by Lecrae
Trust in You by Lauren Daigle
Every Little Thing by Hillsong Young and Free

WHAT INSPIRES YOU?

DESCRIBE YOUR CHALLENGES OR LIMITS?

WHAT EXPERIENCES HAVE SHAPED YOU MOST SO FAR?



Mission + Vision + Work = Your Purpose ★

EXPERIENCE CHRIST

When you really experience God, it changes things. Like everything! God is not interested in a boring spirituality. Jesus' story through the Gospel message of creation, fall, redemption and restoration is nothing short of epic. Is your faith living this adventure, or are you lost in the woods? It is time to see your story inside the story of God.

Creation

God creates good things! God shares with mankind His own creative capacity. Art, music, books, buildings, cooking, gardens, programs, projects are all a product of God's creative invitation. We have God-given ability to add beauty or usefulness to the world around us. God gave you desires. This is a reflection of Him and a form of worship. What do you like to create? Do you see this as worship? (Ephesians 2:10, Colossians 3:23)

Fall

God and Satan each have a plan to capture your heart. It is staggering the amount of people who live like there is no villain in our story, but Satan works through humans to separate us from God, in big ways and small. Life is very confusing if you do not take this into account. Satan will oppose any act toward love or freedom, and he will use our own desires to do it. (1 Peter 5:8, John 10:10, Ephesians 6:12)

"THE THING YOU WERE MADE FOR IS...."

Redemption

The only way to weaken this villain is through the work of Jesus Christ. Can you imagine Satan's disappointment when he thought he slayed the son of God, but instead just pulled the thread that would unravel the entire kingdom of darkness? Now, in our darkest moments, when pain or betrayal threatens to suffocate us, we have hope. Redemption is surrendering our pieces to Jesus and him to finish the puzzle, he makes us whole. Only then can you begin to live fully alive! This is where your adventure begins and where you gain the power to renew things around you. (Ephesians 3:16-21, Romans 6)

Restoration

The thing you were made for is the renewal of all things.: Yourself, others, the world. This is one of the most important things you can know about yourself. The secret to your unhappiness and the answer to the agony of earth are one and the same. You are longing for more. This aching explains addictions, injustice and defeat. Without the hope of restoration, life is too much to bear. When you align your heart with Jesus, hope is ignited. We have this to give to a hurting world. You get to choose how and whom and what and where, but your humanness means you are part of the everyday renewal. (2 Corinthians 5:17)



**GOD IS IN
THE THINGS
YOU LOVE...
MUSIC,
STARLIGHT,
COFFEE,
SEEK HIM
THERE.**



EXPERIENCE CHRIST

READ

PSALM 139:13-16

JOHN 1

ROMANS 3:14-21

TITUS 3:3-7

LISTEN

Who You Say I am by Hillsong Worship

Beautiful Things by Gungor

Worn by Tenth Avenue North

Wish by Lecrae

CHOOSE A PASSAGE:

Romans 1:14-17

Mark 8:34-38

Jeremiah 17:5-8

DIRECTIONS:

- Write out the passage here... like with a pencil... stop whining, just do it.
- Circle words that surface more than once with a colored pencil or highlighter
- Underline action words with a different color highlighter or colored pencil
- What do you notice?

JAMIE'S STORY

Those who consider themselves Christ followers have a story that intersects with the bigger story of God's work in the world. Though God works uniquely in each of our lives, he often uses our experiences to minister to those around us – especially those with similar stories. Take Jamie . As a junior on the high school volleyball team, Jamie's life was rudderless. "Faith wasn't part of my life," Jamie says. "I was just going with the flow, drinking, rolling with the crowd. The excitement had worn off and I felt I had no direction." An older teammate invited her to a conference with her church. She went and fell in love with what they were teaching about making a difference in the world and, over time, embraced Jesus. Jamie's life changed, "I used to only look forward to the next game, but for the first time, I was looking forward to the rest of my life."

You have a story!

EXCEL & GROW

The world needs what you have! But figuring out what that is can take your whole life!

Human beings are unique in that we undergo a constant search for identity. By including God in your strategy for life you build a direct line to the unique vision and strengths He has for you. God is unchanging, He provides security needed to face weaknesses and the confidence to grow your strengths. But He is not going to do the work for you. God has given you more gifts than you realize but it is up to you to use them and grow them.

Leaders never stop learning. Be brave enough to believe that change is possible in yourself and in the world. As the next wave of Christian leaders, you could create new paths in ministry, business, mission, biology, mental health, or education. Try new things, commit to being good at something that matters to you. This is where you will create impact.

Six Ways to Identify Your Talents

- Take a personality test
- Find what makes you feel inspired or strong
- Ask friends/family what qualities they see in you
- Review where you spend your money
- Take notes of your interests or challenges
- Note what others have thanked you for

Six Promises To Make to Yourself

- Don't compare or compete with others
- Try new things
- Celebrate success for you and others
- Don't hide yourself
- Fail forward and keep going
- Rest and restart

**"YOUR GIFTS AND DESIRES ARE
GOD'S UNIQUE MAP FOR YOUR LIFE."**

JOHN ELDREDGE

Get to know you!

The Enneagram is a great personality test
<https://www.truity.com/test/enneagram-personality-test>

High-5- Your top five strengths
<https://high5test.com/strengthsfinder-free/>

Meyers-Briggs Personality Assessment
www.16personalities.com

Spiritual Gifts Assessment
https://www.fumcr.com/June_8__Youth_Spiritual_GiftsTest.pdf



EXCEL AND GROW

READ

Matthew 7:7-12
Psalm 37:4
Matthew 25:14-30
Luke 8:1-5
2 Peter 1:3-11

LISTEN

You Can't Stop Me by Andy Mineo
Set the World on Fire by Britt Nicole
Drawing Closer by Planet Shakers

STRENGTHS

WEAKNESSES

It is proven by research that success comes from focusing on your strengths, not dwelling on your weakness!

Write your answers in the circles.

OPPORTUNITIES

THREATS

You can only control what is above the line!

RICK'S STORY

Storytelling was natural for me. Against my parent's wishes, I went to film school. But then I dropped out. I felt like a loser. I traveled around the country and tried different churches of all different faiths. I really got interested in one. Ultimately I was baptized. I started working as a maintenance man and reading my Bible more, I started to believe that my desires and my future could be used for God. I kept working while I honed my craft and finally had confidence to go back to college. I got my degree in ministry and later journalism. The most satisfying thing about it for me is that most good stories deal a lot with healing, brokenness and second chances. I think, "what does it look like for someone to know that God hasn't discarded them?" I feel honored to be a part of capturing the journey of God's people. The diversity of our stories, cultures, experiences and talents add up to one incredible story that is still being told.



ENCOUNTER COMMUNITY

Choosing who you will spend your time with is one of the biggest signs of maturity and one of the most important decisions you will ever make! As Candace Galek, young entrepreneur CEO of Bikiniluxe noted,

"Be picky about who you date, and pickier about who your friends are. Boyfriends may not stay but friends will, and your spouse will probably end up coming from your friends anyway."

You were never meant to walk through life alone. We want to live like Jesus through authentic relationships and love.

Creating community means inviting others in or stepping out of our regular circles to connect and form deep and lasting relationships that support our life and work for the rest of our life.

CREATING COMMUNITY

- 1 Write down a list of your friends.
2. What do you love about your closest friends?
3. Be honest. Do you have toxic friends?
4. What boundaries do you need moving forward?
5. What kind of friend are you?
6. Are you comfortable when you are alone?
7. Try some silence each day.
5. Pray about your friends!

Short Guide to Choosing Friends as an Adult

1. Find friends everywhere

Up until now, your friends were chosen mostly by proximity (you went to the same school/church) or by interest (same team, class, etc.). Your circles will increase as you explore new options. It is up to you to begin to discern who is in your circles.

Pro-tip: don't ditch all your old friends (unless they are toxic), just expand your tribe. This includes multi-generational relationships too! Find a cool old person to learn from and take time to pass on what you know to a young'un.

2. Level up your friends...and family

As your circles expand, so must your boundaries. Make sure those you spend the most time with are supporting you in a positive lifestyle. Look for qualities you want in your own life: faith, positive attitude, resilience, motivation.

3. Be a good friend

Your caregivers were legally responsible to do stuff for you, your friends aren't! If you are someone who tends to take more than give, you may have some changes to make. Be someone who is pursuing their true self not creating false or unreliable identities and expect the same of your crew!

ENCOUNTER COMMUNITY

YOUR TRIBE MATTERS

READ

ROMANS 8
PROVERBS 27:17
PROVERBS 18:24
PROVERBS 17:17
JOHN 15:12-13
PSALMS 133:1

LISTEN

BEST FRIENDS BY HILLSONG YOUNG AND FREE
I'LL FIND YOU BY LECRAE

KEEP AND LET GO EXERCISE

Write down what behaviors, people and attitudes you want to hold on to as you grow and live in adult community.

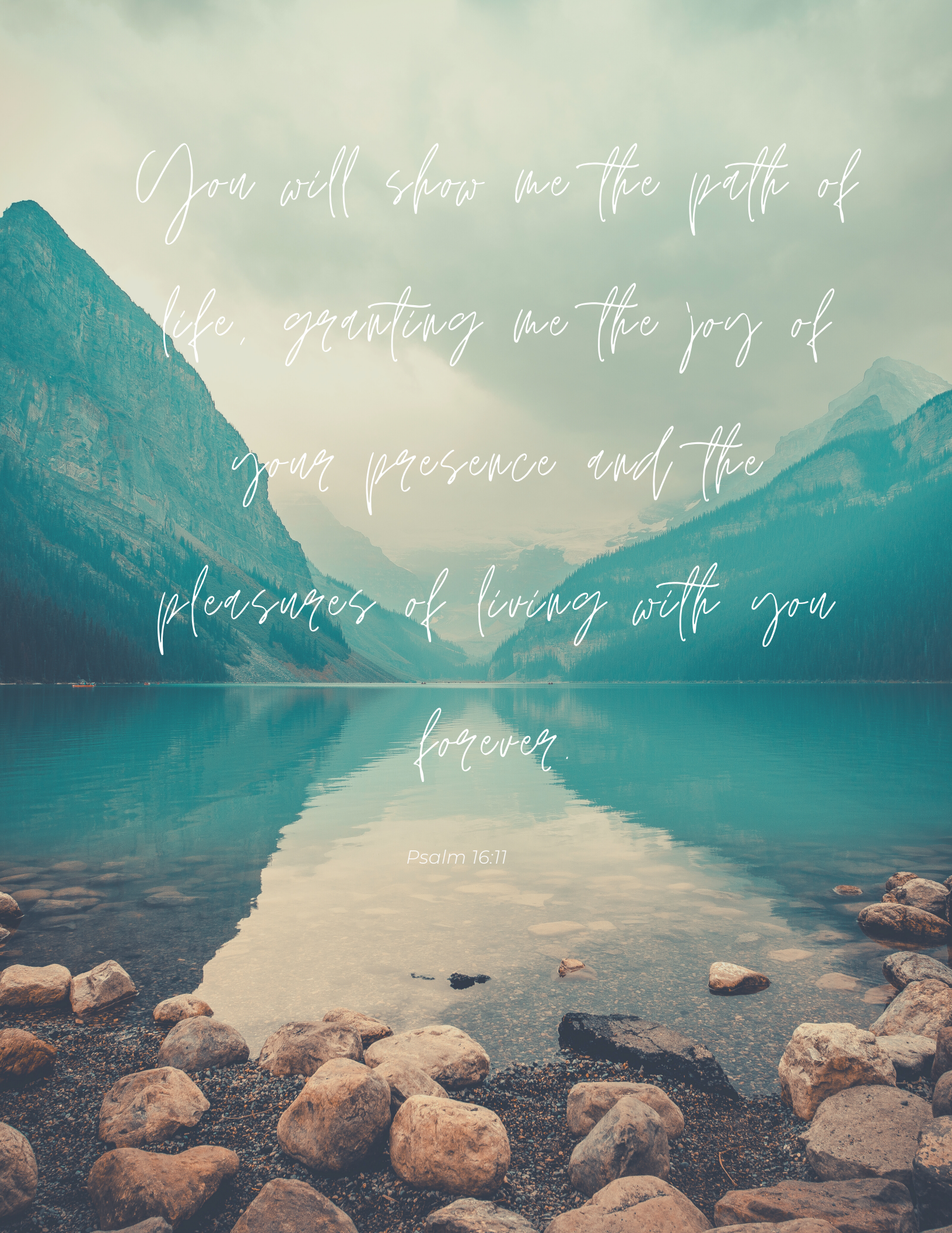
Write down what toxic behaviors, people or attitudes do you have to let go of to live in adult community.



NICK'S STORY.

I picked up a book in my girlfriend's room that said "prayer requests" and I saw my name. I was furious. I threw the book on her bed and asked for an explanation why she thought I was so horrible. She was surprised but didn't back down. She laid it all out for me that day. I had experienced betrayal from a good friend that year and my grandfather had died. My girlfriend said, I "seemed different." She described times of rage, how I treated my parents, and how I didn't want to hang around friends anymore. She said she thought I was depressed but knew I wouldn't talk about it, so she just prayed. I didn't realize I had been acting different, I just knew life seemed to suck this year. She stood by me. She made us pray together and we started to go back to church. I didn't realize how much negativity I had let in my life until I started to hang out with more positive people.

I didn't feel better instantly but I felt more at peace moving forward.



You will show me the path of
life, granting me the joy of
your presence and the
pleasures of living with you
forever.

Psalm 16:11



ENGAGE CULTURE

FIND REAL, LIVEABLE WISDOM WITHIN THE COMPLEX ISSUES OF CULTURE.

As humans, we live in the midst of a complex and torn society. Parents, teachers, Google, Instagram or news reports do not have the answers to pain, injustice, politics, finances, mental health, or pandemics in this quickly changing world. It is no wonder anxiety is so normal.

It is essential that you create an anchor for your soul by building muscles of cultural discernment. This is the ability to compare beliefs, values, and customs of the world to those of your faith. This does not mean not experiencing the world. The world is full of adventures and experiences to be explored! Do it! But your maturity factor is determined by your wisdom factor. Are you able to make good choices by yourself? This truly has nothing to do with age!

Discernment affects how you approach decisions, technology, sexuality, money, and even adventure. Learn to hear God's voice over the loud noise of life. How do we find joy, peace and purpose? How do we make change in our world? What is the point of life? Balancing these ancient questions within your daily schedule is how faith is built.

Pain will find you, as I am sure you know. Jesus loved us enough to warn us "In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world." John 16:33 The Bible does not shy away from life's complexity. The more you study God's word you will see how God's people deal with racism (The Good Samaritan) Genocide (Esther) and a culture full of sex. Simply put, we can not live in a world of complexity without wisdom. In a complex and anxious age, we must understand God's design even more.

TIPS TO LIVE AUTHENTICALLY IN EVERY SETTING

- Live with a sense of mission
- See God working in every part of the world
- Live out your faith inside and outside of the church
- Have confidence in your hope for good in the world
- Curb self-centeredness by serving others

"BE KIND, TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THOSE AROUND YOU. HAVE THE COURAGE TO MAKE A NEW CULTURE; A PLACE YOU WANT TO LIVE."

MORRIE SHWARTZ
(TUESDAYS WITH MORRIE)

ENGAGE CULTURE

READ

MICAH 6:8
ROMANS 12:2-3
LUKE 10:25-37
2 CHRONICLES 1
PHILIPPIANS 4
ECCLESIASTES

LISTEN

It Starts with Me by TobyMac
War Cry by Social Club Misfits
Where Were You by Ghostship
It Is Well by Kristin Dimarco
Try out Relevant Magazine or Relevant Podcast

THREE PATHS TO WISDOM & EMOTIONAL GROWTH

REFLECTION

What have you learned about yourself and your experiences so far?

Learn from the past. What did you learn about yourself? Where did you see God working? Why did you stumble previously?

SELECTION

What have you learned from life and others so far? Who is your crew to ask important questions?

Step away from the situation, gather information, scripture, research, Ask others then zoom back into your choices and be guided from what you have learned.

PROJECTION

How do you best search for God in any situation?

Create a vision you want and practice going for it. Ask God to help you see your life and others, as he sees them. Seek out what the bible says.

JAYDAN'S STORY

I used to make fun of Christians, but something changed. I went to a concert one time and some girl got super drunk and passed out. She seemed to be by herself.

Then I saw two guys go over and prop her up against a wall and started asking people if they knew who was with her. I thought that was nice, so I went over, too. We stayed with the girl until after the concert and still no one came. Security finally took her to the festival nurse station. I got to talk to them for awhile that night and they seemed like really good guys. We met for coffee a couple of times, and they invited me to a bible study group in their house. These guys are still some of my best friends. I met Jesus through them, and we have been on many adventures since then. Life can be hard, and I can't imagine trying to figure it out without faith.



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JOURNEY ON...

so what's the next part of your story?

Hey! You did it! You did the work to grow your faith and focus on your future. Use this tool as many times as needed as you refine your vision, desires, strengths, and opportunities. Learning about yourself and God is a never ending adventure!

We think it's pretty cool when people start to see their story inside God's story. In fact, we spend most of our time helping others shape their future. We would love to connect more!

Your journey doesn't stop here. Keep moving forward. Try new things; college, trade school, travel, serving others. Wherever you go, take your faith with you! Chase a great life with a big God. To be sure, there will be twists and turns, Covid 19 will not be your first or only "curveball," but God has a plan for you. This could be fun!

Sincerely,

THE MACU TEAM

FRIENDS

*On your way to college in NC or VA?
Cool look up our friends!*

College Ministries of Virginia
Campus Christian Ministries, NC

RESOURCES

Much of the ideas in this journal came from these books. We think you should read them!

YEAR OF RESTORATION

John Eldredge

FAITH FOR THE EXILES

David Kinneman

LOVE DOES

Bob Goff

THE ARMOR OF GOD

Priscilla Shirer

JUST COURAGE

Gary Haugen

PODCASTS TO TRY

Love Thy Neighborhood
The EnneaCast
Dream Big with Bob Goff
Relevant Podcast
Craig Groeschel
Leadership