



CENTER FOR CAREER AND LIFE DESIGN COUNSELLING  
create a life you love!

# Center for Career and Life Design Counselling

WORK-BOOK: PART I  
A Framework



**Unleash Your Potential :**

Shape Your Life with Exciting Career Opportunities  
to Live with Purpose

# UNLOCK YOUR POTENTIAL WITH EXPERT CAREER AND LIFE-DESIGN COUNSELLING

Are you ready to take control of your future and design a life filled with meaning and purpose? With over 35 years of experience teaching and mentoring at prestigious institutions like the Indian Institute of Management Calcutta, and the Indian Institutes of Technology Bombay & Kharagpur, I am now offering career and life-design counselling to empower individuals from all walks of life.

Using the principles of design thinking, our sessions go beyond conventional advice to help you discover your true calling, enhance life-skills and career-skills, and build resilience. You'll gain self-confidence, develop strategic career plans, and achieve a better work-life balance. Our life-design planning, inspired by Stanford University's d.school's life-designing methodology, will guide you in creating a flexible, forward-thinking roadmap for your future.

Join a community of like-minded individuals committed to lifelong learning and growth. Start designing the life and career you deserve today!

## WHAT IS LIFE-DESIGN?

Life-Design is an innovative approach to shaping your personal and professional future, inspired by design thinking principles pioneered at Stanford University d.school. It involves applying the creative and problem-solving techniques of design thinking to career and life planning, enabling individuals to explore multiple pathways and make informed, intentional choices about their careers, relationships, and overall life direction. Life-Design encourages a mindset of curiosity, experimentation, and adaptability, helping people create fulfilling and meaningful lives.

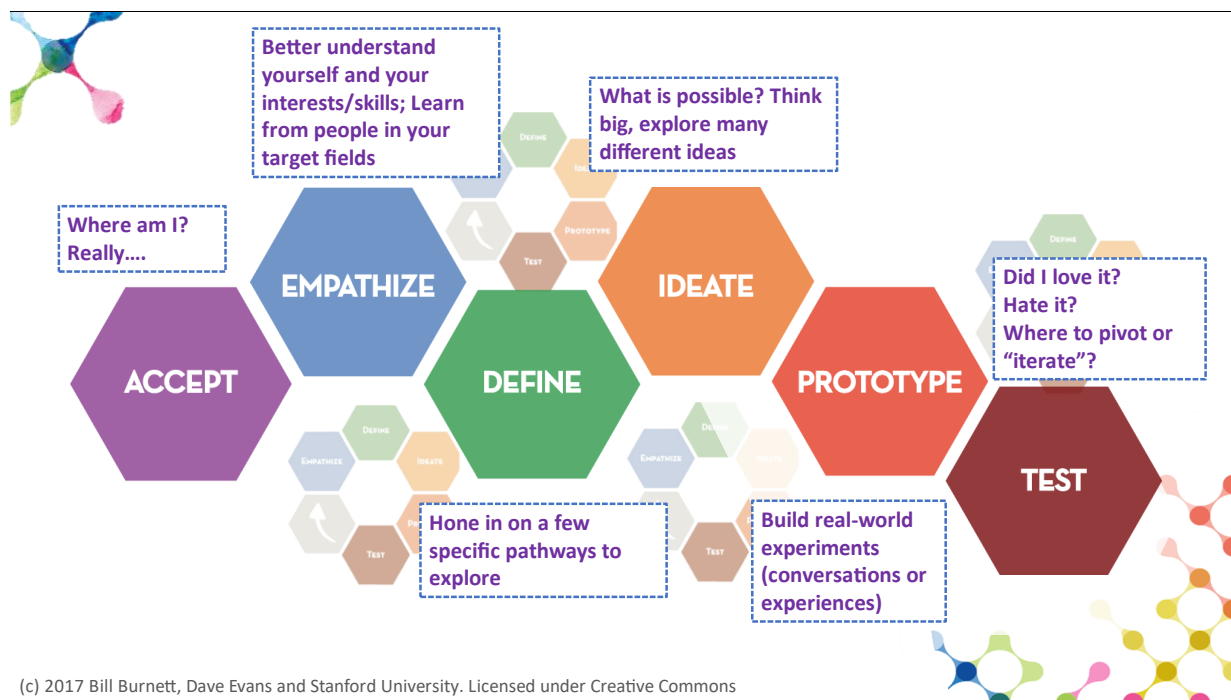
## WHY LIFE-DESIGN?

1. **Multiple Pathways:** Life is not a linear journey dictated by your career choices. Life-Design helps you explore various career options along with life possibilities and prepare for different scenarios, ensuring that you are not confined to a single, rigid path.
2. **Personal Fulfillment:** By focusing on your passions, strengths, and values, Life-Design helps you align your career and life choices with what truly matters to you, leading to greater satisfaction and happiness.
3. **Adaptability:** In a rapidly changing world, the ability to adapt is crucial. Life-Design teaches you how to be flexible and resilient, turning challenges into opportunities.
4. **Informed Decisions:** Life-Design equips you with tools and frameworks to make thoughtful and well-informed career and life decisions, reducing uncertainty and increasing confidence in your choices.
5. **Proactive Approach:** Instead of passively drifting through life, Life-Design encourages you to take control and actively shape your future.

## HOW TO CREATE A PLAN FOR DESIGNING YOUR LIFE?

There are 7 major stages in the design process:

1. **Accept:** Begin by understanding yourself and your current conditions deeply. Accept situations and conditions that cannot be changed.
2. **Empathize:** Reflect on your interests, values, strengths, and what brings you joy. Engage in self-assessment exercises and seek feedback from those who know you well.
3. **Define:** Clearly articulate your goals and aspirations. Identify the key areas of your life that you want to focus on, such as career, relationships, health, and personal growth.
4. **Ideate:** Brainstorm multiple possible futures. Don't limit yourself to one "right" answer. Create several different life scenarios or "Odyssey Plans" that explore various paths you could take.
5. **Prototype:** Test your ideas in small, manageable ways. This could involve trying out a new hobby, taking on a short-term project, or talking to people who are already in the fields you're interested in. The goal is to gain insights and see what resonates with you.
6. **Test:** Evaluate your prototypes by reflecting on your experiences and gathering feedback. Assess what worked, what didn't, and why. Use this information to refine your plans and make more informed decisions.
7. **Iterate:** Life-Design is an ongoing process. Continuously revisit and revise your plans as you grow and as circumstances change. Stay open to new possibilities and remain flexible in your approach.



### Final Deliverable

By following structured steps, we will help you to prepare a flexible, forward-thinking 5-year plan for your career and life that aligns with your values, passions, and aspirations. Our comprehensive approach ensures that you are not only prepared for the immediate future but also empowered to navigate the complexities of life with confidence and resilience. Start your journey today and take the first step towards a well-lived, meaningful existence!

# OUR STEP-BY-STEP PROCESS:

## WE HELP YOU TO DESIGN A PLAN FOR YOUR CAREER AND LIFE IN A 5-YEAR TIMELINE

### Step 1: Accept and Commit

- **Initial Consultation:** Understand your current situation, aspirations, and challenges.
- **Commitment Agreement:** Establish a mutual commitment to the process and set expectations.
- **Goal Setting:** Define long-term goals and immediate objectives for the next five years.

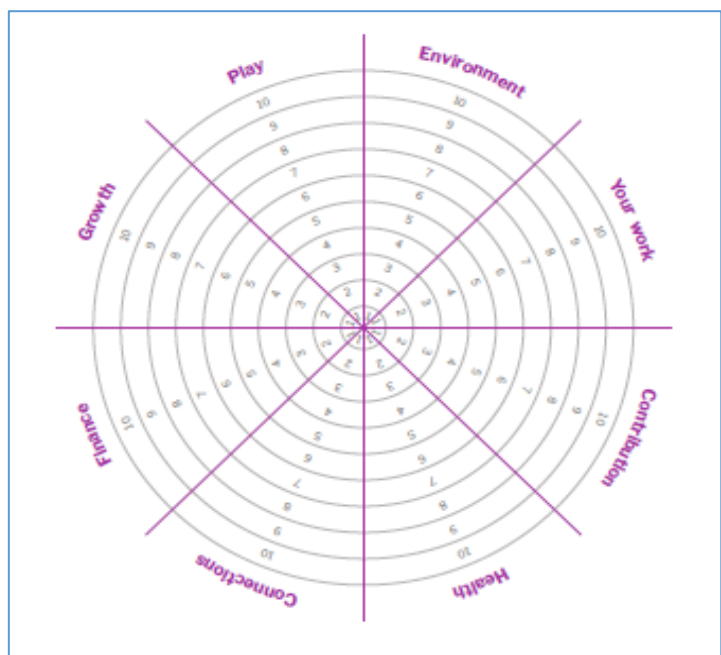
### Step 2: Empathize

- **Self-Discovery Exercises:** Use assessments and reflective exercises to explore your passions, strengths, and values; identifying Life-View and Work-View.  
⇒ **A set of worksheets will be provided for assessments**
- **Persona Development:** Create detailed personas representing different aspects of your identity

### Step 3: Define

- **Focus on your Likes & Dislikes:**
  - Activities
  - Environment
  - Interactions
  - Objects
  - Users / Companionship
- **Problem Statement:** Clearly articulate the key challenges and opportunities you face in your current career and life.
- **Focus Areas:** Identify specific areas to focus on, such as career growth, personal development, relationships, health, and well-being. Use “Wheel of Life” to assess your current state of being: to understand to what extent different areas in your life are currently balanced. A wheel of life, also known as the “life balance wheel,” is used to assess and understand how different areas in your life are currently balanced and to help achieve a work-life balance.

- **ENVIRONMENT:** Your home, locality, residency or workplace and its surroundings
- **WORK:** Work, business or projects that you pursue
- **CONTRIBUTION:** Adding value to the world, or your community
- **HEALTH:** Physical and mental well-being
- **SOCIAL CONNECTIONS:** Personal network of friends & family including intimate partner
- **FINANCE:** Related to income, debts, savings and investments
- **GROWTH:** Creative self-development through learning and practice
- **PLAY:** Hobbies, leisure-time activities



## Step 4-A: Ideate & Create Odyssey Plan

- **Brainstorming Sessions:** Generate a wide range of ideas and possibilities for achieving your vision.
- **Create Odyssey Plans:** Create *at least two different five-year plans*, each exploring a unique pathway to your goals. You can have more plans depending on your choice.
  - **Plan 1: The Default Plan**
    - **Description:** This is the plan you would pursue if you continued on your current path. It includes your current career trajectory, lifestyle, and foreseeable changes.
    - **Components:** Career progression, skill development, personal goals, and major life events.
  - **Plan 2: The Alternative Plan**
    - **Description:** This plan explores a significant change in direction. It could involve a different career or pursuing a long-held dream.
    - **Components:** Steps to achieve the change, required resources, potential challenges, and new opportunities.

The objective of each plan is not only to offer you different possibilities of your life, but also help you to evaluate different versions of your life from the perspective of designing a *balanced life* on different dimensions as depicted in a “wheel of life”. A wheel of life, also known as the “life balance wheel,” is used to assess and understand how areas in your life are currently balanced and to help achieve a work-life balance. Under each dimension, your target should be clear and achievable, i.e SMART: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound:

|          |            |                                                                           |
|----------|------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>S</b> | Specific   | What will you achieve? What will you do?                                  |
| <b>M</b> | Measurable | What data will you use to decide whether you've met the goal?             |
| <b>A</b> | Achievable | Are you sure you can do this? Do you have the right skills and resources? |
| <b>R</b> | Relevant   | Does the goal align with your life-view? How will the result matter?      |
| <b>T</b> | Time-bound | What is the deadline for accomplishing the goal?                          |

# MY\_LIFE -PLAN A: THE DEFAULT 5-YEAR PLAN

| Dimensions                      | Life-Design Questions                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Action Plans to achieve this                                                                                                                          |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>ENVIRONMENT</b>              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Where do I desire to stay / my locality/ my place of residence</li> <li>My dream home</li> <li>My dream workplace: large corporate or cozy small company or Institutes</li> <li>Others: <i>my dream environment</i></li> </ul>                                                                                                                             | How do I achieve this? Am I feeling confident or uncertain? Does the plan make sense within itself? is it consistent with my work-view and life-view? |
| <b>WORK/ PROFESSION</b>         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What industries or fields am I interested in?</li> <li>What type of career / profession I desire</li> <li>What type of work do I love</li> <li>What defines good work for me</li> <li>What motivates me to do a job</li> <li>Others: <i>my dream job</i></li> </ul>                                                                                        | How do I achieve this? Am I feeling confident or uncertain? Does the plan make sense within itself? is it consistent with my work-view and life-view? |
| <b>SOCIAL CONTRIBUTION</b>      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How does my work relate to benefit of community</li> <li>How do I plan to create meaning and contribute meaningfully to social cause</li> <li>What are the potential impacts of my work on societal issues?</li> <li>How do I want to contribute to my community or society?</li> <li>Others: <i>my dream vision for community contribution</i></li> </ul> | How do I achieve this? Am I feeling confident or uncertain? Does the plan make sense within itself? is it consistent with my work-view and life-view? |
| <b>HEALTH &amp; WELL-BEING</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What are my effective long-term strategies for promoting mental health and emotional well-being?</li> <li>How do I plan to maintain work-life balance for ensuring my overall well-being?</li> <li>What activities contribute to my physical and mental well-being?</li> <li>Others: <i>my dream target for personal health and well-being</i></li> </ul>  | How do I achieve this? Am I feeling confident or uncertain? Does the plan make sense within itself? is it consistent with my work-view and life-view? |
| <b>SOCIAL CONNECTIONS</b>       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How can I improve communication with my spouse, children, friends, and family?</li> <li>What regular activities can I do to strengthen my relationships?</li> <li>How can I balance personal time and shared experiences?</li> <li>What kind of support do I need to achieve my goals?</li> <li>Others: <i>my dream relationships</i></li> </ul>           | How do I achieve this? Am I feeling confident or uncertain? Does the plan make sense within itself? is it consistent with my work-view and life-view? |
| <b>FINANCE / SECURITY</b>       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How does money have to do with my job satisfaction?</li> <li>How do I propose to balance your career and financial security in this LIFE-PLAN_A ?</li> <li>What are my financial goals and needs?</li> <li>What are my savings and investment plans for the future?</li> <li>Others: <i>my dream financial state</i></li> </ul>                            | How do I achieve this? Am I feeling confident or uncertain? Does the plan make sense within itself? is it consistent with my work-view and life-view? |
| <b>GROWTH/ SELF-DEVELOPMENT</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What new skills or knowledge do I want to acquire?</li> <li>What experiences do I want to have in my life and career?</li> <li>How do I adapt to changes in my career and personal life?</li> <li>How do I measure my personal and professional growth?</li> <li>Others: <i>my dream personal &amp; professional profile</i></li> </ul>                    | How do I achieve this? Am I feeling confident or uncertain? Does the plan make sense within itself? is it consistent with my work-view and life-view? |
| <b>PLAY/ LEISURE</b>            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What activities make me feel most fulfilled and happy?</li> <li>What causes or issues am I passionate about?</li> <li>How do I desire to engage myself to enjoy my leisure time?</li> <li>Others: <i>my dream leisure</i></li> </ul>                                                                                                                       | How do I achieve this? Am I feeling confident or uncertain? Does the plan make sense within itself? is it consistent with my work-view and life-view? |

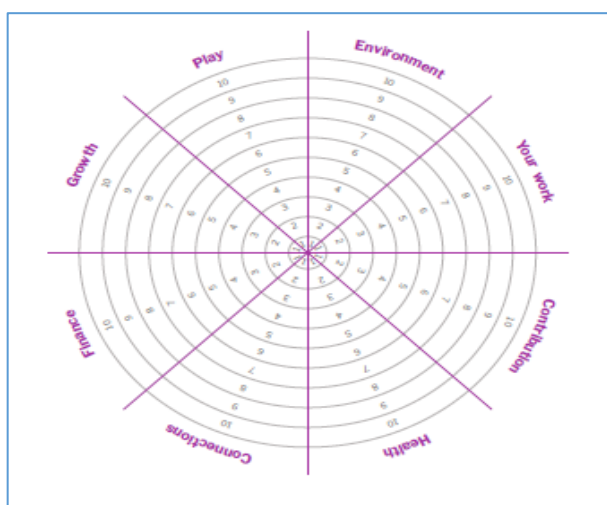


# MY\_LIFE-PLAN B : THE ALTERNATIVE 5-YEAR PLAN

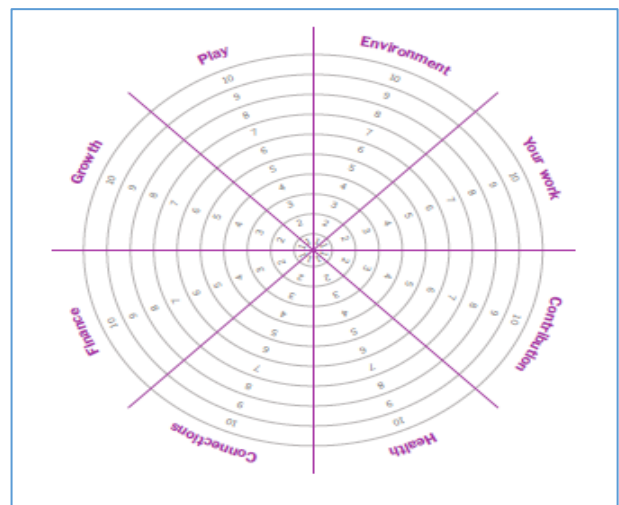
| Demensions                      | Life-Design Questions                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Action Plans to achieve this                                                                                                                          |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>ENVIRONMENT</b>              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Where do I desire to stay / my locality/ my place of residence</li> <li>My dream home</li> <li>My dream workplace: large corporate or cozy small company or Institutes</li> <li>Others: <i>my dream environment</i></li> </ul>                                                                                                                             | How do I achieve this? Am I feeling confident or uncertain? Does the plan make sense within itself? is it consistent with my work-view and life-view? |
| <b>WORK/ PROFESSION</b>         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What industries or fields am I interested in?</li> <li>What type of career / profession I desire</li> <li>What type of work do I love</li> <li>What defines good work for me</li> <li>What motivates me to do a job</li> <li>Others: <i>my dream job</i></li> </ul>                                                                                        | How do I achieve this? Am I feeling confident or uncertain? Does the plan make sense within itself? is it consistent with my work-view and life-view? |
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| <b>HEALTH &amp; WELL-BEING</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What are my effective long-term strategies for promoting mental health and emotional well-being?</li> <li>How do I plan to maintain work-life balance for ensuring my overall well-being?</li> <li>What activities contribute to my physical and mental well-being?</li> <li>Others: <i>my dream target for personal health and well-being</i></li> </ul>  | How do I achieve this? Am I feeling confident or uncertain? Does the plan make sense within itself? is it consistent with my work-view and life-view? |
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| <b>FINANCE / SECURITY</b>       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How does money have to do with my job satisfaction?</li> <li>How do I propose to balance your career and financial security in this LIFE-PLAN_B ?</li> <li>What are my financial goals and needs?</li> <li>What are my savings and investment plans for the future?</li> <li>Others: <i>my dream financial state</i></li> </ul>                            | How do I achieve this? Am I feeling confident or uncertain? Does the plan make sense within itself? is it consistent with my work-view and life-view? |
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## Step 4-B: Evaluate and Compare Plans

- **Feasibility and Desirability:** Assess each plan's feasibility (practicality) and desirability (alignment with your values and passions). For each plan, assess the following questions from wheel of life:
  - How satisfied will you be on the **WORK** front?
  - How well are you taking care of your personal **HEALTH (Physical and Mental Well-being)**?
  - How things will be going on the **CONNECTION** front?
  - What do you plan your **ENVIRONMENT** inside of home and office?
  - What will be the ways you are planning to **CONTRIBUTION to society**?
  - How well will you be managing your **PLAY-TIME: leisure time and hobbies**?
  - How well you have taken care of your **FINANCIAL** well-being and future security?
  - How well you have planned for your own learning, self-development, and **GROWTH** as a person?
- **Impact Analysis:** Consider the impact of each plan on different aspects of your life, including career, personal growth, relationships, and well-being.



MY\_LIFE-PLAN A



MY\_LIFE-PLAN B

**Make an overall assessment of each plan in a scale of 1 to 10:**

- a. Resources (Do you have the resources—time, money, skill, contacts—you need?)
- b. Likability (Are you hot or cold or warm about your plan?)
- c. Confidence (Are you feeling full of confidence, or uncertain about pulling this off?)
- d. Coherence (Is it consistent with you, your Workview, and your Lifeview?)

## Step 5: Prototype

- **Small Experiments:** Test different aspects of your Odyssey Plans through small-scale projects, internships, or volunteer opportunities.
- **Skill Development:** Enroll in courses, workshops, or certifications to acquire necessary skills.
- **Networking:** Connect with communities related to your potential career paths for feedback.

## Step 6: Test

- **Feedback Loop:** Gather feedback from mentors, peers, and self-reflect on your prototypes.
- **Adjust and Refine:** Make necessary adjustments to your plans based on feedback and experiences.
- **Pilot Implementation:** Begin to implement your refined plan on a larger scale while continuing to monitor and adjust.



**FOR CREATING A COMPREHENSIVE LIFE-DESIGN PLAN,  
FOLLOWING SELF-ASSESSMENT TESTS WILL BE ADMINISTERED  
TO ASSESS AND EVALUATE  
YOUR CURRENT STATE AND FUTURE ASPIRATIONS**

## **1. Assessment of Work-view**

### **1.1 Career Choice and Inclination Assessment (For Students)**

The Career Choices and Inclination Assessment helps students explore their career preferences, readiness, and strategies. It prompts reflection on meaningful work, evaluates how specific their career focus is, assesses their knowledge about chosen fields, and gauges realism regarding their abilities and market constraints. It also examines their awareness of various career options and evaluates their strategic planning for achieving career goals. This comprehensive test aims to provide students with a clear understanding of their career mindset and readiness for making informed decisions.

### **1.2 RIASEC Test (For Students)**

The RIASEC Test, based on John Holland's theory, is a popular career assessment tool that categorizes individuals into six personality types: Realistic, Investigative, Artistic, Social, Enterprising, and Conventional. By identifying a person's dominant types, the test helps match them with compatible career paths that align with their interests, skills, and work preferences. This targeted approach enhances career satisfaction and success by guiding individuals towards professions that suit their inherent strengths and passions. The RIASEC Test is widely used in career counselling to provide clear, actionable insights for career development.

### **1.3 Signature Strengths Assessment**

The Signature Strengths Assessment test helps individuals identify their core strengths based on positive psychology principles. It highlights key attributes such as creativity, perseverance, kindness, and leadership, guiding individuals to leverage these strengths in their personal and professional lives. By focusing on what they naturally excel at, people can enhance job satisfaction, performance, and overall well-being. The test provides actionable insights for career planning, personal growth, and fostering a strengths-based approach to achieving goals.

### **1.4 Assessment of Work-View (For working Professionals)**

Understanding a person's work-view provides valuable insights into their fundamental beliefs about work and its role in their life. It encompasses their definition of meaningful work, alignment with personal values, perceived impact, adaptability over time, and strategies for achieving work-life balance. By exploring these aspects, we gain a deeper understanding of how individuals perceive and approach their professional journeys.

### **1.5 Assessing Entrepreneurial Mindset**

Assessment of Entrepreneurial Mindset evaluates an individual's traits and attitudes essential for entrepreneurial success. It examines characteristics like risk-taking, creativity, resilience, and innovation. By identifying these attributes, the assessment helps individuals understand their potential for entrepreneurship and guides them toward suitable entrepreneurial ventures. This insight supports informed career decisions, aligning personal strengths with the demands of starting and running a business. It's a valuable tool for those considering entrepreneurship as a career path, ensuring they are well-prepared for the challenges and opportunities ahead.

## **2. Assessment of Life-view**

### **2.1 Assessment of Life-View: Aspirations Index**

The Assessment of Life-View evaluates individuals' long-term life goals and aspirations. It prompts reflection on the importance of each goal, the likelihood of achieving it, and progress made thus far.

This assessment distinguishes between intrinsic aspirations (such as meaningful relationships, personal growth, and community contributions) and extrinsic aspirations (such as wealth, fame, and image). By understanding these aspects, individuals gain insights into their motivations and priorities, aiding in life planning and fulfilment.

## 2.2 Wheel of Life

The Wheel of Life assessment is a visual tool used to evaluate and balance key areas of one's life, such as career, relationships, health, and personal growth. Individuals rate their satisfaction in each area, creating a wheel-shaped chart that highlights imbalances and areas needing attention. This holistic approach aids in setting priorities and goals, fostering a more harmonious and fulfilling life.

## 2.3 Mindset Assessment

The Mindset Assessment evaluates whether an individual possesses a growth mindset or a fixed mindset. A growth mindset is characterized by the belief that abilities and intelligence can be developed through effort, learning, and perseverance. In contrast, a fixed mindset holds that these traits are static and unchangeable. This assessment helps individuals understand their approach to challenges and learning, highlighting areas where adopting a growth mindset can foster personal and professional growth.

## 2.4 Your Need Hierarchy: Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Motivated Person

The assessment test evaluates individuals based on their orientation towards Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. It distinguishes between those highly motivated by the hierarchy, who methodically prioritize satisfying basic needs before advancing to higher-order goals, promoting stability and resilience. In contrast, individuals poorly motivated by the hierarchy may skip foundational needs in favor of pursuing higher-order aspirations prematurely, potentially risking instability and setbacks in their pursuit of personal growth or social status. Understanding one's motivational approach within this framework helps in tailoring effective personal development strategies to ensure balanced progress and holistic well-being.

# 3. Strength-Weakness and Competencies Assessment

## 3.1 SWOT Analysis

Personal SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) analysis is a framework used to evaluate your competitive position in your social and professional life and to develop strategic planning. A SWOT analysis pulls information from internal sources (strengths or weaknesses of the specific individual) and external forces that may have uncontrollable impacts on decisions (opportunities and threats).

## 3.2 Life Skills Competencies Assessment

There are evidences that Life Skills, which are a set of psychosocial competencies, can enable young people to protect themselves from a multitude of vulnerable socio-economic environments and risk-taking behaviours. **Life Skills** focus on personal development and include three key components: Social Skills, Emotional Skills, and Cognitive Skills. These skills are crucial for building strong relationships, managing emotions effectively, and enhancing critical thinking and problem-solving abilities.

## 3.3 Career Skills Competencies Assessment

Career Skills are aimed at preparing individuals for the dynamic and competitive job market. Career Skill Competencies comprises of three core skills that are needed to support 21st century job market: Digital citizenship Skills ( a set of skills that includes learning digital skills and becoming digital literate with contemporary digital tools and techniques), Career Preparation skills ( which include formal presentation and report writing skills, preparing resume and statement of purpose, improving interview performance , planning for a career abroad) and Career Progression skills (Improving Career Capital, Entrepreneurship Skills for self-employability, professional and personal relationship management and embracing change through strengthening adaptability Quotient).

