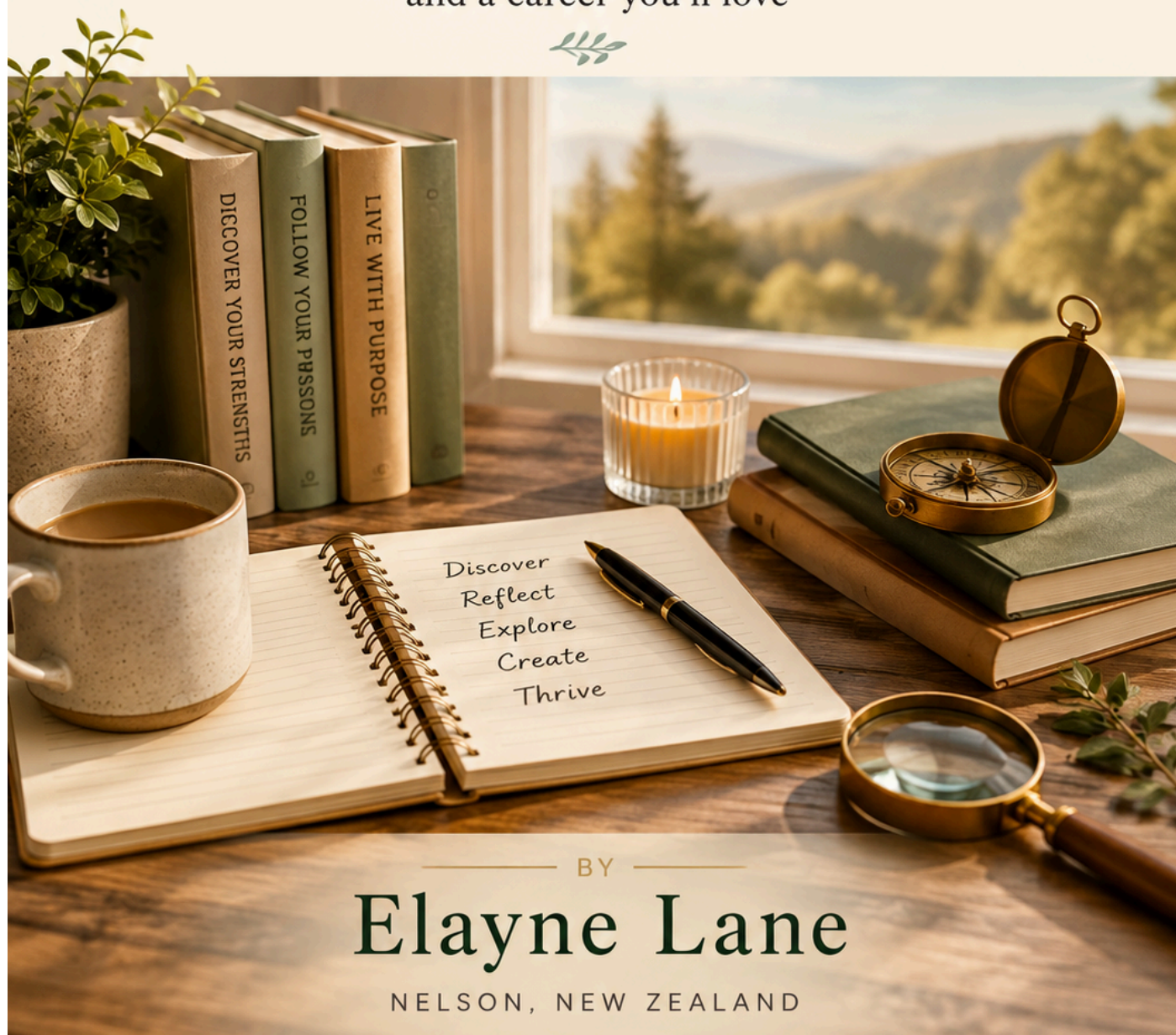


Finding Your *Direction*



A PRACTICAL WORKBOOK

for discovering meaningful work
and a career you'll love



BY

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Finding Your Direction

A three-step guide to discovering meaningful work

Welcome

Finding work that suits you isn't simply about choosing a job. It's about understanding yourself. I suggest you look at it on a laptop rather than a phone.



Many people spend years trying to fit themselves into careers that never really feel right. Others know something needs to change but aren't sure where to begin.

This workbook is designed to help you slow down, reflect, and explore what truly matters to you. Rather than telling you what career you should choose, this

workbook invites you to discover your own answers through a series of practical exercises and reflections.

There are no right or wrong answers. Some sections may only take a few minutes, while others may spark ideas that stay with you for days. Take your time. Write in the spaces provided, revisit sections if you need to, and trust that each exercise is helping you understand yourself a little more clearly.

I hope this workbook helps you discover not only what you might like to do, but also the unique gifts you already have to offer.

Warmly,

Elayne Lane

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Introduction

Many people feel they need to figure out their whole future before they can make a decision. The truth is, very few people discover meaningful work that way.

This guide is designed to help you get started. It isn't about finding the "perfect" career. It's about learning more about yourself, exploring possibilities, and becoming curious about what feels like a good fit.

You don't need all the answers today. You just need to take the next step.

Please start with listening to this recording.  [Become a Detective](#)

Step 1 — Discover Yourself

Lets begin. Grab yourself a drink, turn off your phone and take out a pen and paper.

Before you can discover work that suits you, it's worth spending a little time discovering yourself. These questions aren't a test, and there are no right or wrong answers. They're simply another way of collecting clues about the person you already are. Answer these questions one by one.

Take your time with these questions.

There are quite a few, so you might like to answer five each day. There is no rush. This workbook isn't a test. It's simply a way of collecting clues about the person you already are.

What activities make me lose track of time?

What problems do I naturally enjoy solving?

What do people often ask me for help with?

What kind of people do I enjoy being around?

What environments make me feel alive?

What kind of contribution feels meaningful to me?

What would I regret never trying?

Are you artistic – drawing, music, design, sculpting etc?

What games did you love as a child, leggo, playing at being a nurse?

Are you an introvert (prefer being alone) or an extrovert (enjoy and feel energised by being with other people)?

How do you want your days to look – working 9-5 or 7-3, would shift work suit you better, or night work only (if you are a night owl)?

When you were a child, what did you naturally enjoy doing?

Did you love being indoors or outdoors?

Did you enjoy making and building things?

Were you artistic? Did you enjoy drawing, music, writing or creating?

Did you enjoy sewing, fixing things or working with your hands?

Did you naturally organise games, teach other children, or pretend to be a nurse, teacher or explorer?

Do you enjoy working quietly on your own, or do you come alive when you're with other people?

Think about the moments in your life when you've felt most engaged, most alive and most like yourself. What were you doing? Who were you with? What was it about that experience that felt so satisfying?

What do you want your everyday life to look like?

Imagine that money was already taken care of. You never had to worry about paying another bill. How would you choose to spend your days?

Take a moment to acknowledge what you've just done.

By answering these questions, you've already started gathering clues about yourself. You may have noticed certain interests appearing more than once, remembered things you loved doing as a child, or recognised environments where you naturally come alive. Those patterns matter.

There are no perfect answers, and you don't need to have everything figured out yet. You're simply beginning to see yourself a little more clearly.

The next step is to add another perspective. The following assessments won't tell you exactly what career to choose, but they can highlight strengths, interests and personality traits that support what you've already begun to discover.

Free Career Assessments

Complete these one at a time rather than all at once. I suggest doing one assessment each day. This gives your mind time to reflect between each one and allows new ideas to emerge naturally.

Personality [16Personalities](#)

Interests [O*NET Interest Profiler](#)

Strengths [VIA Character Strengths Survey](#)

Careers [CareerQuest by Careers New Zealand](#)

As you complete each assessment, don't worry if every result isn't a perfect fit. Instead, notice the patterns that keep appearing. Ask yourself:

What keeps appearing?

What surprised me?

What felt true?

What didn't fit me at all?

What kind of environments do I seem to enjoy?

Do I prefer working with people, ideas, information, or practical tasks?

Don't worry if you don't have a clear answer yet. You're collecting clues, not making a final decision. Every insight you gather will make the next step a little clearer.

Step 2 Explore Your Possibilities with ChatGPT (optional)

By now you've gathered a lot of information about yourself. You've reflected on your interests, strengths, values and the kind of life you would like to create. You've also completed several career assessments and started to notice some common themes.

Now it's time to put those pieces together.

ChatGPT can help you explore possibilities, identify patterns and generate ideas you may not have considered. It won't tell you what your perfect career is, but it can help you think more deeply about the clues you've collected.

Copy the prompt below into ChatGPT. Before you press Enter, replace anything in **[square brackets]** with your own information.

ChatGPT Prompt

I am trying to discover meaningful work that suits who I am rather than simply choosing a job.

Here is what I have discovered about myself.

My strengths: [list your strengths]

My interests: [list your interests]

My personality: [describe your personality or paste the results from your personality assessment]

My values: [what matters most to you]

The type of lifestyle I would like: [describe your ideal work-life balance, hours, flexibility, income, family life, location, etc.]

Things I don't enjoy: [list anything you know isn't a good fit]

Based on everything above, I'd like you to:

1. Identify any themes or patterns you notice.
2. Suggest careers or occupations that may suit me.
3. Explain why each career might be a good fit.
4. Suggest careers I may not have considered.
5. Recommend practical ways I could explore these careers before making any major decisions.
6. If appropriate, suggest courses, volunteering, shadowing, books or other ways to learn more.
7. Ask me thoughtful questions that might help me gain further clarity about what would suit me.

Remember, ChatGPT is a brainstorming partner, not an expert who knows your future. Use its ideas as possibilities to explore alongside your own intuition, lived experience and conversations with people you trust.

The prompt is on the next two pages (yes, its a long one).

Prompt

I would like you to act as an experienced vocational guidance coach, career counsellor, strengths coach and occupational psychologist.

Your role is to carefully analyse all of the information I provide and help me discover work that is genuinely aligned with my personality, interests, values, strengths, preferred work environment, preferred lifestyle and natural way of contributing to the world.

Please don't simply summarise my assessment results.

Instead, analyse them as though you are looking for patterns in a detective investigation.

Look beneath the surface and identify recurring themes, connections and possible blind spots that I may not have recognised myself.

I would like you to be honest, direct and objective. Please don't tell me what you think I want to hear or try to make every possible career sound suitable. Base your conclusions on the evidence within the assessments.

If there are contradictions between different assessments, point them out and explain what they might mean.

Please structure your response using the following headings.

1. The Big Picture

Summarise the overall picture emerging from all of the assessments.

Who do I appear to be?

What themes consistently appear?

2. Recurring Patterns

Identify the personality traits, interests, motivations, values, strengths and work preferences that repeatedly show up across the different assessments.

Explain why these patterns matter.

3. Possible Blind Spots

Identify anything I may overlook about myself.

Are there strengths I underestimate?

Are there habits, fears or assumptions that could limit my career choices?

Are there contradictions that deserve further exploration?

4. My Ideal Working Environment

Describe the kinds of workplaces, cultures and environments where I am most likely to thrive.

Also describe environments that would probably drain my energy or lead to dissatisfaction.

5. What Gives Me Energy

Based on everything you've read, identify:

- Activities that are likely to energise me.
- Activities that are likely to drain me.
- The kinds of problems I naturally enjoy solving.
- The types of people I may enjoy working with.
- The ways I appear to like contributing.

6. Career Themes

Rather than jumping straight to specific jobs, identify the broader themes that seem to fit me.

For example, teaching, healing, designing, building, researching, investigating, creating, leading, analysing, caring, communicating, organising, solving problems or developing people.

Explain why these themes appear to suit me.

7. Possible Career Directions

Suggest 10–15 occupations that genuinely fit the evidence.

For each one, briefly explain why it matches my personality, interests and strengths.

Do not simply generate a random list of popular careers.

8. Questions Worth Exploring

Suggest thoughtful questions that would help me understand myself even better before making any career decisions.

9. Real World Exploration

Recommend practical next steps.

Who should I talk to?

What should I observe?

What could I volunteer for?

What could I experience before committing to further study or a career change?

10. Your Overall Impression

If you were my vocational guidance coach, what would you honestly encourage me to explore over the next six to twelve months?

Finally, if you notice any important themes or insights that I haven't asked about, please include them.

Remember, my goal isn't simply to find a job.

My goal is to build a meaningful life doing work that is aligned with who I am.

Step 3 – Investigate the Possibilities



Now it's time to take all the clues you've collected about yourself and see where they lead.

By now you should have a much clearer picture of your personality, strengths, interests, values and the kinds of environments where you're likely to thrive. Rather than trying to choose the "perfect" career, your next step is simply to investigate occupations that seem to fit who you are.

Choose your top three to five career ideas and become curious about each one. Instead of asking yourself, *"Which one should I choose?"* try asking a different question:

"Which ones am I curious to learn more about?" Curiosity takes away the pressure of having to make the right decision and replaces it with a sense of exploration.

Remember, you're still the detective. Your job isn't to solve the mystery today. It's simply to follow the clues and see where they lead. Some careers will become more interesting as you learn about them, while others may lose their appeal. That's all part of the process.

As you investigate each career, take some time to:

- Read about the career and what the role involves.

- Watch YouTube videos showing what a typical day looks like.

- Learn what training, qualifications or experience are required.

- Find out about the opportunities, challenges and lifestyle that come with the job.

- Explore the different places people with that qualification can work.

- Notice what excites you, what surprises you and what doesn't appeal to you.

- Write down any questions you would like to ask someone already working in that profession.

At this stage, you're not making a lifelong commitment. You're simply gathering more evidence. Every new piece of information is another clue that helps you understand whether a particular career feels like a good fit. Trust the process and allow your curiosity to guide you. Often the right direction becomes clearer one small discovery at a time.

Step 4 – Become a Curious Explorer

This is where your detective work begins to come alive. Choose one career that you are interested in and then listen to this recording. 🎧

[Feeling into your career](#)



Note from Elayne: When I was trying to work out what I wanted to do with my life, I completed personality and career assessments and ended up with five possible careers.

Instead of trying to guess which career was right for me, I started talking to people who were already doing those jobs. Some careers that looked exciting on paper didn't appeal to me after those conversations. Others surprised me.

Looking back, it wasn't one personality test that gave me the answer. It was the whole process of becoming curious, gathering clues and talking to people who were already doing the work. Every conversation became another clue.

You don't need dozens of interviews. Sometimes one conversation can completely change the direction you're heading. Stay curious, listen carefully, and notice what resonates. You're not looking for certainty yet—you're simply gathering more evidence about the kind of work that feels like a good fit for you.

Continue Your Investigation

So far you've been learning about yourself, exploring careers that seem like a good fit, and looking beneath the surface to discover what really attracts you to those occupations. Now it's time to step out into the real world and see what those careers actually look and feel like.

No personality assessment, career test or website can replace talking with someone who is already doing the work. Real conversations often reveal things you could never discover by reading a job description. They help you understand not only what people do each day, but also what they love, what challenges them and what kind of person naturally thrives in that role.

Most people are surprisingly generous with their time and are happy to spend fifteen or twenty minutes sharing their experiences if you ask politely. You don't need to interview dozens of people. Even one or two conversations can provide valuable insights and perhaps even open doors you hadn't considered before.



If you have the opportunity to talk with someone working in a career you're interested in, you might like to take a list of questions with you, such as:

What do you enjoy most about your work?

What are the biggest challenges?

What surprised you after you started?

Does the cost of training match the income you get now?

How easy is it to get a job?

What is the downside of the job?

What do you wish someone had told you before you started?

What are the hours of work like?

What kind of person thrives in this career?

If you were starting again, would you choose the same path?

What advice would you give someone just starting out?

As part of your investigation, keep gathering information from different sources. Read job descriptions, watch videos showing a typical day in the role and, if possible, spend some time observing someone at work. There's no substitute for seeing a workplace with your own eyes. Often you'll learn more in an hour than you could from weeks of reading.

As you explore each possibility, pay attention to more than just the facts. Notice how you respond, both mentally and physically. Do you find yourself becoming more interested as you learn? Can you imagine yourself doing this work each day? Does it give you a sense of excitement, curiosity or quiet satisfaction, or do you notice yourself feeling flat, disconnected or simply relieved that someone else is doing it?

This is one of the reasons I encourage people to listen not only to their thoughts, but also to their bodies. Sometimes your nervous system recognises a good fit long before your logical mind can explain why. Pay attention to what gives you energy and what leaves you feeling drained. Those responses are important clues and deserve to be included in your investigation.

Remember, you are still gathering evidence. Every conversation, every workplace you visit and every new experience adds another piece to the puzzle. As the clues accumulate, the picture becomes clearer, and you'll begin to recognise the kinds of work that feel meaningful, enjoyable and naturally aligned with who you are.

A Final Thought

Finding meaningful work is rarely one big decision. More often, it is a series of small discoveries that gradually point you in the right direction. You began by becoming a detective and learning more about yourself. You investigated careers that matched your personality, strengths, interests and values. You looked beneath the surface to discover what you were really seeking, and then stepped into the real world to test those ideas through genuine experience.

Be patient with yourself and allow the process to unfold. Very few people discover their life's work overnight, and there is no prize for getting there first. Stay curious, keep collecting clues, and be willing to change direction as you learn more about yourself and the opportunities around you.

Sometimes a single conversation, an unexpected opportunity or one day spent observing someone at work is all it takes to see your future from a completely different perspective.

I hope this guide has given you a simple place to begin. My wish for you is that you discover work that not only uses your skills and abilities, but also brings meaning, purpose and enjoyment to your everyday life.

About Elayne

Hi, I'm Elayne Lane.

I'm a massage therapist, hypnotherapist and educator based in Nelson, New Zealand.

Many years ago I found myself asking exactly the same question you may be asking now:

"What do I want to do with my life?"

This guide grew from my own journey of discovering meaningful work and from years of helping people reconnect with themselves through massage, relaxation and personal development.

My hope is that these exercises help you become a little more curious about yourself and a little more confident that meaningful work is something you discover one clue at a time.

If you'd like more free resources, articles and guided recordings, visit:

www.elaynelanetherapy.co.nz

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