THE HERO’S JOURNEY:
A STRENGTHS-BASED LIFE PURPOSE WORKSHOP FOR ARTISTS

A graduate project submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
For the degree of Master of Science in Counseling,
Career Counseling

By

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“You gain strength, courage, and confidence by every experience in which you really stop to look fear in the face. You are able to say to yourself, ‘I have lived through this horror. I can take the next thing that comes along.’ … You must do the thing you think you cannot do.”

- Eleanor Roosevelt

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ABSTRACT

THE HERO’S JOURNEY:

A STRENGTHS-BASED LIFE PURPOSE WORKSHOP FOR ARTISTS

By

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Master of Science in Counseling,

Career Counseling

There are several qualities of the artistic labor market that create challenges for artists to sustain their careers: a flexible job market characterized by short-term contractual labor, multiple job-holding, and a combination of self-employment, underemployment and unemployment. These issues prevent the development of a cohesive artistic identity and subsequently affect artists’ self-efficacy, motivation and commitment. In addition, artists often lack the career development training and skills necessary to succeed in portfolio or protean careers. The proposed career development workshop is designed to address these issues by helping participants define their overarching life purpose, and use it as a tool to help them set goals, explore, and generate new opportunities.
Chapter 1 - The Problem

Introduction

The analogy to art is quite strong: an artist endorses a work as truly her own by the act of signing it. This act expresses the feeling that the creation indeed expresses the fulfillment of the artist’s creative urge and her individuality. A sense of authorship over ones life, similarly, reflects the feeling that we have left a stamp on our own life, so to speak; that we accept it as our creation. Neither the sense of authorship nor the sense of having lived life as a work of art can be taken for granted. (Strenger, 2009, p. 250)

Today’s mobile workers may feel fragmented and confused by the restructuring of occupations and transformation of the labor force. As they move from one assignment to the next assignment, they must let go of what they did but not of who they are. If they let go of everything, then the loss may overwhelm them. By holding onto the self in the form of a life story that provides meaning and continuity, they are able to move on in a way that advances life purpose and approaches overarching goals. (Savickas, 2011, p.37)

Statement of the Problem

Due to the lack of a defined career path and the need to often juggle several jobs in order to survive, many artists struggle to find a balance between work that pays the bills and time to create art. Often artists either hold down a paying job while they pursue their creative interests, or move flexibly from project to project on a continual basis. As Strenger (2009) suggests in the above quote, having a sense of ownership over one’s life can not be undervalued when juggling multiple occupational and life roles. Yet according to Bain (2005), juggling multiple jobs can compromise the development of a cohesive artistic identity. Bennett (2009) asserts that this compromise can then effect self-efficacy beliefs and limit career progression. Over time the constant need to maintain a good reputation, acquire new projects, and maintain a professional network of contacts can result in artist burnout (Jones, 1996). Bennett (2009) further argues that a lack of training in career self-management can also lead to a challenge to the sustainability of a protean
career. The question, therefore, is how to support artists in the creation of progressive and sustainable careers. As Savickas (2011) suggests above, one means of creating a sustainable career is to maintain a sense of identity across projects through the creation of a meaningful life story. Therefore, the goal of the proposed program is to connect artists to life purpose as the unifying theme in their life stories, in order to assist them to envision fulfilling and sustainable careers and set the necessary goals to achieve them.

**Importance of the Problem**

Examination of the problem is necessary because the evolution of flexibility and competition in the arts dictates that artists develop career self-management skills and knowledge of market demands in order to create sustainable careers. Rising unemployment and underemployment in the arts, coupled with the reduced ability to find a satisfactory work/life balance, demands attention due to the subsequent loss of creative and cultural capital.

Underemployment and unemployment are on the rise, according to Menger (1999). The National Endowment for the Arts (NEA, 2009) notes that the unemployment rate for artists rose to 6% by the end of the recession year of 2008, a 2% overall increase in unemployment compared to the final quarter of 2007. The NEA suggests that numerous artists had already left the workforce by the time the unemployment figure was calculated due to a disheartening job outlook, or the unemployment rate would have been higher (2009).

Since artists are often required to accept jobs that are outside of the arts to make ends meet, Throsby (2007) suggests that “the existence of a disequilibrium in the
achievement of desired work patterns among professional artists indicates that a significant amounts of creative output is likely to be forgone, in both quantitative and qualitative terms, in a given year” (p. 400). He further speculates that this loss of creative output is of social importance, due the value of art in enhancing the well-being of society. Whether or not this social value can be proved empirically, the value of art to the economy can. Throsby argues that artists are vital to the production of cultural goods and services (2007). According to the NEA (2011a), selected cultural industries including the performing arts, film and publishing industries contributed over $270 billion dollars to the national gross domestic product in 2009.

Shorthose and Strange (2004) explain the rise of contingent labor when they indicate the existence of new cultural economy, one that is “increasingly global; increasingly about intangibles such as knowledge… increasingly decentralized, and characterized by networks and flexibility” (p. 43). Menger (1999) directs attention to the fact that many artists are continually required to move between various short-term commitments due to the shifting combinations of artistic specialties necessary to construct artistic products. This increase in flexible specialization has led to work relationships being established around projects instead of organizations, and therefore a focus on career paths across companies instead of within them (Jones, 1996).

According to Bennett (2009), the development of portfolio careers, constructed outside of a tradition one-employer framework and consisting of holding multiple jobs at the same time, is a common means of offsetting artistic occupational risk. However, she suggests that an extreme version of portfolio careers called protean careers best describes careers in the arts. Bennett explains that protean careers are “named after the Greek sea
god, Proteus, who was able to change form at will to avoid danger” (p. 311). Therefore, in a protean career orientation, artists must diversify their skills so as to be adaptable to fluctuating employment demands. Bennett states: “the creative industries workforce has long engaged in protean careers, which necessitate the continual development of new opportunities and the attainment of the corresponding skills required to meet each new challenge” (p. 311). She specifies that individual goals and values shape protean career development, with success defined in terms of achieving psychological objectives rather than occupational status and earnings (2009).

According to Lo Presti (2009), a protean career orientation demands an increase in personal agency and career self-management. Yet many artists are not trained in the career development skills necessary to sustain a career in the arts (Bennett, 2009). Fenwick (2006) argues that portfolio careers are not only driven by building relationships in the business community, but also “partly by personal need for a sense of place, identity, security and boundaries defining one’s life and work in the fluidity of portfolio work” (p. 71). According to Jones (1996), the constant demands of a protean career can also challenge the maintenance of a work-life balance. The achievement of such a balance has become increasingly important for many (Schein, 1996). Kosine, Steger and Duncan (2008) argue that “having a sense of purpose and meaning in life have been found to play an important role in overall life and career satisfaction” (p. 133), yet these factors are often not the focus of career interventions. Lips-Wiersma and McMorland (2006) assert that connecting to a sense of purpose can encourage well-being despite uncertainty and change by providing coherence and continuity. Treadgold (1999) agrees that being involved in meaningful work strengthens one’s self-concept and identity, and
corresponds with a decrease in stress and depression. Furthermore, a connection with purpose can lead to the creation of personally meaningful goals, thereby contributing to the psychological success that defines protean careers (Lips-Wiersma & McMorland, 2006).

The proposed program is designed to address this lack of purpose-based career interventions by encouraging participants to connect with purpose in order to strengthen artistic identity and commitment, as well as create and achieve meaningful goals. The program’s objective is to use the framework of a hero’s journey and various career development interventions to support freelance artists struggling within the world of fluctuating projects and demands to establish a cohesive sense of identity and generate progressive development in their careers. The goal is to enhance the quality of artists’ lives and work by providing them with the tools to articulate a vision and take purposeful action in their careers. If successful, elements of this program can be implemented by professional arts and not-for-profit organizations supporting the development of artists.

Identifying the Population

A prevailing issue when deciding to provide services to artists is defining who exactly artists are. In surveys of artists, Menger (1999) notes that often the definition of who qualifies as an artist varies according to researcher preference, such as whether an artist needs to have earned a living through creating art in order to be able to claim the title. Bain (2005) questions whether artists are defined by the level of recognition they receive for their work, how much training and education they complete, or their level of commitment measured by how much time they focus on their craft. Finally, Cherbo
(2008) debates whether the use of creative skills qualifies someone as an artist, even if his or her occupation is not seen as outwardly artistic. While the problems of defining artists as a group using census and survey data are discussed in more detail in the next chapter, it is hopefully apparent by now that the term artist is used as a “catchall phrase” (Cherbo, 2008). “Artist” can denote a variety of specializations from fine to multimedia artists, from dancers, actors and comedians to architects, photographers and writers. The term can include both those who earn income primarily from art and those who don’t. As such, artist demographics can be difficult to generalize.

It’s important to keep these research limitations in mind when looking at information about artists. The NEA (2008) suggests general demographic trends in its most recent report on artists in the workforce. These trends, based on the 2000 census and the 2005 American Community Survey, focus on eleven occupational categories: actors, announcers, architects, fine artists/art directors/animators, dancers/choreographers, designers, entertainers/performers, musicians/singers, photographers, producers/directors and writers/authors. Because the NEA report is based on Census data, the characteristics summarized in the report are based on artists who earn their primary income from work in the arts (2008).

According to the NEA (2008), artists gravitate towards self-employment. They often have attained levels of education above those of the general workforce, though slightly lower than the professional workforce. There appears to be a larger percentage of men than women artists. Artists also tend to be predominantly white, though the number of Hispanic, Asian, and American Indian artists has grown between 1990 and 2005, while the ratio of African American artists has remained the same (2008).
The recession that began in 2008 has taken its toll on the artistic labor population. The unemployment rate of artists has risen more rapidly than that of the general workforce, with many artists leaving the workforce due to economic difficulties (NEA, 2010). Often freelance artists who have yet to achieve status as core workers in project networks are the first to lose their place in the food chain (Christopherson & Storper, 1989). This project focuses on these peripheral workers.

The proposed program is purposefully designed to be broad and inclusive in terms of demographics and artistic specialties. Recommended group participants are over the age of thirty, have an interest in or have previous engaged in multiple job-holding or contractual/contingent labor, and have a desire to find a feeling of purpose in their lives in order to achieve fulfillment and cohesion in their careers. Due to the demands and fluctuations of contingent work, sustaining a regular weekly commitment could be challenging for this group of artists. Therefore, the program is offered in a retreat format in order to make it more accessible to this population.

**General Characteristics of the Population**

Common characteristics of the artistic population include originality and openness to experience, a tendency towards emotional sensitivity often resulting in depression and anxiety, and a desire to be autonomous and independent. As a labor group, artists are often distinguished by a tendency towards multiple job-holding in order to offset occupational risk and difficulties in maintaining a cohesive artistic identity.

While originality is the characteristic most often associated with artists, Feist (1998) suggests that originality alone cannot determine creativity. In his meta-analysis of
scientific and artistic creativity, Feist argues that before originality comes the ability to remain open to new experiences and ideas. This openness enables artists to “have at their disposal a wide range of thoughts, feelings, and problem-solving strategies, the combination of which may lead to novel and useful solutions or ideas” (p. 300). Openness to experience, therefore, seems to be the foundation of creative ability.

Martinsen (2011) argues that this creative ability is the key to adaptability, a necessary quality for success in a flexible, knowledge-based economy.

Martinsen (2011) indicates that artists are characterized by emotional sensitivity and instability. This emotional vulnerability can lead to high levels of anxiety and depression. Feist (1998) argues that increased anxiety is par for the course among artists, and suggests that:

The essence of much artistic creativity, whether visual, verbal or musical, is the expression of deep emotion, of experiences that move and touch. Being sensitive to these internal affective states appears to almost be a prerequisite for being creative (p. 301).

Papworth and James (2003) found that higher levels of creativity corresponded to greater increases in depression, especially in art students. Elias and Berg-Cross (2009), in their study of the motivation and mental health of seventy-five art students, found that a quarter of the sample disclosed taking anti-depressants, with a slightly smaller number reporting using anti-anxiety medications.

In addition to openness and emotional expression, artists tend to prefer autonomy and independence (Dudek, Bernèche, Bérubé & Royer, 1991). Therefore it is not surprising that many artists gravitate towards self-employment. The NEA (2011b) reports
that artists are more than three times as likely to be self-employed than the general worker, a testament to artists’ entrepreneurial nature.

However, often self-employment earnings need to be supplemented for financial survival. Since competition can be fierce, artists tend to hold multiple jobs in order to offset occupational risk (Menger, 1999). Juggling multiple jobs, or constantly shuffling from job to job in a project network, can leave artists struggling to develop a cohesive artistic identity. Occupational identity is often built around a singular workplace, yet artists rarely have this stability (Bain, 2005). The debate surrounding who is considered an artist is a direct reflection of the challenge of creating and maintaining a cohesive artistic identity.

Consequences of the Problem

According to Lo Presti (2008), identity expansion and adaptability are requirements for protean careerists in the new knowledge economy. Therefore, if artists are unable to successfully develop a cohesive identity or adapt to the demands of a flexible, competitive market, there are significant developmental, economic and emotional consequences.

Bennett (2009) suggests that artists traditionally define success in terms of time spent involved in the arts and the subsequent recognition for such involvement. She argues that the inability for some artists to expand their identities to accommodate multiple forms of work can result in decreased self-efficacy beliefs, which in turn can lead to lowered outcome expectations. Over time, reduced efficacy and outcome
expectations can decrease goal-oriented behavior, complicate career decision-making and stagnate career exploration (Betz & Voyten, 1997).

The same career developmental tasks inform career adaptability. Savickas (2005) identifies four elements of career adaptability: concern, control, curiosity, and confidence. Reflected in these four elements are a future orientation, effective career decision-making strategies, exploratory behavior and efficacy beliefs. An inability to connect to any combination of these elements indicates a reduced capacity to navigate the multiple transitions necessary to move progressively in the world of work (2005).

Disengagement with career development activities can result in the inability to obtain work in a competitive market. According to Menger (2001), intense competition in the artistic labor market already suggests unequal access to job opportunities. Often a smaller group of core workers acquire a greater percentage of the available jobs while a larger group of peripheral workers are forced to compete for the left-overs. For many, the inability to successfully compete can lead to an increasing involvement in non-arts work and unemployment (2001). For those with already diminished financial resources, unemployment can make the starving artist stereotype a reality.

The definition of success associated with protean careers is inextricably entwined with the achievement of favorable psychological outcomes (Bennett, 2009). Therefore, a lack of adaptability to the demands of the artistic labor market can lead to a decrease in psychological well-being. According to Throsby (2007), being unable to achieve desired levels of arts activity challenges the achievement of a preferred work-life balance for peripheral workers, resulting in escalating job and life dissatisfaction. Peripheral artists’ limited engagement in the arts work that calls to them can result in an increase of
depression and anxiety (Treadgold, 1999). Unemployment can further threaten artists’ psychological well-being.

**Limitations of the Project**

The proposed program will be limited to artists able to commit to the duration of the retreat, who desire to or have already engaged in multiple job-holding and/or flexible employment. While the program seeks to strengthen artists’ self-efficacy and goal-oriented behavior through an expansion of identity and connection to purpose, it does not guarantee increased employment offers. Further investment in networking, technical and business skills may be necessary to achieve increased sustainability and career satisfaction.

**Definition of Technical Terms**

*Artist:* The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS, 2010) defines artists as people who use a variety of media to convey ideas and emotions. Artists are often divided into various sub-categories by specialty. However, as expressed earlier in this chapter, the use of artist in this project is designed to be broad and inclusive. Therefore, the population of artists for the program presented here will include, but not be limited to: actors, dancers, designers, entertainers, fine and craft artists, illustrators, performance artists, musicians, writers, photographers, and film production and post-production workers.

*Career:* According to Niles and Harris-Bowlsbey (as cited in Sharf, 2006), the term career refers to the sum of all life roles, not simply work roles.
**Portfolio Career:** individuals who have portfolio careers juggle multiple jobs or freelance contracts in order to generate their income, instead of working full-time for one employer (Bennett, 2009).

**Protean Career:** a more rigorous version of portfolio careers, in which individuals must continuously adapt to market demands in order to remain employable. In a protean career, individuals experience success through the accomplishment of personal psychological outcomes instead of climbing a ladder within an organization (Bennett, 2009).

**Purpose:** one’s overarching life goals, which are strongly valued and which when achieved allow one to feel a deep level of satisfaction and fulfillment (Kosine, et al., 2011)

**Work-life balance:** a personally satisfying combination of work and other life goals (Sturges, 2008). Also known as work-life quality.

**Summary**

The literature review presented in the next chapter will establish and clarify the need for this program. It will address the difficulties in defining the artistic labor market and the lack of career preparation provided by art schools to their students. In addition, it will demonstrate the identity confusion felt by artists whose motivation and commitment to the arts are repeatedly challenged through multiple job-holding and the commercial art environment.
Chapter 2 – Review of Literature

Introduction

This chapter will begin with an introduction to career development theory, and how it specifically addresses the issues faced by artists. It will then proceed into an examination not only of the limitations in defining the artistic labor market, but also the impact of flexible specialization and portfolio careers on earnings and work-life balance. In addition, the literature review will explore career issues central to artists. These issues concern identity maintenance, motivation, commitment, as well as the establishment and sustainability of employment in the arts.

Next will follow a critique of relevant groups and institutions providing services to artists. While there appear to be many workshops and trainings provided by both artists and arts organizations, most seem to gravitate towards technical and business skills. Another type of program, *The Artist’s Way* workshop, takes a spiritual approach to unblocking creativity yet lacks specific career development interventions. A larger institution offering comprehensive career counseling services, the Actors Fund, has eligibility requirements that limit access to their services.

Ultimately, this chapter will demonstrate the need for the proposed program by calling attention to the issues impeding artists from successfully adapting to an uncertain marketplace. It will suggest theoretical approaches to address the needs for adaptability, a cohesive identity, and a sense of purpose to create sustainable artistic careers. Finally, the author will suggest specific interventions designed to tackle the needs of the artistic, contingent population.
General Career Development Theory

Super’s life-span, life-space theory provides a framework by which the career development process can be understood. According to Super, Savickas and Super (1996), Super’s life-span, life-space theory takes into account both life roles and life stages (phases of career development), and introduces the concepts of career maturity and adaptability. In his theory, Super suggested that people take on multiple roles in their lifetime, and that the importance of each role is different for each person. He identified six roles that people perform in their lifetime: child, student, worker, homemaker, citizen, leisurite and community member. At different points in a career, different roles become more or less important (1996). Due to the level of commitment necessary to sustain a career in the arts, the work role can often be over emphasized at the expense of a healthy work-life balance. By looking more closely at life roles, artists can become more aware of which roles are actually more important to them at this time in their career, and make appropriate adjustments to improve life quality and well-being.

In addition to the salience of life roles, Super breaks career development into five distinct stages of development: Growth, Exploration, Establishment, Maintenance and Disengagement (Super, et al., 1996). The first stage in Super’s theory is the growth stage, which roughly extends from early childhood until early adolescence. In order to begin developing a self-concept, children need to learn more about themselves and develop confidence in their own abilities during this stage (1996).

The next stage, Exploration, typically occurs between the ages of fourteen to twenty-four (Super, et al, 1996). People usually begin actively searching different work possibilities during exploration, so characteristics of this stage include refining
occupational and environmental preferences and making goals to achieve desired jobs. The three sub-stages of exploration represent these developmental tasks: Crystallizing, Specifying and Implementing. Crystallizing refers to the exploration of appealing jobs and the skills necessary for successful attainment. Solidifying and expressing one’s desired preferences occurs during Specifying, while Implementing refers to the concrete steps one takes to achieve a desired placement (1996).

According to Super et. al, (1996) between the ages of twenty-five to forty-four a person enters the Establishment stage and commits to working and mastering job responsibilities. The first sub-stage of establishment, called Stabilization, reflects the commitment to meeting the demands necessary to remain in a chosen field, whether climbing a corporate ladder to working various jobs over time, such as a protean careerist. The Consolidating stage reflects the desire to prove one’s competence so as to be considered for advancement. The next sub-stage, Advancing, addresses the developmental phase of moving into positions of increasing responsibility (1996).

The Maintenance stage involves sustaining the skills and position achieved during the Establishment stage, and occurs roughly between the ages of forty-five and sixty-five (Super et al., 1996). The sub-stages of Maintenance include Holding on, Keeping up and Innovating. Holding on refers to the decision to remain in an organization and the desire to retain the level of success experienced during Establishment. As technologies and company demands shift, however, being able to sustain an occupation or vocation can result in the need to upgrade or learn new skills in order to remain competitive. Hence, Keeping up is the second sub-stage of Maintenance and takes into account the continuing need for professional development. The final sub-stage, Innovating, refers to continuing
to advance by identifying new challenges or inventing new ways of executing responsibilities (1996).

According to Super et al., (1996), the final stage, Disengagement, refers to an individual’s removal from the world of work, and typically occurs anytime after the mid-sixties. Deceleration, Retirement planning and Retirement living characterize this stage. If an individual is no longer interested and stops growing in his or her position, then he or she has begun to decelerate. The physical and mental impairments associated with aging do not necessarily preclude an individual from being a productive worker, though transitions to more accommodating work may be necessary. As moving towards retirement can be both exciting and daunting, this stage can include a re-evaluation of the salience of life roles and corresponding adjustments (1996).

While age ranges are associated with certain stages, the theory takes into account that career development is dynamic and stages can be moved through non-linearly (Super et al., 1996). It is important to note that with the rise in job instability in the twenty-first century, it is increasingly common for people to recycle through various stages as they cope with multiple job transitions (Super, Osborne, Walsh, Brown & Niles, 1992). For artists who move flexibly from job to job, for example, recycling through the stages of exploration and establishment and disengagement is more common than moving into the maintenance stage. According to Mirvis and Hall (1996), the shortening of the maintenance stage enhances the development of a protean career, as remaining in the maintenance stage detracts from the desired mobility. Successfully recycling through the stages makes artists more adaptable and resilient.
Finally, fundamental to Super’s theory is the idea of career maturity, or how prepared people are to make career decisions (Super et al., 1996). Yet over time, Super differentiated career maturity to describe the main developmental focus of adolescents, and developed the construct of career adaptability to relate to the career development of adults. Savickas (1997) agrees that career adaptability is a more appropriate construct to understand readiness in an era of increasing job instability. Stressing adaptability instead of maturity accounts for the need to continually adjust to new events, and better reflects the recycling of life stages necessary in a flexible career (1997). Therefore, the concept of life stages, enhanced by the construct of adaptability, can provide a framework for understanding the career issues faced by the artistic population.

Summary of Literature

The following literature review will present issues inherent in the artistic labor market, including the challenge of gathering accurate data on artists, correctly assessing information on earnings and multiple job-holding, and the difficulty of juggling arts, arts-related and non-arts work. It will also address the specific issues faced by artists entering mid-life, as well as how the realities of the world of work influence the construction of artistic identities and successful career navigation. Related programs will be evaluated, and the targeted issues of the proposed program, relevant theoretical approaches and specific career interventions will be discussed.
Defining the Artistic Labor Market

Any discussion of the artistic labor market must take into account the limitations of gathering data on artists. According to Wassall and Alper (1997), there are two ways to gather empirical data on the labor market of artists. The first is through government gathered information, such as Census data. The second is through surveys of artists, which are usually smaller in size and narrowly focused on an artistic specialty. Both methods differ greatly in terms of defining who is a professional artist and in the treatment of multiple job-holding (Menger, 1999).

The advantages of using census data lie in the large sample size and the systematic collection over time. Because of the opportunity for longitudinal comparisons within each occupational category, census data allows for generalizations to be made within occupational groups (Wassall & Alper, 1997). The census data also permits researchers to compare the artistic and general labor market fluctuations over time. However, the census questionnaire asks only about the primary job worked in the week prior to data collection. Therefore, researchers limit the definition of artists to people whose primary jobs are artistic. Since many artists are multiple jobholders, they are not able to identify themselves as artists if their primary work activity during the week in question was non-arts work. Conversely, if an artist is able to identify as such according to the census guidelines, then all subsequent earnings are attributed to the occupation of artist despite multiple income sources (1997). According to Menger (1999), the narrow focus of the census inaccurately represents multiple job-holding and earnings for artists in both scenarios.
Surveys, on the other hand, allow researchers to separate arts and non-arts work time allocations and income. According to Wassall and Alper (1997), while surveys are not limited to the previous week’s employment and thus are able to account for multiple job-holding, they are more limited in their size and scope due to their expense. Menger (1999) also argues that the definition of artist is subject to researcher preference and therefore varies across surveys. Whereas Census data focuses on artists who earn an income connected to arts work, participants in surveys can be artists with no related earnings to their credit (Wassall & Alper, 1997). Surveys are therefore limited in the generalizability of their conclusions about professional artists.

With the limitations of defining artists as a group kept in mind, a discussion of the general characteristics of the artistic labor market follows. Areas of dispute will be discussed in more detail.

**Characteristics of the Artistic Labor Market**

*Flexible Specialization and Competition*

According to Menger (1999), uncertainty and instability characterize the artistic labor market. Despite these challenges, Menger asserts that artists experienced a significant growth in number between 1970 and 1990. From 1990 to 2005, the number of artists still grew at a similar rate to the labor force in general (NEA, 2008). Menger (1999) suggests that this growth can be partially attributed to the flexible specialization of artistic industries, which refers to the shifting combinations of specialized firms needed to create various artistic products. Flexible specialization brought with it a rise in contingent, self-managed and short-term contractual work (1999).
In their discussion of the film industry, for example, Christopherson and Storper (1989) note that a re-organization towards short-term contractual labor changed the distribution of hours and earnings among production workers. They argue that even though the total number of work hours increased due to the disintegration of the hierarchical studio system, the amount of contractual workers grew faster, resulting in increased competition. The reduction of studio production staffs and the increased use of non-unionized firms resulted in an onslaught of training programs and an ensuing surplus of lesser skilled, peripheral workers. The shift away from full-time work hours and the instability of product demands increased the division of labor between a smaller core of tightly networked workers and the larger, less experienced worker pool. While wage increases helped offset the uncertainty of work, during times of recession, peripheral workers were more likely to experience a loss of hours and unemployment (1989).

Risk Diversification and Portfolio Careers

Throsby and Zednick (2011) assert that labor markets in general have seen a shift towards flexibility and casual labor in recent years, with artists especially impacted by the trend towards short-term contractual labor. Wassall and Alper (1997) indicate that self-employment is the most common category of employment in the arts. Menger (1999) agrees, yet states that unemployment and underemployment are also high due to the oversupply of artists and a subsequent increase in competition. Faced with uncertainty and instability, artists may acquire funding from public or private sources, combine resources with other artists, or work multiple jobs in order to improve earnings (1999).

According to Amirault (1997), of “the 25 occupations employing the largest proportions of workers in a secondary job, virtually every ‘artistic’ occupation appears”
A survey of 13,581 art school graduates by the Strategic National Arts Alumni Project (SNAAP, 2010) concluded that 57% of professional artists hold more than one job at a time and 18% hold a minimum of three jobs concurrently. These statistics support the fact that many artists develop portfolio or protean careers in order to offset occupational risk. To balance their risk and increase their earnings, artists divide their time between creative, arts-related, and non-arts work (Throsby & Zednick, 2011).

Earnings

Due to the limitations of census and survey data, disagreement exists on whether or not artists face an income penalty for their choice to pursue work in the arts. Menger (1999) concurs with the idea of an income penalty for artists, and indicates that an artist’s income often reflects whether there is a demand for his or her work. Underemployed artists whose work is not in as much demand cannot simply produce more work in order to increase income. Instead, Throsby (2007) argues that artists often have to choose between work that is financially rewarding but not creative and work that provides artistic opportunity and growth but is not well paid.

Filer’s (1986) research is often cited in discussions of artists and whether they are subject to reduced earnings. Filer notably argues against the idea that artists suffer from a reduced income due to their occupational choice. In his analysis of 1980 census data, Filer expands the definition of artist to include every occupational category that the census designates as artistic. Using this broad definition, he compares artists to a random sample of non-arts general workers. While he admits that artists experience more fluctuations in earnings, he argues that they achieve similar earnings results compared to what they would earn working non-arts jobs. Filer concludes that an artist’s average
income penalty hovers around 10%. Because artists typically freelance or are self-employed, Filer implies that earnings are potentially even higher due to tax deductions, failure to report income, and the receipt of unemployment benefits (1986). When reviewing the current artistic labor market, however, it is important to note that Filer’s research is out of date.

More recently, Wassall and Alper (1997) suggest that using an expanded definition of artist increases average earnings by including some occupations that are questionably artistic in nature. They further argue that Filer’s comparisons between artists and non-arts workers are skewed because artists tend to be better educated than the general workforce. Therefore, a more accurate comparison would juxtapose artists with other professional workers, in which case artists’ earnings remain significantly lower. In addition, due to the limitations of census data, earnings that are attributed to arts work are arguably from varied sources (1997). Menger (1999) contends that Filer fails to take into account the division of art, arts-related and non-arts work in his calculation of artists’ earnings. The fact that artists are forced to supplement their income with other jobs due to insufficient earnings from art alone strengthens the argument for the existence of an income penalty for artists (Wassall & Alper, 1997).

Time Allocation and Work/Life Balance

The availability of jobs and related wages affect how artists divide their time between work and art. Throsby (2007) suggests that the more financially established an artist is, the more he or she can achieve a desirable work/life balance. Similarly, the greater artists’ human capital in terms of education and skills, the more likely they will achieve a better time allocation. Therefore, Throsby argues, “more experienced and better
established artists are likely to have greater control over the deployment of their artistic skills to meet personal objectives” (2007, p. 397) and are thus more likely to achieve their preferred work balance. For less established artists, however, the conflict between work and non-work activities limits work/life satisfaction and can lead to mental and physical health issues (Sturges, 2008).

The challenge between balancing work and life has only been made more difficult in light of the current recession. According to a recent research bulletin produced by the National Endowment for the Arts (2010), the rate of unemployment for artists exceeded the unemployment rate of other professional workers by over 5% in 2009. The research findings also suggest a significant amount of artists leaving the artistic labor market, possibly due to prohibitive job prospects (2010). The more economic constraints placed on artists due to reduced opportunities and earnings, the less preferred time allocations become possible (Throsby, 2007).

Coping with the continually shifting demands of the marketplace and juggling multiple job roles can lead to many career development issues. A discussion of these career issues follows.

**Career Issues for Artists**

Several issues affect the career development of artists. First, having to work multiple jobs in order to survive financially threatens the development of a cohesive artistic identity. Yet the development and maintenance of an expanded artistic identity is necessary to achieve success in the psychological terms that define protean careers. The difficulty of remaining motivated and committed in an environment with limited
opportunities for success can create self-efficacy issue as artists question their ability to produce desired outcomes. Finally, a lack of training in career self-management skills and the stress of constantly needing to reinvent themselves for fluctuating market demands increases artists’ risk of burnout as they age. These issues are explored next.

Construction of Artistic Identity

Unlike other professional fields, the distinction between amateur and professional artists are blurry, and paths to achieving professional status are not clearly established (Bain, 2005). Since work is typically instrumental to the construction of identity, the social interactions inherent in shared workplace cultures provide valuable information in identity formation. However, since many artists split their time between multiple jobs, using the workplace as means of establishing a cohesive identity is problematic (2005).

The struggle between earning money and creating art leads Pizanias (as cited in Bain, 2005) to suggest the term “hyphenated artist” to describe artists who lead portfolio careers involving work in and outside of the arts. Bain asserts that identity confusion abounds among hyphenated artists, as it is commonly accepted that to be a true artist, one must completely devote oneself to the creation of art. This is the root of the starving artist myth, that the desire to create art overrides even the most basic needs. However, the reality is different for most artists. Thus aspiring artists are faced with the challenge of creating and sustaining an artistic identity when few artists are able to survive on their earnings from art work alone (2005).

Instead, Bain (2005) infers that the creation of an artistic identity stems not from the workplace, but from identification with the myths and stereotypes surrounding artists. These myths, whether or not they are based in reality, provide characteristics that can be
selected to construct an identity as a professional artist. These attributes include being rebellious, unconventional, solitary, alienated, and marginalized (2005). Additional attributes include being independent, sensitive and deeply emotional (Dudek et al., 1991).

Bain (2005) asserts that artists use these myths to create a marketable identity:

In the 21st century artists are required to be experimental and innovative, and to push the frontiers of art while capitalizing upon the development of a distinctive and marketable individuality. In this market-savvy entrepreneurial role, artists are encouraged to exaggerate and exploit their individuality and to feed popular myths to reinforce their occupational authenticity (p.29).

This researcher indicates that the romanticization of the artist through myth and stereotype, however, leads to the devaluation of the struggles artists face due to the flexible nature of the artistic labor market (2005).

Expanding Artistic Self-Concept

According to Bain (2005), art is thought by many to be a leisure activity, and thus struggling artists are thought to be separate from the problems of the rest of the workforce. The reality, according to Bennett (2009), is that art is a business and artists subsequently need entrepreneurial skills such as self-promotion, networking and marketing in order to be successful. Jary (2002) asserts that artistic training often focuses on specific art skills development and identification. However, since multiple job-holding and ongoing skill development are necessary to remain solvent and competitive, she argues that an expansion of an artistic self-concept is vital to successfully market oneself in alternative fields. Bennett (2009) agrees that broadening the artistic identity leads to a more sustainable career by suggesting that how artists identify themselves affects their
efficacy beliefs in taking on new tasks. If artists remain focused only on art skill
development due to the myth of the entirely craft devoted artist, they will limit their
ability to successfully engage in other financially sustaining opportunities in the world of
work. As Bennett states:

This mythological image is the root of the problematic ‘labeling’ of artists. Self-
definition as a dancer, actor or musician, for example, implies a performance-
based career; and yet this would accurately describe the activities of very few
artists (p. 312).

Instead, she argues for engaging in a range of experiences inside and outside art in order
to expand a personal artistic identity. In this way, artists can engage in the continual
shifting of identity necessary to remain employable (2009).

In addition to the difficulties faced by artists in constructing a cohesive identity,
they are also faced with challenges to their motivation and commitment. A more in depth
discussion of these challenges follows.

Motivation and Commitment

A discussion of artists is incomplete without touching on intrinsic and extrinsic
motivation and their effect on creativity and commitment to the arts. Intrinsic motivation
refers to the sheer enjoyment of the artistic process involved in creating “art for art’s
sake.” According to Bain (2005), artists’ motivation is presumed to come from this
inherent inclination to create, so much so that artists are expected to remain faithful to
their creative vision at the expense of financial compensation. Extrinsic motivation, on
the other hand, concerns the creation of art for an external reward, such as getting paid
for completing a creative project. Empirical studies by researchers such as Deci, Koestner
and Ryan (1999) have shown that external rewards can undermine creativity and intrinsic motivation, and therefore the persistence necessary to persevere in a highly competitive creative labor market.

The reasons against pursuing a career in the arts are many. According to SNAAP (2011), art school graduates cite a lack of art jobs, student loan debt, and higher pay in other fields as reasons to hesitate to commit to the arts field. In their study of uncommitted and committed art students, Dudek, et al. (1991) found that uncommitted students did not want to dedicate themselves to a profession with such a small chance for success or financial reward. However, financial considerations were secondary for the committed students, who placed the opportunity to do work they loved first (1991).

As discussed earlier, artists often shift between unrelated jobs due to economic necessity. However, according to Stohs (1992), this multiple job-holding is challenging to sustain over time due to economic instability, familial demands and the pressure to acquire higher social status and income. In her study of twelve fine and applied artists, she found that intrinsic motivation helped to sustain a fluid work pattern in the fine arts. However, Stohs also discovered that working in an applied arts setting shifted artists away from internal motivation and towards external rewards (1992). Her survey, while limited in scope, appears to reflect other empirical studies on the effects of rewards.

According to Amabile, Hennessey and Grossman (1986), when a reward is offered, such as financial compensation, the focus turns from enjoyment of the creative process to pursuing the reward. The resulting decrease in creativity can be long term according to the overjustification effect, which posits that when a reward is offered for a typically enjoyed behavior, it decreases the probability that the behavior will be
performed in future situations when the reward is not offered (1986). In other words, by offering artists money for engaging in the creation of art, the likelihood that they will engage in artistic endeavors outside of paid opportunities is reduced.

However, Amabile (1990) hypothesized that it might be possible to immunize people to the negative effects of rewards. Hennessey, Amabile and Martinage (1989) studied the effects of providing intrinsic motivation training, supplied by presenting videotapes of children modeling intrinsic motivation, on children’s creativity. While their conclusions were not definitive, the researchers suggested that with such training, it is sometimes possible for extrinsic factors to enhance intrinsic ones in an additive manner. In order to explain this phenomenon, Amabile (1990) argued that how the reward is perceived could affect creativity, such as seeing the reward as a bonus instead of a constraint.

Along similar lines, Deci and Porac (1978) suggest that rewards have both controlling and informational aspects, in that they can be perceived as either directing behavior or as providing information regarding competence and self-determination. Controlling rewards shift the locus of control away from the artists and undermine creativity. Informational rewards can provide either positive or negative feedback about competence, and therefore can either enhance or undermine creativity (1978).

Deci and Porac (1978) assert that for a healthy level of functioning to be maintained, one’s psychological needs for competence and self-determination need to be met. They argue that there is a strong positive relationship between intrinsic motivation and psychological well-being. Intrinsic motivation is instrumental to a long-term commitment to the arts (Csikszentmihályi, 1990). According to Bridgstock (2011),
intrinsic motivation complements self-directed career behavior as the essential components for success in a protean career (Bridgstock, 2011). Therefore, finding ways to support intrinsic motivation and self-determination in the face of an extrinsic environment becomes crucial to helping artists establish and maintain their careers.

Unfortunately, while many artists are highly educated, they often lack training in the tools necessary to sustain their careers. In addition to a lack of education regarding how to establish their careers, artists face additional challenges to their commitment to the arts as they age. These issues will be explored next.

Challenges to Career Establishment

While the National Endowment for the Arts (2008) notes that artists have higher education levels than the general workforce, Wassall and Alper (1997) indicate that their education has less of an impact on their success in the arts than on their non-arts endeavors. According to Bennett (2009), developing a successful portfolio career depends on one’s ability to self-manage one’s career and strategize opportunities. Since there is no clear ladder to climb in the art world, the question of what career development tools are necessary to increase the chance of becoming established remains. Whether or not artists pursue training in an art school, the lack of career development is apparent. According to the SNAAP (2010) survey, 51% of art school graduates felt that the career advising received in school did not prepare them for working in the arts after graduation. Graduates indicated that skills related to finance and business were crucial to their economic success, yet 53% of graduates reported inadequate training in these areas (2010).
Bennett (2009) suggests that art schools focus too heavily on specific art competencies instead of the skills needed to succeed in the market place. In her study of 239 dancers and musicians, respondents indicated the importance of keeping on top of current trends, remaining versatile, and developing small business and communication skills, specifically in regard to self-promotion and marketing. The need to be adaptable and self-sufficient in a fluctuating and competitive market featured prominently (2009).

Hart (2011) argues that arts education needs to focus on entrepreneurship and empowering students to create their own opportunities. Since the oversupply of artists limits access to existing opportunities, he agrees with Bennett that artists need to become adaptable and self-sufficient. To this end, he writes:

Entrepreneurship teaches artists to identify what makes them both different and necessary. Identifying their difference helps them compete. Artists with a principle goal of serving others, have the potential to become necessary. Being necessary can increase one’s chances of making a living (2011, para. 9).

Bennett (2009) argues that graduates often become entrepreneurs by default as soon as they leave their institutions, and the NEA (2011b) reports that artists are over three times more likely to be self-employed than general workers. Some artists are able to learn these skills on their own, yet for many, lack of entrepreneurial know-how affects their ability to remain in the market.

Career Sustainability and Aging

At the other end of the spectrum, Menger (1999) suggests that artists experience vulnerability due to aging and the nature of freelance work. As artists age, job insecurity takes its toll due to the constant need to research and prepare for the next project while
maintaining an edge in the competitive market. In addition to the strain of freelancing, artists over the age of thirty might confront new responsibilities such as raising a family, taking care of elderly parents, and coming to terms with their ability to achieve their desired level of success (1999).

Midlife artists who haven’t achieved the level of recognition or income that they hoped for at the beginning of their careers might be feeling shame or grief over the loss of this dream (Schwadron & Carroll, 2002). Bandura (1993) argues that the failure to achieve personal aspirations can lead to depression and anxiety. Furthermore, Stohs (1991) suggests that aging artists face pressure to find stable work as peers advance in their jobs and become more financially established. Ultimately, the strain of juggling multiple jobs can become challenging to cope with long-term.

The combination of challenges to artists’ beliefs about their ability to manage their careers and achieve desirable outcomes can lead to reduced feelings of self-efficacy. Betz and Voyten (1997) argue that reduced self-efficacy and outcome expectations can lead to a lack of effective career development due to diminished goal-oriented behavior. According to Lent and Brown (1996), goal-oriented behavior is central to expressing personal agency. Bandura (1993) suggests that individuals are more committed to challenging goals resulting from positive self-efficacy beliefs, therefore reduced self-efficacy leads to less challenging goals and decreases commitment, a necessary component for success in the arts. Negative perceptions of self-efficacy can also lead to career indecision and decreased engagement in career exploration (Betz & Voyten, 1997). As discussed previously, continuous exploration and increased personal agency are essential to success in a protean career.
Relevant Groups and Institutions

Several different types of organizations and individuals recognize the needs of artists and offer career services for this population. *The Artist’s Way* workshops are designed to unblock artists’ creativity (Cameron, 1992). As the author knows from personal experience, individual presenters offer the workshops across the country. Various city based arts organizations, such as Creative Capital (2011), offer career management workshops and trainings, commonly focusing on developing specific artistic or business skills to further careers within the arts. The bi-coastal Actor’s Fund (2012) offers career services designed to assist performance art and entertainment professionals experiencing upheaval or transition through the Actor’s Fund Work Program. However, the question remains as to whether the interventions facilitated by these organizations are able to both reach and provide comprehensive career development services to the population discussed in this paper.

Cameron (1992) explains in her book that *The Artist’s Way* is “a spiritual workshop aimed at freeing people’s creativity” (p. xi). As such, the workshop concerns developing self-awareness and overcoming creative blocks. These challenges are answered through reflection, exercises and tasks designed to encourage people to identify their support systems, take action and live in more alignment with their creative selves. Cameron addresses the emotional highs and lows that accompany a return to creativity, as well as the issues underlying the blocks and the affirmations that might help an individual overcome them (1992). While *The Artist’s Way* taps into a fundamental component of artistic identity, creativity, it is not designed to offer specific career development or
management tools such as occupational exploration, career transition support, or small business skills.

Various arts organizations and not-for-profits offer workshops and trainings designed to support the business of being an artist. One such non-profit organization based in New York City, Creative Capital (2011), offers a professional development program that provides workshops and online webinars in career management. According to Creative Capital’s website, topics of the workshops include marketing and social media, budgeting, business, fundraising, and communication skills. The program approaches artist’s career issues from the standpoint of specific business and strategy solutions designed to assist artists as entrepreneurs (2011). However, while the program supports the development of business and financial skills needed to be self-employed in the arts, it does not address the needs to juggle multiple jobs or how to cope with the frequent job transitions that characterize the lives of artists.

The Actors Fund (2012) offers career counseling, health and housing assistance, as well as other financial and social services to entertainment and performance artists. In recognition of the contingent nature of employment in the arts and the need for alternative income streams, the Actors Fund offers a specific program to address these concerns called the Actors Fund Work Program (AWP). According to the Actors Fund website, the AWP is a workforce development program specifically designed to assist professionals in finding sideline or parallel work to provide supplemental income to their industry employment, or in finding new employment opportunities all together. In addition to one-one-one counseling interventions, the Actors Fund also offers workshops ranging from resume and interview skills to networking and returning to school.
However, the AWP does have eligibility requirements, namely, that participants must be entertainment union members, or meet minimum yearly earnings requirements, or have at least twelve weeks of documented industry experience (2012). Due to the contingent nature of the market, peripheral workers may not earn enough hours or money in their industry employment to meet union eligibility requirements or to justify the yearly membership dues. Underemployment and unemployment might also restrict artists’ ability to consistently fulfill the minimum yearly earnings or documented experience requirements. Therefore, the AWP is limited in its ability to address the needs of non-union members and the larger artistic community.

While these programs and institutions address important issues to the career development of the artistic population, they are each limited in their own way. While the Artist’s Way workshop provides the spiritual and creative component and is broad enough in scope to attract artists from every specialization, it lacks specific career interventions designed to encourage occupational exploration and strengthen adaptability towards multiple career transitions. Non-profit organizations, such as Creative Circle, focus primarily on business, marketing and budgeting skills but miss the mark on expanding artistic identity to include other forms of employment. The Actors Fund Work Program, while more comprehensive in its offerings, has eligibility requirements that are prohibitive to many.

The proposed program addresses the gaps between what each institution offers. Its framework allows for traditional career development interventions designed to encourage exploration and the expansion of artistic identity through increasing self-knowledge and awareness of alternative career paths in the arts. It also provides an overarching spiritual
foundation in the form of connecting with purpose. Finally, it is broad in scope and open to artists of all backgrounds.

**Target Issues of the Proposed Program**

Four major career issues will be addressed by the proposed program: the difficulty of sustaining a cohesive artistic identity, diminished self-efficacy beliefs and outcome expectations, the lack of a unifying theme to provide meaning and psychological well-being during multiple job transitions, and finally the lack of concrete steps to achieve desired career development. Participants will gain a better understanding of their expanded artistic identity through determining their unique traits, skills, interest, values and life themes. Identification of their personal strengths will enable them to realize solutions to perceived barriers, develop self-efficacy beliefs and envision positive outcomes. Developing a purpose statement, brainstorming steps to achieving their goals and creating an action plan will provide participants both with a framework for future career development and the tools to create concrete plans to achieve their goals.

**Additional Theoretical Approaches**

A discussion of the challenges to career progression for artists would not be complete without addressing how to cope with insecurity and uncertainty, which are inherent in multiple job-holding and protean careers. Therefore, in addition to Super’s theory of career development involving life roles and stages, several other theoretical approaches are relevant to the consideration of the career issues of artists. Life design, which melds together career construction and narrative theories, offers a framework for
dealing with the issues of identity and purpose in a contingent labor market. Social
cognitive career theory addresses issues of self-efficacy and resiliency. Finally, two other
theories inform the interventions suggested in the proposed program. A strengths-based
appreciative inquiry approach assists artists in coping positively by focusing on what has
worked right so far. Additionally, planned happenstance helps to frame how artists might
manage the uncertainty of a flexible market. Together, these four theories inform the
proposed program.

Life Design: Career Construction and Narrative Theories

In the past, career theories have been founded on the concepts of person-job fit,
stability and linearity (Savickas, Nota, Rossier, Dauwalder, Duarte, Guichard, Soresi,
Esbroeck & van Vianen, 2009). Yet these theories do not fully address the issues of
flexibility and adaptability in protean careers. Life design recognizes that the ability to
reflect on the self within the context of the current environment and to envision different
opportunities are key to coping with the career mini-cycles inherent in a contingent labor
market. Savickas et al. suggest that life design interventions be framed around four
principles: that life design is a continuous life process, that all life roles are included not
only the role of work, that the environment in which these roles are performed must be
taken into account, and finally, that a future-orientation is necessary to prepare for
unexpected transitions (2009).

With these principles in mind, life design integrates career construction and
narrative theories with the goal of increasing adaptability, identity, and meaning-making
that careers are constructed by the meaning that people apply to their experiences. He
further indicates that the theory integrates the “what, how and why of vocational behavior” (p. 43). It does this by addressing individuals’ perception of themselves, their ability to adapt in a fluctuating economy, and the patterns that give their lives meaning (Del Corso & Rehfuss, 2011). Narrative theory assists the exploration of these themes through the telling of life stories that are set in personal, subjective contexts. Savickas (2011) states that: “An identity narrative tells a life history that revises identity over time without losing its essential meaning. It tells a story about self, a narrative of becoming oneself in response to the continuous changes that occur during the life course” (21). Through the use of personal stories, artists are able to strengthen the cohesion of their identity, imbue meaning and identify next steps (Savickas, 1993).

**Social Cognitive Career Theory**

Social cognitive career theory evolved from Bandura’s social cognitive theory, and emphasizes the interplay between self-efficacy beliefs, outcome expectations and goal-oriented behavior in career development (Lent & Brown, 1996). Self-efficacy refers to the perceptions people have about their ability to perform tasks. These perceptions are affected by personal accomplishments, learning from others’ experiences, social encouragement and decreased emotional distress (Lent & Brown, 1996; Betz, 2004). According to Lent and Brown (1996), of these factors, personal accomplishments seem to hold the most sway over an individual’s conviction in his or her abilities.

Outcome expectations refer to artists’ beliefs about what results their behavior will achieve (Lent & Brown, 1996). If an artist has a positive outcome expectation, he or she will be more motivated to establish and pursue related goals. The ability to engage in goal-oriented behavior is crucial to personal agency (1996). Therefore, personal goals are
essential in regards to an artist’s commitment to lifelong learning and his or her adaptability and perseverance in the face of the insecurity of a protean career. Self-efficacy may also be the key to decreasing anxiety and depression associated with insecurity (Bandura, 1993).

Appreciative Inquiry

Appreciative inquiry (AI) is fundamentally an organizational development approach, grounded in positive psychology. However, Schutt (2007) has adapted the AI approach to apply to individuals in addition to organizations. According to Whitney and Shau (1998), the premise of AI is that change occurs depending on where the organization (or individual) focuses, so if it focuses on what is already working well, it will change for the positive. If the organization or individual focuses on the negative aspects, then the change will occur in a negative direction.

Once a positive topic of inquiry has been selected (what the individual wants to change, such as living in more alignment with purpose), the 4D model of appreciative inquiry focuses on the four phases of the approach: Discovery, Dream, Design and Destiny (Schutt, 2007). According to Whitney and Schau (1998), the Discovery stage focuses on what is working well already, on the positive stories and peak experiences that energize the organization. The Dream stage focuses on visualizing and exploring new possibilities. Both the discovery and dream stages allow for an expansion of the positive organizational (or individual) identity (1998). The next stages, Design and Destiny, focus on the actions necessary to facilitate and maintain the change (Schutt, 2007).

The AI approach offers a way for artists to become change agents in their own careers. The Discovery and Dream stages allow for an expansion of the artistic identity
by focusing on experiences imbued with life-giving energy and strengths. The Design and Destiny phases inform the translation of ideas into positive action (Schutt, 2007). By teaching artists a cycle of behavior that they can tap into at any point in their career, AI strengthens the sustainability of artists’ careers.

Planned Happenstance

Planned happenstance evolved out of Krumboltz’s social learning theory, and revolves around the idea that life is full of chance events that are opportunities for learning in disguise (Mitchell, Levin & Krumboltz, 1999). The framework of the theory is based on an oxymoron, that not only are there unplanned events that affect career development, but that people can also generate chance events with some planning. In order to generate these events, people must both explore career options and develop the skills to recognize the opportunities that become available. To this end, Mitchell et al. suggest the development of five skills: curiosity, persistence, flexibility, optimism and risk-taking (1999).

According to Mitchell et al. (1999), curiosity refers to the exploration needed to generate new circumstances for learning, and persistence refers to continuing on in the face of adversity. Flexibility reflects the ability to change attitudes and environments, while optimism refers to believing that it is possible to achieve new goals. Finally, risk-taking refers to the ability to move forward even if the outcome is unsure (1999). The five skills will serve as a framework for many of the interventions in the proposed program, in order to increase artists’ ability to adapt to uncertainty.
Summary of Theoretical Approaches

Sustaining a career in the arts depends on an artist’s ability to continually adapt to a fluctuating market place. Super’s life-span, life-space theory, especially the idea of recycling through various stages, provides a framework for understanding the demands for adaptability and the lack of linearity in artistic career development. Life design provides the opportunity for artists to see themselves against the context of their environment, and to expand and construct their artistic identities in response to continuous change. Social cognitive theory addresses the challenges to self-efficacy and positive outcome expectations that are inherent in competitive markets, and creates the opportunity for artists to develop appropriate coping responses in the form of goal-directed behavior. Finally, appreciative inquiry and planned happenstance allow artists to focus on what’s working well to generate positive transformations, create desired opportunities, and take action in the face of uncertainty and change.

Specific Career Interventions

The proposed program will fill an existing hole in the traditional workshop offerings to artists of either artistic or business management skills, by offering the opportunity to connect to a larger sense of purpose to inform career development behavior. Participants will benefit from the opportunity to expand their artistic identities, increase self-efficacy and positive outcome expectations, increase exploration and goal-directed behavior, and strengthen adaptability through connecting with a sense of meaning and purpose.
Increasing Self-Knowledge and Exploring Identity

The four sessions will support exploration self-knowledge and artistic identity through assessments and activities designed to discern traits, skills, interests, values, and strengths. Participants will also be encouraged to identify significant life themes and important components of their unique purpose, and to ultimately construct a purpose statement. This process will involve both formal assessments such as the StrengthsFinder 2.0 assessment to identify strengths and structured card sorts using the VISTa Life/Career Cards. It will also involve exercises designed to encourage skill development, locate examples of strengths in their current lives, and explore opportunities to live in more alignment with purpose.

Self-Efficacy and Positive Outcome Expectations

Self-efficacy will be addressed through a focus on strengths and an appreciative inquiry approach. The appreciative interview will be used to shift participants’ focus to energizing and peak experiences in the effort to identify past positive outcomes and increase the generation of similar experiences. They will also be addressed through reframing participants’ experiences within the context of the hero’s journey, and assisting them to identify members of their support system. Reflection and discussion of how individuals or others have overcome barriers as well as guided meditation exercises designed to encourage participants to connect to their own intuition and knowledge (connecting to inner wisdom) and to visualize positive futures will also facilitate self-efficacy and positive outcome expectations.
**Goal Setting and Generating Opportunities**

Participants will be instructed in effective goal setting behavior and led through exercises designed to clarify a goal and develop an action plan that taps into their strengths. They will also be introduced to the concept of planned happenstance, which will tie together the various components of the workshop into a comprehensive whole designed to increase participants’ adaptability to uncertainty. By connecting with purpose, reflecting on past chance events and discussing how to generate and seize opportunities, participants will leave this workshop prepared to actively engage in achieving positive psychological outcomes in their careers.

**Summary**

The lack of career training from art school, as well as an increase in familial obligations and pressures as they age lead many artists in their thirties to search for a better way to progress in their careers. The author’s hypothesis is that a workshop designed to help artists’ define their traits, skills, values and interests as well as their life themes, strengths and goals for the future, will help them connect with a sense of purpose. This connection with purpose will enable them to better create opportunities in alignment with their goals and achieve positive psychological outcomes in their careers. In the next chapter, the author will examine the principles of this workshop and the procedures to implement it.
Chapter 3 - Procedure

Logic of the Program

There are significant obstacles that hinder artists from enjoying stable and fulfilling careers: an absence of defined career paths, a lack of career self-management skills, and frequent occurrences of multiple job-holding and job transitions. The need to be flexible in order remain competitive can lead to difficulties in developing a cohesive artistic identity, while the expressive nature of artists often coincides with an emotional vulnerability that leaves many prone to depression and anxiety. The research examined in this paper reflects the need for connecting to a sense of meaning or purpose in order to both understand and achieve the psychological goals that define success in a protean career orientation.

In their study concerning the commitment levels of artists, Dudek et al. (1991) state: “commitment….requires a sense of purpose, a drive to set and attain goals” (p.387). The proposed program is designed to expand artistic identity, increase self-efficacy and connect participants with their life purpose in order to increase their engagement in exploration, goal-setting and decision-making behavior. The ultimate goal of the program is to use increased self-awareness and a connection to purpose to strengthen career sustainability for artists.

The proposed program is structured around the stages of the hero’s journey outlined by Vogler (n.d.), in order to creatively assist participants in transforming themselves from the victims to the heroes of their own life stories. Reframing their career challenges as a hero’s journey, as well as focusing on their strengths, setting goals and creating an action plan are interventions designed to increase participants’ self-efficacy.
beliefs and outcome expectations. Determining their unique traits, skills, interests, values and strengths allows artists to express and expand their identities, and leads to uncovering personally meaningful life themes. Connecting with a larger sense of purpose serves as a tool for sustaining and unifying a career characterized by multiple job transitions and job-holding.

The facilitator leading the program will be a certified career counselor with a background in the arts. The program will be limited to ten artists who are engaged in, or seeking employment in, arts or arts-related work. The program will consist of four sessions, delivered during a four-day weekend at a retreat location in a natural setting. The structure is designed in this manner to reflect the fact that many artists may be able to commit to one long weekend away from work but may not be able to consistently meet on the same day every week for a longer workshop consisting of shorter sessions. The natural setting is designed to reduce the stress and anxiety often produced by working in the arts, and allow participants the opportunity to slow down and recharge their batteries.

**Necessary Materials for the Program**

The following list of materials is required for implementation of this program:


• (10) Binders with loose-leaf paper

• Dry erase board

• Dry erase markers

• Glue

• Scissors

• Large selection of magazines

• Construction paper

• Glitter

• Colored pens and pencils

• Charcoal Pencils

• Pastels

• (10) Rectangular foam poster boards

• Retreat center in a natural setting with walking paths and overnight accommodations

• Conference room with chairs and tables

• Meditation Scripts:
  
  o Meeting Your Inner Guide (Appendix A)

  o Vision of Your Fulfilling Future (Appendix J)

• Handouts:

  o Strengths Reflection Worksheet (Appendix B)

  o Appreciative Interview Questionnaire (Appendix C)
Assessments

StrengthsFinder 2.0

According to Rath (2007a), the StrengthsFinder 2.0 assessment helps individuals in identifying specific natural talents that given time and energy can be, or have already, become strengths. For the artistic population, who need to expand their identity to include more than artistic specialties or technical skills in order to compete in a flooded market, this assessment provides them with a tool to understand other talents they possess that may help them to stand out from the crowd. The assessment also provides a positive way of looking at their abilities that assists them in combating feelings of depression and anxiety that can lead to self-limiting beliefs and diminished expectations of success. Finally, with the help of a trained career counselor, artists can identify ways to use their
strengths to assist them in achieving their personal or career goals, effectively increasing self-efficacy and positive outcome expectations.

**VISTa Life/Career Card Sorts**

Since artists are by definition open-minded and tend towards originality in problem solving, the VISTa Life/Career Cards enable them to approach identifying traits, skills, interests and values more flexibly than standardized assessments. The VISTa card sorts are appropriate for the artistic population because they provide the opportunity for artists to actively engage in the process and make decisions about what cards represent them personally. Additionally, the cards provide the opportunity for artists to individually address, create and interpret their own personal and unique life themes and life purpose.

**Procedures for Implementation**

Before this program can be implemented, it will need to be marketed to the public and the location will need to be booked. The program facilitator will need to develop marketing materials and engage in traditional and social media networking in order to advertise the opportunity to the public. S/he will also need to develop relationships with various arts organizations that might be interested in either providing information about the program to members, or potentially partnering with the facilitator in offering the program through such means as providing scholarships to interested members who need financial assistance. Since the program is designed in a retreat format, an appropriate location in a natural setting, with overnight accommodations and meal provision will need to be secured.
Once the marketing is in place and the program is attracting participants, the facilitator will engage in a pre-screening process with potential participants. This pre-screening process will determine whether the program is appropriate for participants at this point in their career development. Participants will need to meet the following criteria:

1. Be currently engaged in multiple job-holding or a portfolio career that involves participation in arts or arts-related employment, or be seriously considering leaving non-arts employment to pursue arts or arts-related work.

2. Have at least 5 years of work experience.

3. Be able to commit to the entire 4 day retreat, both in terms of time and financial commitments.

4. Be willing and able to participate in career development activities. If the facilitator becomes concerned with a participant’s emotional stability during the pre-screening process, s/he will provide referrals to appropriate therapeutic services and the participant will be offered the opportunity to participate at a later point in time.

Once a participant has been accepted into the workshop, the facilitator will explain that during the program the participant will be working with one computerized assessment, and will briefly introduce the StrengthsFinder 2.0 assessment. Since the retreat center will not offer computer access, participants will be given instructions and an access code two weeks prior to the program, will take the assessment online and will email their results to the facilitator a week prior before the program. The facilitator will explain that the results will then be interpreted and used during the program.
Once the pre-screening process is complete and participants have paid for their spot in the program, the facilitator will need to gather the materials for the program including all art supplies and presentation materials. The facilitator will also purchase a *StrengthsFinder 2.0* book and the VISTa Life/Career Card kit for each participant. Each participant will receive a personal binder with loose-leaf paper and these materials will need to be purchased and prepared in advance. Finally, the facilitator will compile and make copies of all handouts and ensure that they are hole-punched as to easily snap into participants’ binders during the program.

Two weeks prior to the program start, the facilitator will give each participant an access code for the StrengthsFinder 2.0 assessment and instruction for completion and emailing their results. The facilitator will answer any further questions about the assessment, and will follow up if participants’ results have not been received one week prior to the program to ensure everyone has results before arriving at the retreat center.

**Summary**

The purpose of this program is to offer a career development workshop for artists to connect with their personal life purpose in order to enhance their ability to sustain a career in the arts. The participants will have the opportunity to clarify and expand their identity, increase self-efficacy and positive outcome expectations, set goals and develop actions plans, and enhance their ability to cope with the demands for flexibility. The proposed program will benefit participants and, by extension, their families, future employers and art lovers touched by the participants’ creative endeavors. The following chapter outlines the proposed program in detail.
Chapter 4 – The Program

Session One: Reframing the Situation and Developing Strengths

"The truth is that our finest moments are most likely to occur when we are feeling deeply uncomfortable, unhappy, or unfulfilled. For it is only in such moments, propelled by our discomfort, that we are likely to step out of our ruts and start searching for different ways or truer answers."

-Unknown

Session One Goals:

• To answer the question: What is the Situation?
• To validate the struggles artists have had in the world of work and their subsequent fears and perceived barriers in regards to their artistic future.
• To introduce the workshop members to Strengths in order to begin increasing positive self-efficacy beliefs.
• To introduce artists to different ways of connecting with their own inner guidance and strength.

Session One Behavioral Objectives:

• Experience a guided meditation and connect to a source of inner wisdom. Share advice received during meditation with a partner and with the group as a whole.
• Identify five strengths and list an example for each demonstrating how they use the strength in their lives.
• Identify their primary barrier to achieving a purposeful life and identify one step they can take to overcome their barrier.
• Complete an appreciative interview and facilitate another participant’s interview in order to locate additional strengths and patterns. Share insights with partner and the group as a whole.
**Session One Time Allotment:** 8 hours, including lunch

**Materials Needed:**

- 10 binders with loose-leaf paper
- 1 dry erase board and 4 markers: red, green, blue and black
- Box of pens
- 1 Meeting Your Inner Guide Meditation Script (Appendix A)
- 10 Strengths Reflection Worksheets (Appendix B)
- 10 Appreciative Interview Questionnaires (Appendix C)
- 10 Interview Review Worksheets (Appendix D)

**Module One: Introduction**

*General Introduction and Ice-Breaker*

When the participants enter the workshop room for the first time, they will be given the binders with loose-leaf paper that they will be using for the duration of the workshop. Since the group members will already know the career counselor (facilitator) because of the pre-screening interview, he or she will briefly review his/her professional qualifications and related experience. Then the career counselor will discuss the goal of the program, which is to connect artists to their own unique life purpose in order to help them make career decisions in alignment with their personal goals. During the workshop, artists will also develop an action plan to put into practice when they leave the retreat.
Finally, the career counselor will explain his or her role as a facilitator during the long retreat weekend.

The facilitator will ask participants to divide into pairs and introduce themselves to each other by sharing their name and a little bit about their background in the arts. They will then be invited to introduce their partner to the group.

Explanation of the Hero’s Journey

The individual stages will be discussed more in depth during the modules, so during the introduction the facilitator will simply explain that the purpose of using the hero’s journey in this work is to help the clients reconnect to being a hero in their own life story. S/he will then list the stages of the hero’s journey as follows (Vogler, n.d.):

1. The Ordinary World
2. The Call the Adventure
3. The Refusal of the Call
4. Meeting Your Mentor
5. Crossing the Threshold
6. Tests, Allies & Enemies
7. Approach
8. The Ordeal
9. The Reward
10. The Road Back
11. The Resurrection
12. Return with the Elixir
Module Two: Hero’s Journey Part One

This module includes the hero’s journey stages of the *Ordinary World*, the *Call to Adventure*, and the *Refusal of the Call*. The facilitator will explain the first two stages of the hero’s journey. According to Vogler (n.d.), in *The Ordinary World*, the hero is introduced within the context of his or her current situation. In the current situation there exists some tension or conflict that is unsettling. During *The Call of Adventure* the hero either recognizes a personal desire, or is pressured, to make a change (n.d.).

*The Ordinary World*

The facilitator will begin this section by suggesting that it is important to understand how career paths in the arts develop differently than in many other fields. S/he will start by discussing the difference between the traditional career paths of our parents and the current demands of the artistic labor market. To begin a discussion of what this means to the participants, the facilitator will ask them what the traditional career path means to them and write their descriptions on one side of the white dry erase board. After completing this list of characteristics, the facilitator will then ask them what the realities have been about their own career progression in the arts, and write the answers on the other side of the dry erase board. If needed, the facilitator will flesh out the list of relevant characteristics, asking participants if they relate to these additional facets.

The facilitator will introduce the idea that although there is no clear career path in the arts, there are several different ways to engage in the artistic labor market. By understanding the different avenues for participating in the artistic world of work, artists can clarify their preferred level of involvement and strategically develop career goals to
engage more effectively. The facilitator will then define the various alternative career paths in the arts and discuss their differences, from portfolio careers to protean careers. S/he will also discuss and define sideline work, parallel and secondary careers. The advantages and disadvantages for each approach, including the demands and amount of risk for each, will also be discussed.

At this point, the facilitator will ask participants to spend time reflecting on the following questions, and writing their responses in their binders:

- How would you describe how you’ve engaged in the artistic labor market so far? How do you define success? Does success depend on amount of financial reward, level of involvement or creativity, or through psychological goals (such as how you feel when you engage in arts work)?
- Would you prefer to engage in the arts in a different way? If so, how?
- How comfortable are you with the level of risk that engaging in the arts in a new way might entail?

The facilitator will ask participants to share any fears or resistance that might have come up among participants when discussing the different strategies for engaging in the arts. The facilitator will return participants’ focus to the idea that there is tension in the first stage of the hero’s journey that causes him or her to be called to action.

*The Call to Adventure*

At this point, the career counselor will facilitate another group conversation around the idea of *The Call to Adventure*, by asking participants to share their answers to the following questions:

- Why are you here in this workshop?
• Why is it important that you be here now, at this specific time in your life?
• What do you hope to get out of this process?
• What do you hope to be able to know or do that you aren’t able to now?

After the group discussion, the facilitator will reaffirm the issues the workshop is designed to address, and how the activities might relate to additional topics that were brought up.

** 15 min break **

_Refusal of the Call_

The facilitator will then turn the group conversation to the barriers that the group members perceive when they think about living a life in alignment with their purpose. The facilitator will do this by asking the clients to reflect and share their answers to the following questions:

• What comes up for you when I say that you can create a life that fulfills your sense of purpose? Are you experiencing any resistance?

• What are some of the obstacles you face in achieving this goal?

The facilitator will then write on the dry erase board all the barriers that participants perceive as obstacles in their attainment of a purposeful, quality life.

After a list has been made, the facilitator will then turn the conversation to how to overcome barriers. S/he will ask people to take out a piece of paper from their binders, and to write at the top of the page what they feel is their number one barrier to achieving the life they were called to live. The facilitator will then ask the participants to spend a few moments reflecting on the following questions:
• Do you perceive this barrier as insurmountable or do you feel you could overcome it?

• Do you know anyone who has overcome similar barriers? How has s/he overcome them?

• What is one thing you could do to begin overcoming this barrier?

After the participants are done with their reflection, the facilitator will ask them to share their answers to the following questions with the group:

• What is your number one barrier?

• Were you able to come up with an example of someone you know overcoming this barrier? If not, is there anyone in the group who can share an example that relates to this barrier?

• Were you able to identify a step you could take to overcome it? What was the step? If you weren’t able to identify a step, why not?

After the group has processed the exercise, the facilitator will invite participants to enjoy lunch on the grounds and return to the conference room in one hour.

** Lunch Break **

Module Three: Hero’s Journey Part Two

After welcoming participants back, the facilitator will share that the afternoon module will progress into the hero’s journey stage of Meeting the Mentor. The facilitator will then explain that this stage refers to connecting to their own inner wisdom or asking
a trusted other for guidance in order to develop the courage to answer the call to
courage (Vogler, n.d.).

Meeting the Mentor Guided Meditation

The facilitator will explain that during this part of the session, the participants will
be led in a guided meditation designed to get them in touch with their own inner wisdom
or knowledge. The facilitator will ask participants to either find a comfortable place on
the floor to lie down, or to find a comfortable position in their chairs that they can remain
in for a while. Once the participants are settled, the facilitator will read the Meeting Your
Inner Guide meditation script (Appendix A) slowly and with pauses for participants to
visualize their own personal meeting with their inner guide.

After the guided meditation is complete, the facilitator will ask the participants to
find one other participant with whom to share the advice that their inner guide gave them.
The dyads will take five to ten minutes each to describe their guide, the questions they
asked, and the answers they received. The facilitator will let the participants know when
to switch partners. When both partners have had a chance to share, the facilitator will
bring the group back into a circle, and ask them to share any insights they gained from
participating in this exercise. The facilitator will conclude this exercise by suggesting that
the participants have the tools that they need already to overcome many of their barriers.

Introduction to Strengths-Based Approach

The facilitator will segue from the guided meditation reflections to explain the
concept of Strengths. S/he will explain what is meant by a strengths-based approach to
career development and how it will be used during the rest of the session and in various
other ways during the workshop. S/he will explain that the strengths-based approach is
founded in positive psychology, and that it focuses on how each individual does things well instead of perceived weaknesses. In this way, the strength-based approach shifts the focus from fears and obstacles to empower participants through their strengths and assets.

The facilitator will then recall the StrengthsFinder 2.0 assessment that participants took at home before the workshop began. As discussed in Rath’s (2007a) book, *StrengthsFinder 2.0*, the facilitator will explain the concept of the 34 different strengths and the idea that natural talents are honed into strengths through an individual’s investment of time and energy. The facilitator will then hand out the *StrengthsFinder 2.0* books, and a print out of each participant’s strengths. The participants will be encouraged to take some time to read the descriptions of their top five strengths in the *StrengthsFinder 2.0* book.

When they are done reading, the facilitator will ask group members:

- Do you feel your results accurately reflect your strengths? Why or why not?
- Can you give one example of how you use one of your strengths?

The facilitator will give an example of how s/he has recently used a strength in his or her own life to assist the discussion. The facilitator will then hand out the Strengths Reflection worksheet (Appendix B), and ask participants to identify examples of how they use each of their strengths in their lives already, including whether they demonstrate their strengths in small or large ways. The participants will then be asked to select two strengths: the one that they feel they demonstrate the most and the one that they feel they demonstrate the least. The facilitator will then ask the participants to identify one step they could use to invest in the strength they use the least (either by using a suggestion from the book or one they come up with on their own) to develop it further.
Finally, the facilitator will provide an example of how a personal strength could be used to overcome a barrier. S/he will then ask participants to recall their number one barrier, and will ask:

• What one or two strengths you could use to overcome your most significant barrier and how?

Participants will then be invited to share both how they would develop one of the strengths and how they could use a personal strength to overcome their number one barrier with the group.

**15 minute break**

Appreciative Interview

The facilitator will introduce the appreciative interview, and explain how it provides a unique way to look at personal strengths and themes by identifying and sharing positive experiences in their own lives (Schutt, 2007). The facilitator will then encourage participants to share their personal life stories as a means for connecting with the key factors that contribute to their success. Participants will then be instructed on how to be an effective interviewer and listener, including how to give appropriate feedback and follow up with additional questions.

At this point, the facilitator will ask participants to pair up, and find a quiet place in the room where they have space to focus on listening to each other. The facilitator will then give out the Appreciative Interview Questionnaire (Appendix C) and the Interview Review worksheet (Appendix D) to be used by the participants, and ask the pair to select
who will be interviewed first. The facilitator will instruct the participants that they have thirty minutes to complete the first interview, and then fifteen minutes to reflect on the strengths and patterns that arose out of the interview. The facilitator will let participants know when twenty-five and forty minutes have passed, respectively, so they will know when to begin wrapping up each section.

Once any questions have been answered, the participants will be asked to begin, and the facilitator will move among to the pairs to ensure the interview process is running smoothly. When the first interview is completed, the facilitator will ask participants to take a 5-minute break, and then return and switch interview roles.

When both participants have finished interviewing each other and receiving feedback, the facilitator will bring the group back into a circle for a group discussion. The facilitator will encourage the group members to reflect on the following and share their insights:

• What was this experience like for you?
• What did you learn about yourself during the interview and feedback session? What themes and strengths was your partner able to locate in your interview?
• Were you surprised by anything that was said, either while you were telling your own story or in the feedback from your partner?

Conclusion of Session One

The facilitator will bring the group discussion to a close by summarizing the topics and insights gained throughout the day. Participants will be encouraged to spend time after dinner in reflection about what they experienced in the first session. The
facilitator will encourage participants to reflect whatever way is best for them, by walking the grounds, by writing, or by using the art supplies that will be set up in the workshop room for them to use. These supplies will include paper, pens, crayons, charcoals and pastels, as well as magazines, scissors, paper and glue. Participants will be encouraged to bring what they create to the next morning session if they would like to share it.
Session Two: Connecting with Identity and a Support System

“An identity would seem to be arrived at by the way in which the person faces and uses his experience.”

-James Baldwin

“A friend is someone who understands your past, believes in your future, and accepts you just the way you are.”

-Unknown

Session Two Goals:

• To increase client’s self-knowledge and expand their artistic identity.

• To discuss the importance of a personal support system.

Session Two Behavioral Objectives:

• Identify top ten Traits, Skills, Interests and Values using the VISTa Life/Career card sorts and complete a Personal Profile (Appendix E).

• Identify a minimum of three skills to develop and complete a Skill Development worksheet (Appendix F) to identify the one skill they will develop.

• Discover a minimum of two Life Themes through completion of a life themes cards sort and a Life Themes worksheet (Appendix G).

• Complete the Themes Reflection (Appendix H): give a minimum of one example of how each life theme is represented currently, identify a minimum of two cards that represent how participants recharge their batteries and three action steps they could take to incorporate the ideas represented on their recharging cards more into their current lives.

• Identification of a minimum of two people (one outside of the retreat group, one inside the retreat group) who help form their own personal support system.
Session Two Time Allotment: 7.5 hours including lunch

Materials Needed:

- 10 binders with loose-leaf paper
- 1 dry erase board and 4 markers: red, green, blue and black
- Box of pens
- 10 Personal Profile Worksheets (Appendix E)
- 10 Skills Development Worksheets (Appendix F)
- 10 Life Themes Worksheets (Appendix G)
- 10 Themes Reflection handouts (Appendix H)

Morning Check-in

To open the next session, the facilitator will ask participants to share any reflection or insights they gained in their period of evening reflection, as well as any artwork they created and/or anything else from the day before that they want to share.

Module One: The Hero’s Journey Part Three

This section of the workshop will focus on the hero’s journey stage of *Crossing the Threshold*. Therefore, after the check-in, the facilitator will introduce this stage to the participants, which is characterized by the hero engaging in the adventure (Vogler, n.d.).
Self-knowledge will be introduced as the first step to preparing for the inevitable changes inherent in the artistic labor market. Participants will already have discovered several personal strengths during the previous session. The facilitator will explain that throughout the morning the participants will complete card sorts designed to further increase their knowledge about themselves by determining their top ten traits, skills, interests and abilities. The facilitator will encourage participants to remain open to discovering new information about themselves, as well as allowing information about themselves to resurface that they might have known at one point in time, but have forgotten or ignored.

**VISTa Life/Career Card Sorts**

The facilitator will explain that the VISTa card sorts offer the participants the opportunity to connect with the characteristics and values that define them, and the activities and skills that enable them to express their unique identity (Severson, 2006b). Participants will each be given a VISTa card kit, as well as the Personal Profile worksheet (Appendix E). The facilitator will explain the purpose of each sort and the steps that will be taken to reach the top ten cards that reflect their traits, skill, interests and values, as outlined by Severson (2006b). Participants will be encouraged to use a first thought, best thought approach to sorting the cards. To begin, the facilitator will ask them to take out their first deck of cards, Traits.

**Traits**

The facilitator will explain that the purpose of the Traits cards sort is to identify the top ten qualities they feel characterize them the most. The facilitator will guide
participants through the steps to reach their top ten trait cards, and will ask them to write these traits into the appropriate box on their Personal Profile Worksheet (Appendix E).

Skills

The facilitator will then ask participants to take out the next deck of cards, skills. S/he will explain that the skills sort is designed to identify both skills they have already mastered and those that they are interested in developing. The facilitator will ask participants to follow the same set of steps as with the traits sort to identify their top ten skills.

Unlike the first trait sort, participants will also be given the Skill Development Worksheet (Appendix F) and asked to write down any skills not identified in their top ten that they feel the need to, or would be interested in, developing. There is no limit to how many skills the participants can select. They will then be instructed to set this worksheet aside until later.

**15 minute break **

Interests

Upon the return from the break, the facilitator will explain that the interest cards are designed to identify the activities they would enjoy participating in the most. Participants will again sort the interests down to the top ten, and write the information on their Personal Profile worksheet (Appendix E).
Values

The final sort will be completed through the same steps as the Interest sort, in order to identify values that the participants deem the most personally significant. They will then be recorded on the Personal Profile worksheet (Appendix E).

Profile Review

After the Personal Profile worksheet and Skill Development worksheet have been completed, the facilitator will ask participants to spend some time in reflection of their profile and skills worksheet. They will be encouraged to reflect on the following in their binders:

• Do you feel the profile accurately represents you? Why or why not?
• Were you surprised by anything that you uncovered in your sorts?
• What did you learn that was new? What did you reaffirm about yourself?

Participants will be encouraged to continue their reflection on the Skill Development worksheet by answering the additional questions, in order to identify one skill they will commit to developing.

The facilitator will then ask participants to divide into pairs and share their reflections on their cards and skills with their partner. After sharing in dyads, participants will be asked to reflect on their experiences with the card sorts as a group. The facilitator will conclude the group conversation by stressing the importance of exploring and creating new opportunities to find fulfillment through the process of life-long learning.

** Lunch Break **
Module Two: The Hero’s Journey Part Four

This module’s focus will be *Tests, Allies and Enemies*. The facilitator will share that during this stage the hero faces one or more challenges, and identifies personal supporters and detractors (Vogler, n.d). The challenge presented to the participants during this part of the workshop is the identification of personal life themes. The facilitator will explain that locating their life themes allows for even deeper insight into their unique identities by looking at what they need to feel happy and satisfied.

*Identifying Life Themes*

The facilitator will ask participants to find space at a table or on the floor, and to take out the forty cards they selected previously during the Traits, Skills, Interest and Value VISTa card sorts. The facilitator will then encourage the participants to sort the cards into groups that are personally meaningful and articulate the theme they represent, as suggested by Severson (2006b). The facilitator will instruct participants to place the cards as if they are playing a game of solitaire, so that at any time they can see all the words on the cards.

Once all the cards are grouped into categories, the facilitator will hand out the Life Themes worksheet (Appendix G), so that participants may write their groupings down. Then the facilitator will ask participants to title their groupings, with whatever name reflects the theme that links the cards. He or she will give the participants several examples of groupings to demonstrate the subjective nature of naming. After participants title their categories of cards, the facilitator will hand out the Themes Reflection sheet (Appendix H), and invite participants to take fifteen minutes to reflect on how these
themes can be found in their current lives, and if they aren’t already present, brainstorm what steps they might take to bring these themes more into focus.

After the reflection period, the facilitator will suggest the participants pair up with another member of the group to discuss how they sorted the cards and why. What themes were they able to discern? What do the themes mean to them? Participants will also be encouraged to share any insights they gained from their reflection on their themes with each other.

To close out the theme reflections portion of the session, the facilitator will call the group together so that the insights gained from their experience with the exercise and their personal reflections can be processed as a group. The facilitator will ask:

- Do you feel like you have a better idea of who you are?
- How many people are already engaging in their life themes already, either through work or in their personal life? How do you see your themes manifesting?
- Is there anything that surprised you about the themes you saw in your cards?
- If you feel that you are not engaging in your themes already, were you able to come up with ideas about how to incorporate your themes more?

** 15 min. break **

_Identifying a Support System_  

After returning from the break, the facilitator will continue with the _Tests, Allies and Enemies_ stage of the hero’s journey by turning the conversation to support systems.
The facilitator will explain that often change in ourselves can bring out negative reactions in those close to us who are more comfortable when we remain in the same place. They might not even realize that they are not being supportive or why, just that they feel uncomfortable with what you are doing. Others might be supportive, but aren’t providing the kind of support they would prefer. Therefore, it’s crucial to identify people who they can turn to and who will support their vision as they move forward. It’s also important to identify the kind of support they want and need. The facilitator will ask participants to take out their binders and reflect on the following questions:

- Who has supported you in the past? How have they supported you?
- Who supports the aspects of yourself that you’ve identified?
- What do you need from others to feel supported during this workshop and in your everyday life?

The facilitator will then invite the participants to share what they need to feel supported at this point in the workshop or in everyday life. Participants will be asked if they can identify one person in the room who they might ask for support. The facilitator will invite participants to share with the group why they think that person would make a good member of their cheerleading squad.

**Conclusion of Session Two**

The facilitator will wind down the group discussion by summarizing the information that was gained by engaging in the day’s activities. The facilitator will close the session by inviting participants to seek out any additional group members that they would like to ask to be a part of their support system and to spend time during the
evening getting to know them better. The facilitator will also encourage participants to continue reflecting on the life themes they identified by writing in their binders.
Session Three: Connecting with Purpose and Envisioning the Future

"Twenty years from now you will be more disappointed by the things that you didn't do than by the ones you did do. So throw off the bowlines. Sail away from the safe harbor. Catch the trade winds in your sails. Explore. Dream. Discover."
- Mark Twain

Session Three Goals:

- To answer the questions:
  - What gives you meaning in your life? What is your purpose?
  - What does a future where you are living life in alignment with your purpose look like?

Session Three Behavioral Objectives:

- Identify a unique sense of purpose through a VISTa card sort and completion of the Purpose Worksheet.
- Visualize a meaningful and fulfilling future through a guided meditation (Appendix J).
- Create a vision board to represent a personal vision of a positive future.
- Create a purpose statement.
- Identification of a minimum of one strength to aid them in overcoming barriers to living more in alignment with purpose.

Session Three Time Allotment: 7.5 hours including lunch
Materials Needed:

- 10 binders with loose-leaf paper
- 1 dry erase board and 4 markers: red, green, blue and black
- Box of pens
- 10 Purpose Worksheets (Appendix I)
- 1 Vision of a Fulfilling Future Meditation Script (Appendix J)
- 10 poster boards
- Magazines
- Scissors
- Glue
- Colored Pens and Pencils

Morning Check-In

To open this session, the facilitator will ask participants to share any additional insights they made during later reflection on their life themes, or by connecting with other members of the group.

Module One: The Hero’s Journey Part Five

The facilitator will introduce the first part of the morning module, the hero’s journey stage of the *Approach*. According to Vogler (n.d.), in this stage the hero prepares
to face his or her greatest challenge. Therefore, the facilitator will introduce mindfulness meditation as a tool to help participants ground themselves in the present and in their bodies more fully as preparation for identifying their purpose. The facilitator will lead participants outside, where they will be encouraged to find a comfortable position where they can hear the facilitator. The facilitator will then lead participants through a silent mindfulness meditation engaging the five senses: sight, sound, smell, touch and taste.

After the meditation has been brought to a close, the facilitator will lead participants back to the main conference room. S/he will introduce the hero’s journey stage of The Ordeal. During The Ordeal, the hero faces his or her greatest challenge (Vogler, n.d.). Since this workshop is about life purpose, connecting to this is the main challenge the participants face during the workshop. The facilitator will open a group discussion about life purpose by asking participants:

- What does connecting with life purpose means to you?
- What do you hope to be able to know or do as a result of connecting with your life purpose?

Identifying Purpose

Participants will then invited be to connect to their life purpose through a final VISTa Life/Career card sort. The facilitator will ask participants to again take out their top 40 cards. Participants will be asked to consider each card, and determine whether or not that card relates to their life purpose. They will do this by asking themselves if the word on the card reflects one of the following elements of purpose, as suggested by Severson (2006b):

- Who they are destined to be (who they are in their hearts)
• What they feel called to do (the talents they have to offer)

• What inspires them to action (what they feel deeply about; what motivates them)

Not all cards will reflect these elements, so the facilitator will ask participants to create three piles of cards relating to the three elements of purpose, and to set the rest aside.

**15 minute break**

The facilitator will encourage participants to spend time reflecting on their groups of cards and arranging them to best express who they are, what they have to offer and what inspires them. The facilitator will encourage them to record their groupings on the Purpose Worksheet (Appendix I). They will then be asked to find a partner, and share their groupings with them in a dyad.

Once the partners have shared their cards with their partner, they will be encouraged to identify a statement that sums up their purpose and write it down (Severson, 2006b). The facilitator will walk around during this time, and assist participants if they have questions. If participants appear to be struggling with creating a purpose statement, the facilitator will suggest trying it in the following format, and then adjusting it until it feels right: I am _______________________. I am inspired by ______________________ to _______________________.

The facilitator will then ask participants to come together in a circle. Each person will be asked to share their purpose statement and if they can find examples in their life of how they are already connecting to this purpose. After every member has shared their
statement and potential example with the group, the facilitator will encourage a group discussion, by asking participants:

- Is there any resistance or fear that comes up when you look at your life purpose laid out in front of you?
- What stories do you tell yourself that keep you from connecting to this purpose more in your life?

The facilitator will then turn the discussion back to Strengths, by asking participants to recall their five top strengths and the insights they gained from the appreciative interview. Participants will be encouraged to contemplate the combined list of their strengths and identify one or two strengths that could help them overcome their fear or resistance. After time for reflection, the facilitator will then ask participants to share with the group one strength they think could help them overcome their fears to living their life with purpose. The facilitator will ask:

- What strength did you identify and why?
- How might you use your strengths to overcome unexpected future obstacles?

The facilitator will close the morning section of the session by encouraging participants to spend a few moments, after they eat, outside grounding themselves through their five senses before they return for the afternoon session.

**Lunch Break**
Module Two: The Hero’s Journey Part Six

Envisioning the Future

The facilitator will reopen the session by explaining that through being courageous in the face of fear during The Ordeal, the hero experiences a transformation. According to Vogler (n.d.), the next stage is called The Reward because the hero walks away from the transformative experience with a treasure, in this case a new way of thinking or a new insight that gives him or her power. There is still the risk of losing what they’ve found, so during this stage of the workshop, the participants will be encouraged to continue to connect with the wisdom they gained during the purpose card sort by actively visualizing a fulfilling future in which they are living out their purpose.

Meditation on a Fulfilling Future and Creation of a Vision Board

The facilitator will explain to participants that s/he will guide participants through a meditation designed to help them visualize a fulfilling future, and explain that when the meditation is complete that they will be requested to remain silent. Since people are often easily swayed by others to change their ideas, the purpose of silence after the meditation will be to help them protect their vision while they create a vision board. They can use any of the art supplies provided, including clipping pictures from magazines and pasting them to the board. The goal will be to specifically use or create images that maintain the vision, though key words or phrases can also be included. The only requirement is that participants somehow place themselves in their vision board, through writing their name or placing an image that represents them on the board.

Participants will also be prompted, if they experience resistance during any aspect of this exercise, to acknowledge how they are feeling and try to continue. This exercise is
about allowing themselves to dream big, and they will be encouraged to give themselves permission to put whatever images they relate to on their board without judgment (for instance, without letting thoughts such as “this is asking for too much,” or “this isn’t possible for me” stop them). Finally, the facilitator will ask participants if they have any questions before they begin the exercise.

Once any questions are answered, participants will then be asked to find a spot they can relax, either in their chair or lying on the floor. The facilitator will then read the Vision of a Future Fulfilling Life meditation script (Appendix J) with appropriate pauses. After the guided meditation is complete, the facilitator will ask participants to quietly gather supplies and find space to work. They will have an hour and a half to create their board. If they finish earlier, they may use the supplies to create something else of their choice or they may reflect on their experience creating their board in their binders. They will be asked to remain in the room unless they need the restrooms.

** 15 minute break**

**Discussion**

After the boards are created, the facilitator will ask the group to separate into pairs, and take five to ten minutes each to show their board to their partner and explain what the images represent to them.

After the dyads are concluded, the facilitator will ask participants to join in a circle. The facilitator will lead a group discussion designed around the following questions:
• How was this experience for you? Was it easy/difficult?

• Do you feel that the board accurately reflects your vision for a fulfilling future?

• What did you learn from sharing your board with your partner? Were you comfortable sharing your vision or was there any resistance that came up? What did the resistance relate to?

• Was there anything that surprised you about this process? Were there any insights about yourself or your purpose that came out of this experience that you would be willing to share with the group?

**Conclusion of Session Three**

Before breaking for dinner, the facilitator will ask participants to spend time during the evening continuing to reflect on their purpose and vision boards.
Session Four: Creating an Action Plan and Sustaining the Vision

“To him who is determined it remains only to act.”
-Italian Proverb

“In the middle of difficulty lies opportunity.”
-Albert Einstein

Session Four Goals:

• To teach participants how to set goals and create an action plan.
• To introduce participants to the concept of planned happenstance.
• To empower participants to manage uncertainty.

Session Four Behavioral Objectives:

• Complete a Mind Mapping exercise and identify a minimum of five action steps to living their lives in more alignment with their purpose.
• To create a goal statement by completing the Inspired Action: Identifying My Goal handout (Appendix L).
• To develop an action plan that includes: a statement of their goal, a minimum of five action steps to take to reach the goal, identification of the three actions they will commit to taking first, identification of a minimum of one strength and one support person to aid them in achieving their goal, and a statement of how they will know when it has been achieved, and the date for achievement.
• To complete a Planned Happenstance Reflection handout (Appendix N) and give an example of one chance event or time when something happened differently
than planned, identify a minimum of three action steps they took as a result of the event and describe at least one result of their actions.

Session Two Time Allotment: 5 hours, including final refreshments

Materials Needed:

- 10 binders with loose-leaf paper
- 1 dry erase board and 4 markers: red, green, blue and black
- Box of pens
- 10 Mind Mapping Exercise: Exploring Living with Purpose sheets (Appendix K)
- 10 Inspired Action – Identifying My Goal handouts (Appendix L)
- 10 Inspired Action – My Personal Action Plan handouts (Appendix M)
- 10 Planned Happenstance Reflection handouts (Appendix N)

Morning Check-in

The facilitator will begin the morning by checking in with participants, to see if anything came up for them during their evening off that they want to share, or questions they want to ask. The facilitator will also ask how their moods are this morning, if they are feeling happy or sad and why.

Module One: The Hero’s Journey Part Seven

This module contains the hero’s journey stage of The Road Back. The facilitator will explain that this stage represents the hero starting the return journey (Vogler, n.d.).
This does not mean that it’s no longer an adventure, as the return is not usually direct. For
workshop participants, this return will be characterized by creating action steps that will
help them achieve their visions after the retreat has concluded and they are back in their
everyday lives.

**Mind Mapping Exercise**

The first step in connecting to purpose is to brainstorm possible ways to
increase a sense of fulfillment. The facilitator will hand out the Mind Mapping Exercise:
Exploring Living With Purpose worksheet (Appendix K) and ask participants to
brainstorm large and small ways they might express their purpose more fully in their
lives. The facilitator will then instruct participants to draw arrows from the center circle
of as many ways they can imagine to take action in order to connect with a feeling of
purpose. S/he will encourage participants to record every idea, even if they think it’s
silly. Participants will be encouraged to think like the hero of their story that they are in
order to step outside of their comfort zones to create new and alternative solutions to
reach their goals. After giving participants time to brainstorm possibilities to living with
more purpose, s/he will ask participants to reconnect with their partner to share their
statement and their possible action steps.

After both partners have had a chance to share their mind-maps, the facilitator
will bring the group back into circle to reflect on the mind-mapping process, and whether
or not they were able to access different solutions than in the past. The facilitator will
lead a group discussion addressing the following questions:

- How was your experience of this exercise?
• Are there any ideas you came up with that are outside your comfort zone that you are willing to explore in order to achieve your goal?

• Were you able to come up with realistic steps?

*Inspired Action*

The facilitator will then transition the conversation into turning mind-maps into concrete action plans, the goal of the next exercise. The facilitator will hand out the Inspired Action – Identifying My Goal worksheet (Appendix L). Participants will be encouraged to consider their mind-maps while they complete the worksheet, in order to identify their first goal in respect to living a life with purpose.

The facilitator will then explain how to create SMART goals, meaning goals that are specific, measurable, action-oriented, realistic and timely. The facilitator will give examples and field questions. The facilitator will hand out the Inspired Action – My Personal Action Plan worksheet (Appendix M). Participants will be encouraged to clearly state their goal for the future (specify), identify a date for accomplishing this goal (timely) and how the participant will know s/he has achieved his or her goal (measurable). Once participants have brainstormed the steps necessary to achieve this goal, they will be encouraged to identify the first three steps they will take as they move forward (action-oriented/realistic).

The facilitator will also tie the action plan back to Strengths and support systems by encouraging participants to identify personal strengths and resources (people) that will help them accomplish their action plan. After the action plans are completed, the facilitator will ask participants to pair up into dyads and share their goals, steps, strengths and resources.
Finally, the facilitator will round up group members into a circle, and ask them to share their experience with creating the action plan. S/he will ask the following questions:

- Do you feel like you were able to come up with a viable action plan? Why or why not?
- What one or two strengths you were able to identify that you can use to help you accomplish your goal?
- How will you be able to use these steps to help you achieve goals in the future?

**Module Two: The Hero’s Journey Part Eight**

The hero’s journey stage associated with this module is *The Resurrection*. The facilitator will share that in this stage, the hero faces one more test on his or her way home and resolves the original conflict (Vogler, n.d.). The facilitator will recall the discussion the participants had the first day of the retreat, about the realities of working in an artistic labor market that is unpredictable and uncertain. Since there is always an element of uncertainty in working in the artistic fields, the facilitator will explain that while it is necessary to have a plan, it is also necessary to be flexible in the plan. This is the final challenge that they will face in the workshop.

**15 minute break**

*Planned Happenstance*

The facilitator will introduce the concept of planned happenstance, and explain that planned happenstance incorporates two ideas: that career exploration produces
chance opportunities and that the development of certain skills enables people to grab onto and profit from these opportunities (Mitchell, et al., 1999). The facilitator will explain that planned happenstance encourages the development of five skills and will define each: curiosity, persistence, flexibility, optimism and risk-taking (1999). The facilitator will then show participants that these are the skills that they have been working on in this workshop by showing how they link to various exercises:

- **Curiosity:** Identifying traits, skills, interests and values, selecting skills to develop, exploring actions to living a life with purpose
- **Persistence:** Identifying strengths and how to use them to overcome barriers
- **Flexibility:** Reframing your life story to be the hero instead of victim
- **Optimism:** Visualizing a future life, seeing goals as attainable and developing an action plan to achieve them
- **Risk-taking:** Where the participants are now – choosing to take action even if the future outcome is uncertain.

The facilitator will give an example of planned happenstance in his or her own career, and will ask if anyone can share a time they were able to turn a chance event into a learning opportunity. The facilitator will ask the volunteer:

- What did you planning on happening, or what “chance event” occurred?
- What happened (or didn’t happen) instead?
- What actions did you take that led to the final result?
- What was your final result?

After illustrating planned happenstance with this example, the facilitator will direct participants to the final handout, the Planned Happenstance Reflection (Appendix
N). Participants will be encouraged to reflect on an instance of planned happenstance that has already occurred in their life. After they have spent some time filling out the worksheet, participants will be asked to share their experience working with this idea with the group. The facilitator will encourage reflection of the following questions:

- How has planned happenstance played a part in your career so far?
- How can the idea of planned happenstance aid you in your future career development?
- How might your past experience inform your future career plans?

**Module Three: The Hero’s Journey Part Nine**

The final stage of the hero’s journey is the *Return With The Elixir*. In this stage is characterized by the return with the treasure that has transformed the hero and has the power to transform others (Vogler, n.d.). At this point, the facilitator will lead a final processing discussion of the weekend. The facilitator will ask:

- What was the most powerful insight you had during this workshop?
- What do you know that you didn’t when you arrived? What are you now able to do that you couldn’t before?
- Are there obstacles that you feel you can overcome now that you felt were permanent barriers when you first arrived?
- What implications does this knowledge have on how you move forward in your career?
- How can you take the ideas you’ve learned here one step forward when you go home?
- Do you feel like the Hero of your story?
Conclusion of the Program

The facilitator will thank participants for being authentic and open to experiencing all the activities in the workshop, and will share several things that s/he learned from the participants. S/he will encourage participants to continue to take the time to reflect and use the tools they experienced in the workshop when they return back home. The facilitator will then invite participants to celebrate having successfully completed their own hero’s journey, by sharing refreshments outside before saying goodbye.
Chapter 5 – Project Evaluation

Introduction

In chapter five, the proposed program will be evaluated in terms of its format, content, goals and effectiveness. The field evaluation team consisted of three career development professionals. Each evaluator was given chapters three and four, in addition to seven evaluation questions (Appendix O). The field evaluators were asked to review the chapters and respond to the evaluation questions. The responses of the field evaluation team are summarized in this chapter.

Field Evaluation Team Credentials

Evaluator #1 is a nationally certified career counselor and manager of the Womentoring program at Jewish Vocational Services. She has over five years of experience in the community college and non-profit sectors. She specializes in adults in transition, and holds a Masters degree in Counseling with a Career specialization from California State University, Northridge. She also has a background in the entertainment industry, with previous experience as a Retail Promotions Manager for the Walt Disney Company and as an Operations Coordinator and Acquisitions Marketing Manager for Dreamworks, SKG.

Evaluator #2 is a Student Development Specialist at Union Community College in New Jersey. She has over eight years of career counseling experience in the community college sector, with additional experience as a career coach for the New York Public Library. She specializes in higher education and training and development, working with
college students and adults in transition. She holds a Masters degree in Counseling with a Career specialization from California State University, Northridge.

Evaluator #3 has over fifteen years of combined experience as a counselor/psychologist-in-training, in addition to professional positions as a teacher, researcher, advising dean, therapist, career counselor and academic advisor. She holds a Masters degree in Counseling and Guidance with a specialization in Higher education and her Doctorate degree in Counseling Psychology will be conferred in May 2012, both at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Currently, she works as an assistant professor at California State University, Northridge.

Summary of Findings from Evaluators

1. To what degree does this program address the particular problems and needs of the population?

Evaluator #1 indicated that the program effectively addresses several challenges faced by the artistic population. She felt that the program helps provide clarity to those struggling with ill-defined career paths and encouragement to those wrestling with maintaining an artistic identity. She also expressed that the program assists artists in strengthening their self-efficacy beliefs and supports them in career exploration.

Evaluator #2 felt that the program successfully addresses the population’s need to make a commitment in order to succeed in the arts. She indicated that the program’s goal-orientated objectives provide artists with a structure through which they can recognize and mark progress in their careers. However, she also felt that artists require several other key career development components not specifically addressed by the proposed program.
in order to remain competitive, namely continuing arts education and support in establishing their niche, marketing their work and refining their skills to address specific market demands. She felt that these career development issues were long-term, on-going concerns that could not be completely covered in one weekend retreat.

Evaluator #3 indicated that the program adequately addresses the needs of artists faced with career issues such as constructing and maintaining identity, building self-efficacy beliefs and coping with challenges to motivation and the absence of a clear career path. She also felt that the program tackles the demands placed on artists for career self-management skills, mainly the need to strategize career moves because of heightened competition and the freelance nature of arts work.

2. To what degree is the format of this program appropriate for this population?

Evaluator #1 felt that the hero’s journey context provided an appropriate creative framework for the strategies and goals of the program. She also indicated that the setting and retreat format are appropriate to the population, as they support the self-reflection and creativity of artists, which might otherwise be limited in a corporate conference room setting. She agreed with the author that the four-day retreat format was more conducive to artists’ needs and schedules than weekly or monthly meetings.

Evaluator #2 indicated that the format of the program successfully balances both structure and freedom through the exercises and modules. She noted that the structure allows for shy or quiet participants to feel safe, while the freedom allows the participants multiple opportunities to be creative in their exploration and expression during the career development process.
Evaluator #3 suggested that the weekend retreat format was particularly appropriate for the artist population, as it is an arrangement with which most artists are already familiar. She also agreed with Evaluator #1 that the use of the hero’s journey was a helpful framework for understanding change, decision-making and the steps involved in engaging in a vocation. Evaluator #3 felt that the inclusion of exercises and activities such as vision boarding and card sorts appropriately reflect artist’s needs for creativity.

3. **To what degree are the assessments used in this program appropriate for this population?**

Evaluator #1 felt that the assessments used in this program were appropriate for the population, and that the facilitator explained them to participants adequately. She indicated that the StrengthsFinder assessment gives participants the opportunity to discover both new and previously discounted strengths. She also felt that it keeps participants focused on the positive through concentrating on the strengths they already have instead of skills they have yet to master. She stated that the use of card sorts allows artists to express themselves creatively and feel more in control of the assessment, both important needs of the artistic population.

Evaluator #2 agreed that artists would respond favorably to the proposed assessments. She indicated that artists are more likely to be engaged in activities that require active participation or manipulation of objects, and so felt that card sorts were particularly good at addressing the needs of this population. In addition, she suggested that the card sorts allowed artists to represent complex ideas in a visual way, thereby tapping into another avenue of self-expression.
Evaluator #3 indicated that due to the inherent creativity of artists, the assessments were particularly appropriate. She stated that the StrengthsFinder assessment and VISTa card sorts both creatively engage artists in multiple aspects of career development.

4. To what degree are the exercises and activities used in this program appropriate for the population?

Evaluator #1 indicated that the artistic population needs a variety of interventions that supply opportunities to use their creativity. She indicated that the brainstorming, meditations, open discussion format and the provision of time for reflection answered this need. In addition, she felt that the program’s strategies allowed for artists to connect to the emotional component of career development, which is important for this population.

Evaluator #2 stated that artists often demonstrate anxiety, depression and feelings of isolation. She felt that the exercises were helpful in assisting artists to develop the necessary skills to cope with setbacks and reframe negative beliefs. In addition, she felt that the exercises successfully supported the overarching goals of the program, by guiding participants to define their visions for the future and clarify the steps necessary to achieve their goals.

Evaluator #3 suggested that the exercises and activities included in the program were highly appropriate for artists. She felt that the activities were presented in such a way as to be “culturally congruent with artists” by appealing to their creative nature, in addition to encouraging decision-making skills and personal growth.
5. **To what degree are the program's goals and objectives likely to be met in the allocated time frame?**

Evaluator #1 suggested adding specific time allotments for each exercise within the program to guarantee that all goals and objectives for the sessions would be met. Yet she asserted that the ultimate goal, for artists to incorporate the insights gained during the retreat into their everyday lives, could not completely be met in the four-day time period. Instead, she suggested providing additional career resources for participants to use post-workshop, in addition to a follow up workshop to ensure participant progress towards their goals.

Evaluator #2 felt that the goals and objectives of this program would be met within the allocated time frame, in that artists would leave the workshop with an action plan for the future. She indicated that the activities and exercises are scheduled and organized in such a way as to ensure participants meet all the requirements. She reflected that the participants remaining on-site during the retreat ensures that participants will be present to engage in all activities and exercises.

Evaluator #3 felt that the goals and objectives of the program could be met within the four-day retreat. However, she felt that the goal of developing positive self-efficacy and outcome expectations could be explored in more depth and through more avenues in order to be more effective.

6. **Please indicate any reservations you have for this program?**

Evaluator #1 was concerned about the funding of the program, specifically whether or not participants’ fees could cover the costs of the facilitator and the materials. She also questioned how often the retreat would be held during a given year, in order to
be accessible to participants who are not accepted into the retreat the first time around. In addition, she felt that the program should incorporate resources for the participants to use after the retreat has ended, in order to further sustain their motivation and positive outcomes. Finally, she suggested that the program include a method of evaluating the participant’s progress six months later.

Evaluator #2 agreed that her primary concern was the funding of the program, as she felt that the costs generated by catering, lodging, materials and the facilitator’s fee would be prohibitive to some participants. She suggested the inclusion of external sponsorships through grants, art schools or alumni organizations. In addition, she felt that the retreat setting was limiting in terms of expense and that some artists might feel confined by the isolated location. Therefore, she suggested either a retreat center within commuting distance to enable participants to return home in the evenings, or a planned group outing on one of the evenings to provide some variety. She also indicated that the program could take better advantage of the unused evening hours by providing activities that could facilitate group cohesion. Ultimately, however, she did not feel that these reservations detracted from the appropriateness of the program.

Evaluator #3 felt that aspects of group formation and norming needed to be better addressed in order to provide a safe environment for participants. Specifically, she suggested discussing informed consent and confidentiality, and setting ground rules for the group work during the program. She also felt that disclosure about the use of meditations in the workshop should be given up front, as meditations can be an intense experience for some and as such are not always appropriate for everyone.
7. What recommendations do you have for modifying this program?

Evaluator #1 suggested spelling out the steps in the pre-screening process more clearly, specifically whether it is necessary to apply for a spot, if an interview is required, and who will facilitate the pre-screening process. She also suggested explaining what is meant by “arts-related” work. Finally, she suggested a progress check-in six months after the workshop.

Evaluator #2 did not have any recommendations for modifications to the program itself. She did, however, feel that it might be useful to adapt the program for use with individual clients who cannot commit to a four-day retreat or who do not respond well to group work.

Evaluator #3 recommended additions to the screening process and proposed following up with participants after the workshop. Suggested additions to the screening process included a discussion of the benefits and challenges inherent in the program, and a clarification of steps to be taken in case an individual expresses a desire to harm self or others. She recommended including a worksheet exploring informed consent and confidentiality and advocated engaging participants in a group norming activity during the early stages of the workshop in order to facilitate the sharing of personal information and insights. Evaluator #3 also proposed following up with participants after the retreat in order to remind participants of what they learned. She suggested introducing the idea of recycling through stages of the hero’s journey in a non-linear fashion during the retreat, in order to enable the facilitator to encourage participants to reconnect with the hero’s journey during a follow-up workshop. In this way, the hero’s journey could be used as a
framework for understanding whatever stage of career development in which they find themselves.

**Conclusion**

Many of the recommendations offered by the field evaluators will be incorporated into the proposed program in order to enhance its effectiveness. A summary of these revisions follows.

*Structure and Content Revisions*

Prior to the workshop, the program organizers will develop relationships with arts organizations and art schools, as well as apply for grants, in order to provide supplemental funding and develop a scholarship program for a limited number of participants. Participants will need to apply for the scholarship during the screening process, and will be granted scholarships based on financial need. The screening process will also be clarified to indicate that each participant must complete an interview with the facilitator of the program. During this interview, the facilitator will review informed consent and confidentiality, specifically the risks involved in career development work and the limits of confidentiality within groups. If the workshop is full, participants will be put on a waitlist, and informed if a spot becomes available in the current workshop or the next program commences.

These topics of informed consent and confidentiality will be revisited on the first day of the workshop, with the addition of a group norming activity designed to create a safe environment for group work to occur. Steps will also be taken to clarify the interventions designed to increase self-efficacy, such as the appreciative interview (past
performance accomplishments) and how participants can learn from others who have overcome barriers that the participants find themselves facing (vicarious learning). Recycling through stages of the hero’s journey will be introduced during the final session of the workshop, to encourage participants to continue using the framework to address their individual challenges after the workshop.

Finally, a shorter follow-up workshop will be added three months later in order to evaluate participant progress, revisit the insights gained previously, and address any challenges that arose since the completion of the original workshop. In addition, the follow-up workshop will further address issue of self-efficacy by asking participants to share their accomplishments between the original workshop and the present, as well as revisiting the hero’s journey framework to address any new perceived barriers.
References


Hart, J. (2011). *What if...artists were trained as entrepreneurs?* [Web log post].

Retrieved on November 11, 2011, from www.tcgcircle.org/2011/05/what-if-artsts-were-trained-as-entrepreneurs


List of Appendix Materials

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Appendix A

Meeting Your Inner Guide - Guided Meditation Script

Sit or lie down in a position that is comfortable to you. Begin by taking several deep breaths. Fill your lungs as deeply as you can, and then slowly exhale every last ounce of air. Do this several times.

Start by relaxing your feet. Feel them rest heavily into the ground. Then relax your ankles. Move up your legs and relax your shins, and then your thighs. Release any tension you may be holding in your hips. Breathe into your abdomen and feel it sink into the floor or the back of your chair as you exhale. Relax your chest, and your shoulders. Finally, release any tension in your shoulders, neck and face. Keep breathing deeply, in and out.

Picture yourself alone walking across a field. Take the time to observe your surroundings. What sounds do you hear? Is there a breeze? Is it warm or cool? Keep walking across the field until you reach its edge. There you find a path that winds down into a valley where there’s a stream. Start to walk down the path. As you walk, you enjoy the beautiful surroundings and feel the weight you’ve been carrying drop off your shoulders completely.

As you near the stream at the base of the valley, you see a person waiting for you. At first their features may be indistinct. You feel safe and secure though, because you know this person is your guide and is there for your well-being. As you reach the stream, this person becomes more defined, if you want him or her to. Know that your guide wants you to be at ease, so if at first your guide appears as a person you don’t feel safe with, simply ask your guide to appear to you in a way that is more comfortable for you.

When you reach your guide, say hello and invite your guide to walk with you along the path beside the stream. Take some time just to be in each other’s company and enjoy the surroundings. When you feel ready, ask your guide if there is anything that he or she feels is important for you to know at this time, anything that will help you connect to what you are here to do, either in this workshop or in your everyday life. If you have other questions for you guide, feel free to ask him or her anything. If an answer is not obviously apparent or forthcoming from your guide, know that the answer exists and you will receive it at a later time.

When you feel ready to say goodbye to your guide for now, thank him or her for spending time with you and for offering guidance and support. Part ways with your guide beside the stream, and walk up the path in front of you that leads you back up and out of the valley. Once you reach the field you started in, take a few more deep breaths, and then open your eyes.

Appendix B

Strengths Reflection Worksheet

Can you give an example, small or large, of how each of your strengths is reflected in your life?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strength #1: ____________________________</th>
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<tr>
<td>Strength #2: ____________________________</td>
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<td>Strength #4: ____________________________</td>
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<td>Strength #5: ____________________________</td>
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Appendix C
Appreciative Interview Questionnaire

1. Please describe one of your greatest accomplishments, when you knew what you wanted and you pursued it successfully. Choose an experience that made you feel especially happy and fulfilled.
   • What about this experience made it so memorable?
   • What factors do you think contributed to your success?
   • What strengths, abilities or talents of yours made this accomplishment possible?
   • Who supported your vision of what you wanted to accomplish? How?
   • If you experienced any challenges or obstacles, how did you overcome them?

2. Please tell me about an on-the-job or learning experience that stands out for you, a time where you felt exceptionally motivated, inspired, and engaged.
   • From where did you draw your inspiration and motivation?
   • What made the experience so engaging and meaningful?
   • Did anyone encourage or assist you? If so, how?
   • What unique qualities or talents did you bring to the experience that made it feel so successful?

3. What do you value most about yourself as an artist?
   • Why are you drawn to create? What inspires you to create the work you do?
   • What aspect of the creative process do you enjoy the most?
   • What unique skills and talents do you feel distinguish you as an artist?
   • Who have been the cheerleaders of your artistic endeavors? How did they support you?
   • How has being an artist contributed positively to your life?

Appendix D
Interview Review Worksheet

1. As your partner shared his or her experiences, what did you hear were the significant factors that contributed to their success and feelings of fulfillment? Were there any reoccurring themes across their stories?

2. Please describe any of your partner’s unique qualities or strengths that became apparent as your partner shared his or her experiences with you.

3. Is there anything else that stood out to you as particularly significant and relevant that you want to share with your partner?

Appendix E

Personal Profile

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Top 10 Traits</th>
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<th>Top 10 Interests</th>
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Appendix F
Skill Development Worksheet

Skills to Develop:

What skills do I feel I should develop?

What skills do I actually want to develop?

What is one skill I will commit to developing?

Appendix G

Life Themes Worksheet

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<th>LIFE THEMES</th>
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Appendix H

Themes Reflection

What are the top 2-3 themes that you identified? Are you currently involved in activities that allow you to express these themes in your work or home life? If you are, please detail how they are expressed with the theme in the box. If not, please note that as well.

Theme #1: ________________________________

Theme #2: ________________________________

Theme #3: ________________________________
Appendix H

Themes Reflection Continued

If you aren’t engaging in the life themes that fulfill you, or aren’t engaging in them often, what are 3 steps you can take to incorporate them more into your life? What strengths can you use to help you do this?

A career in the arts can be demanding, and it’s easy to burnout. As you review your themes, which cards represent how you recharge your batteries? How often do you engage in activities that energize you? What is one step you could take to increase your involvement in such activities?

Appendix I

Purpose Worksheet

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Appendix J

Vision of a Fulfilling Future Meditation Script

Sit or lie down in a position that is comfortable to you. Close your eyes and begin taking slow, deep breaths. Feel your body relax into your chair or into the floor a little bit more with each breath.

Let your mind wander to all that you have learned or rediscovered about yourself in the past couple of days. Think about your unique strengths, the life themes and the purpose you’ve identified as close to your heart. All the insights you have gained are inviting you to consider new possibilities for how you live your life.

Imagine yourself two years in the future. You wake up refreshed and ready to start the day. You feel happy and excited because you know that you will be spending the day doing what you feel called to do and what you enjoy most. What does your life look like now that you are living in alignment with your purpose?

Where are you and what are you doing? How has your life changed for the better? Who supports and encourages you in living your life with purpose - loved ones, friends, co-workers? How does living this way make you feel?

Reflect back on the path you took to get to where you now are. How did you create this life? Who did you enlist to help you along the way? What heroic actions did you take to get to where you are?

Take a moment to enjoy where you are, and all you have achieved. When you are ready, open your eyes.

Appendix K

Mind Mapping Exercise: Exploring Living With Purpose

Purpose Statement:

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

As the HERO of my life story, what steps can I take now to live in greater alignment with my purpose?

Appendix L

Inspired Action – Identifying My Goal

What are five ideas from your mind-map exploring purpose that you feel would be most valuable in helping you live and work in more alignment with your purpose?

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Of these five ideas, what are the three ideas that excite you the most?

1.

2.

3.

Of the three things that excite you the most, identify one specific goal for yourself moving forward.

1.

Appendix M

Inspired Action - My Personal Action Plan

My goal is to:

I will accomplish this goal by (date): ______________________________________

I will take the following actions to reach my goal:

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Of these action steps, the first 3 actions I will take are:

1.                                                                                           

2.                                                                                           

3.                                                                                           

(Continued on next page)
Appendix M

Inspired Action - My Personal Action Plan Continued

I will use the following strength(s) to help me accomplish this goal:

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

This strength (these strengths) will help me by:

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

The people who I will ask for support in achieving my goal are:

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

I will know that I have achieved my goal when:

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

Appendix N

Planned Happenstance Reflection

Think back to a time in your life where something did not go according to plan, yet things still ended well, or even better than you imagined. Or think back to a time where something positive seemed to happen by chance. What actually happened that led you to the result?

What did you plan on happening? Or what “chance event” occurred?

What happened (or didn’t happen) instead?

What actions did you take that led to the final result?

What was your final result?

How might this experience inform your future career plans?
Appendix O

Questions for Program Evaluation

1. To what degree does this program address the particular problems and needs of the population?
2. To what degree is the format of this program appropriate for this population?
3. To what degree are the assessments used in this program appropriate for this population?
4. To what degree are the exercises and activities used in this program appropriate for the population?
5. To what degree are the program’s goals and objectives likely to be met in the allocated time frame?
6. Please indicate any reservations you might have for this program.
7. What recommendations do you have for modifying this program?