

Lifestyle Redesign

Brought to you by the

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Odyssey Planning



An undergraduate class at Stanford University found that one reason students or adults in general find it difficult to engage in their life planning, is because they believe there is only *one plan* for their life (Burnett & Evans, 2016).

However, within this course, they challenge students to think of multiple versions for their future because they believe, there is more than one answer for the life you can live. (Burnett & Evans).

They call this Odyssey Planning, an exercise to think of parallel ideas for your life. Studies have found that if your mind starts with multiple ideas in parallel, it is not prematurely committed to one path and stays more open and able to receive and conceive more novel innovations (Dow et al, 2010).

In the exercise below, you will do just this, to think of three different ideas or stories for your life.

Directions:

For this handout you will create alternative versions of the next five years of your life. Each one must include:

1. **A visual or graphical timeline.** Include personal and non-career events as well – do you want to be married? Train to run a half marathon? Start your own company?
2. **Decide a title for each option,** Describe the essence of this alternative.
3. **Questions** that this alternative is asking – preferably two or three. In each timeline, you will investigate different possibilities and learn different options, what thing will you want to learn? What questions are you asking yourself when you create each plan?

4. Now gauge:

- a. Resources (Do you have the objective resources – time, money, skill, contracts you need to pull off your plan?)
- b. Likability (Are you hot, cold or warm about your plan?)
- c. Confidence (Are you feeling full of confidence or pretty uncertain about pulling this off?)

Possible considerations

- Geographically – where will you live?
- What experience/learning will you gain?
- What are the impacts/results of choosing this alternative?
- What will life look like? What particular role, industry, or company do you see yourself in?

Other Ideas

- Keep in mind things other than career and money. Though these are important, think of other goals you may want to accomplish!
- Don't overthink this exercise!