

FINDING MEANING AND PURPOSE





THE MEANINGS OF MEANING

COHERENCE

Things happen for a reason.

PURPOSE

I am alive in order to do something.

SIGNIFICANCE

My life matters.

DISCERNMENT OF PURPOSE

- Self-discovery through introspective work
 - Sunesis: Ethical discernment for the ancient Greeks
 - Saint Ignatius of Loyola's discernment of spirits: God's will for one's life
 - In Buddhism, pañña: Finding the path to long-lasting happiness
- Goals: Finding one's calling
- Common to all approaches: Structured, sustained contemplation

THE PROMISES AND PERILS OF “PASSION”

Two Types: Harmonious Passion and Obsessive Passion

- **Harmonious Passion**
 - Positive affect, concentration and flow while engaged
 - No negative affect while engaged or not engaged
- **Obsessive Passion**
 - No positive affect, flow or concentration
 - Negative affect during activity and especially when not engaged

Career passions
are like healthy
and unhealthy
relationships.

PITFALL: THE PARADOX OF CHOICE

- Jam experiment:
6 vs. 24 options to try
- 60% of shoppers stop for the large display; 40% for small display
- 30% from small display buy;
3% from large display
- Extra-credit term paper experiment:
6 vs. 30 topics
- 74% with limited option completed paper; 60% with extensive option

Ask yourself:
Am I in agony
because of too
much choice?

CAREER MODELS

