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CHANGEMAKERS:

Building Your Personal Brand for Sustainable Employment

What Defines You? (Part 1)

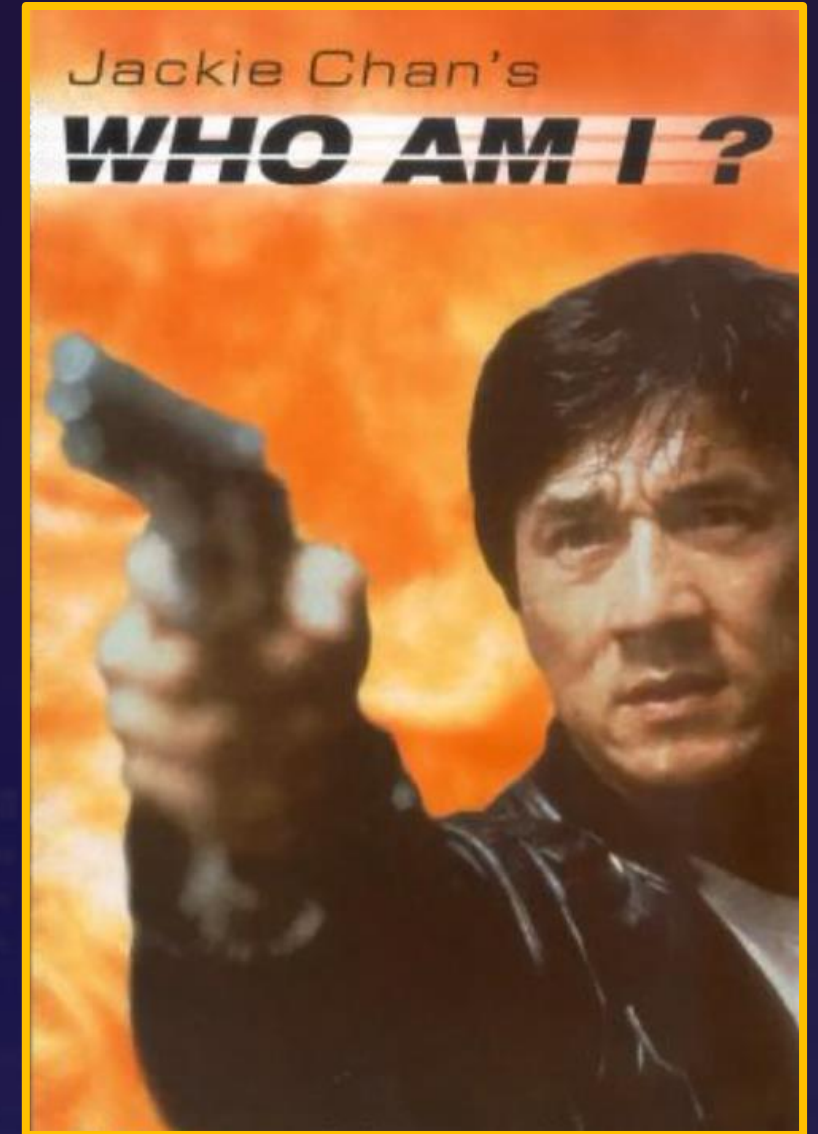


CHANGEMAKERS: Building Your Personal Brand

What Defines You?

Introduction

- Defining Ourselves
- Authenticity
- Ambition
- Curiosity
- Passion





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What Defines You?

What Defines You?

Defining Ourselves



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What Defines You?

Defining Ourselves

Think back to an earlier stage of your life. What did you want to be (or do) when you grew up?

The answer may be different depending on how old you were at the time.



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What Defines You?

Defining Ourselves

Think back to an earlier stage of your life. What did you want to be (or do) when you grew up?

The answer may be different depending on how old you were at the time.

If someone asked you the same question today, what would you say?



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What Defines You?

Defining Ourselves

What does it mean to become who you want to be?

- Is it to get a particular job?
- To achieve a particular goal?
- To surround yourself with particular things or people?





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What Defines You?



Defining Ourselves

Consider who you want to be.

Your dreams, ideals and goals are not only part of being human but are also important for being **successful** in whatever you do.



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What Defines You?

Take a moment to reflect on what you wanted to be when you grew up.

- **What or who influenced your aspirations?**
- **To what extent do you think it has affected what you have chosen to do as an adult?**





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What Defines You?

What Defines You?

Authenticity



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What Defines You?

Authenticity

In relation to a personal brand, **authenticity** is one of your biggest assets and strongest differentiating factors.

Your authentic personal brand is what sets you apart.



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What Defines You?

Authenticity

In relation to a personal brand, **authenticity** is one of your biggest assets and strongest differentiating factors.

Your authentic personal brand is what sets you apart.

Don't try to be somebody else.

Be true to yourself, your skills, and your expertise.



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What Defines You?

Authenticity

Authenticity is increasingly important in today's society of digitally constructed identities.

But what does it mean to be authentic?

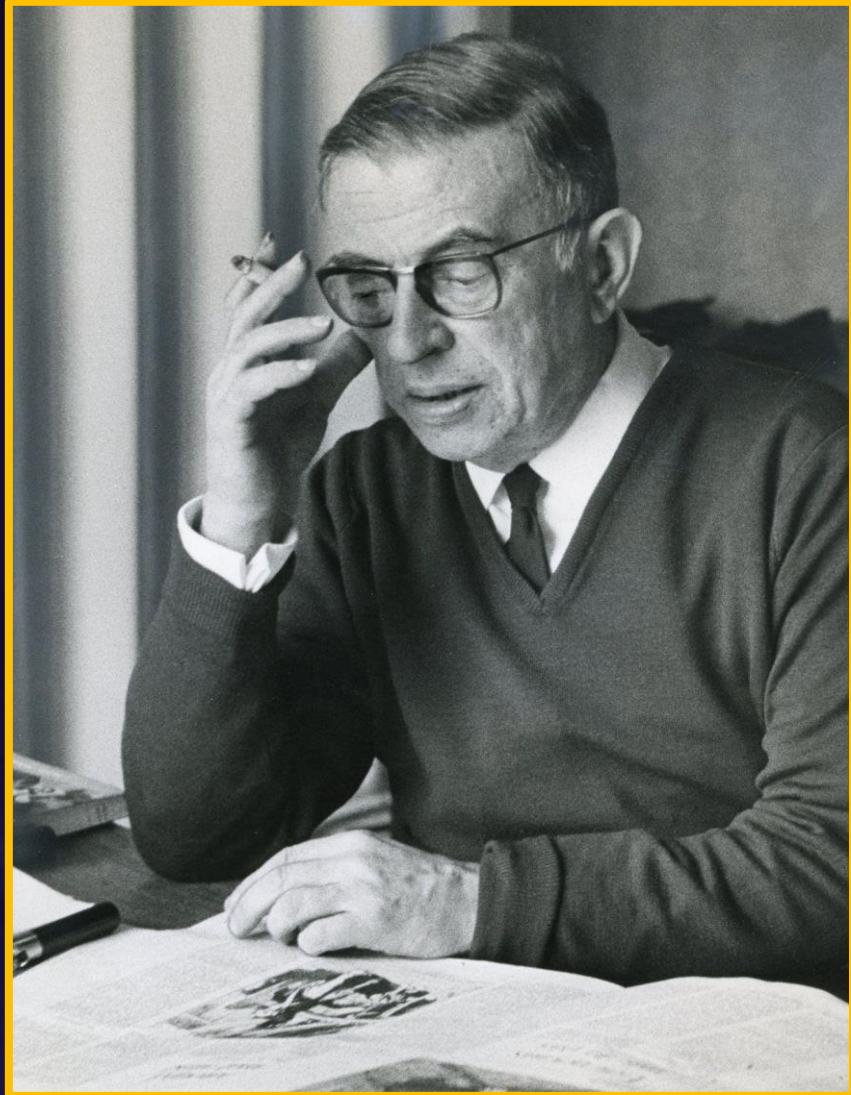
Consider what it could mean to be true to yourself, creating your own purpose and be the master of your own life.





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What Defines You?



Authenticity

The philosophy of Jean-Paul Sartre (1905-1980) may help you think about defining yourself.

Sartre stated that '**existence precedes essence**'.

When we are talking about something's essence, we are talking about its **defining features** – what it IS.



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What Defines You?

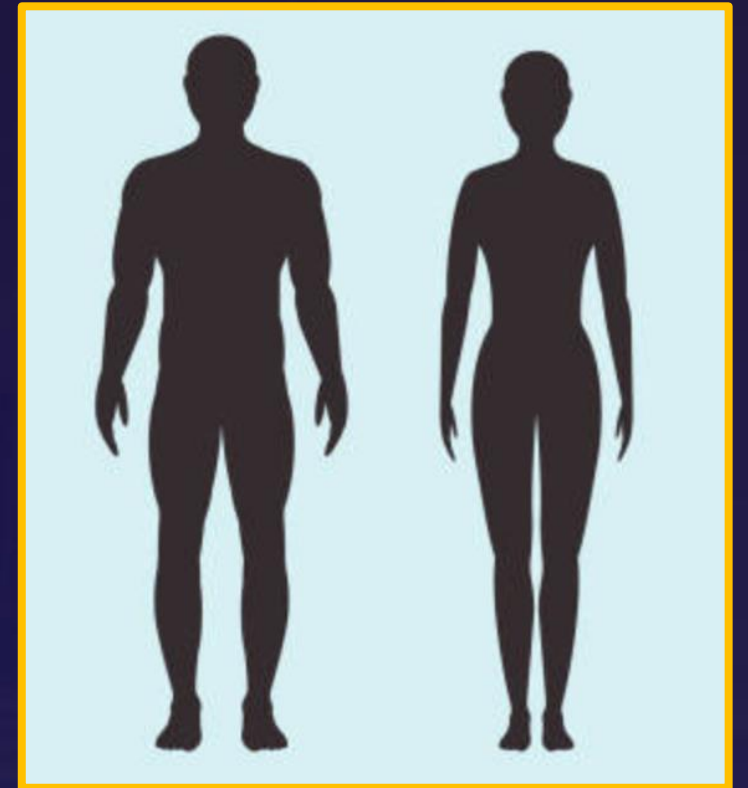
Authenticity

Essence:

“The basic, real and invariable nature of a thing or its significant individual feature or features.”

Inanimate objects such as a spoon or door have an essence **first** – a reason for them to exist the way they are.

They meet a need, designed before they were physically created to serve a specific purpose.





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What Defines You?

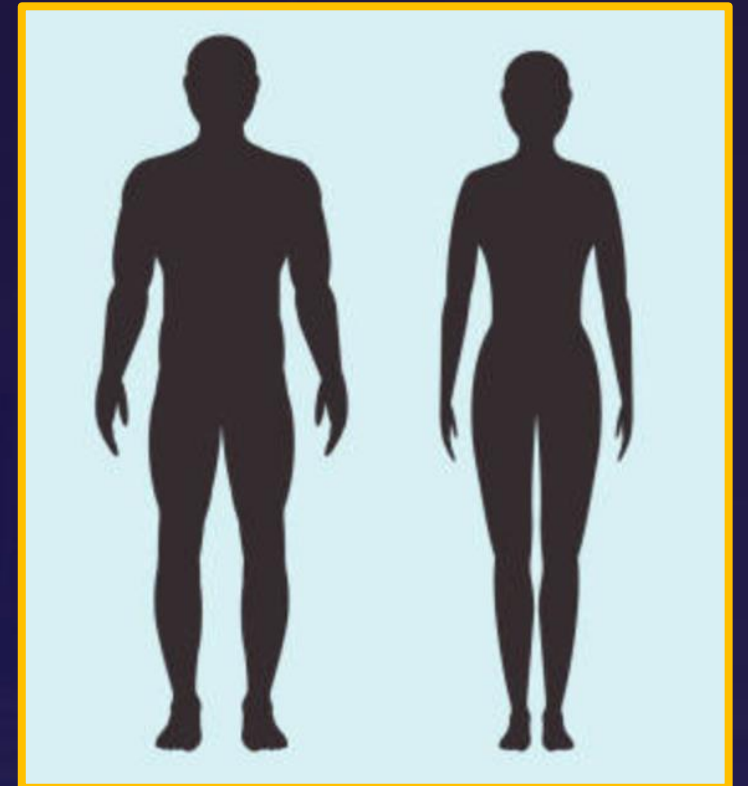
Authenticity

Essence:

“The basic, real and invariable nature of a thing or its significant individual feature or features.”

Human beings are **not created with this same sense of essence** – our existence comes *before* any essence we may eventually come to have.

The **world we live in** and the **types of attitudes around us** help shape our essence.





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What Defines You?

What Defines You?
Ambition



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What Defines You?

Ambition

Often, people will aspire to be **ambitious**.

Achieving great things seems to be a driving force for many people and important to their identity.

However, **Tom Savage** presented a TED Talk in which he argues that our ambition to do more, work more, harder and faster is killing us – causing people to be **lonelier, more stressed** and **unhealthy**.





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What Defines You?

Ambition: Tom Savage (TedX)





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What Defines You?

Ambition

Tom Savage's solution is also presented in the presentation: **Simplicity**.

We all need to understand which activities are nourishing for us and focus on **who we are** instead of **what is expected from us**.

Taking time to understand **who you are** will make it easier to identify your **authentic self**.



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What Defines You?

What Defines You?
Curiosity



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What Defines You?

Curiosity

Curiosity is important to **learning**.

Whatever the subject of study, the importance of curiosity can impact your education and learning in many ways.





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What Defines You?

Curiosity

Curiosity can:

- Promote creative thinking
- Promote Experimentation
- Promote Team-building skills.





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What Defines You?

Curiosity

There are many ways in which curiosity can be promoted within your learning.



Questions

Asking questions such as “why” aren’t ever a bad thing. Asking these questions promotes a deeper understanding for your subject.

It is also part of personal reflection.



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What Defines You?

Curiosity

There are many ways in which curiosity can be promoted within your learning.



Structure

Sitting in different seats in the learning spaces you attend, or studying in different places promotes curiosity.

You may gain new ideas from a different perspective or people around you.



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What Defines You?

Curiosity

There are many ways in which curiosity can be promoted within your learning.



Reflection

By reflecting upon a situation, you can consider the “**what ifs**”. What if you did something differently? What if you got an earlier bus to class?

Being curious about the “what ifs” may allow you to **act differently** in the future.



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What Defines You?

Curiosity: Seeing Things Differently

One way in which you can start to see things differently is to be deliberately curious. Some ways of doing this are as follows:

Become an expert across different disciplines and sectors

Seek a **wide range of sources from different areas**, such as educational texts to scientific journals and social media. This allows you to **gain awareness of developments across different fields** and how this may affect your own sector, also known as 'horizon scanning'.



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What Defines You?

Curiosity: Seeing Things Differently

One way in which you can start to see things differently is to be deliberately curious. Some ways of doing this are as follows:

Do not always remain in the same place around the same people

It can be extremely useful to **learn from others in a different physical environment**, which may bring a different perspective and allow you to look deeper into things.



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What Defines You?

Curiosity: Seeing Things Differently

One way in which you can start to see things differently is to be deliberately curious. Some ways of doing this are as follows:

Change your perspective

Try **observing and experiencing things in a different way** with regards to your environment and competitors.



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What Defines You?

Curiosity: Seeing Things Differently

One way in which you can start to see things differently is to be deliberately curious. Some ways of doing this are as follows:

Network more effectively with others

Try to do this both to **widen your circle** and **gather more information**. Networking does not need to be purely physical – it can also be virtual, using online and social media platforms to expand your contacts and connections.



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What Defines You?

Curiosity: Seeing Things Differently

One way in which you can start to see things differently is to be deliberately curious. Some ways of doing this are as follows:

Listen more and ask questions

Consider a famous quote from Albert Einstein: *“The important thing is to not stop questioning. Curiosity has its own reason for existing”*.



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What Defines You?

Curiosity: Seeing Things Differently

One way in which you can start to see things differently is to be deliberately curious. Some ways of doing this are as follows:

Bear in mind different attitudes and behaviours or people

This could be **cultural, political, geographical or even generational** – outlooks and opinions differ depending on where someone is from, how they were raised and when they were born.



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What Defines You?

What Defines You?

Passion



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What Defines You?

Passion

We are often told that having **passion** is important in life.

Passion is a strong feeling of **enthusiasm** or **excitement** either **for something** or about **doing something**.

It is vital to our wellbeing, our motivation, dedication and our own identity. This seems to be the case in our personal and professional lives, our social experiences and hobbies.





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What Defines You?

Passion

Do you know what your passion is?





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What Defines You?

Passion

Do you know what your passion is?

You may have more than one!

By considering what you are passionate about you can identify key elements that may allow you to build a unique brand for yourself, a project, or a company.





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What Defines You?

Passion

When considering this concept, Electra Michaelidou wrote in September 2023 that following your passion:

- Gives you a sense of purpose
- Boosts your confidence
- Boosts your overall happiness
- Increases your resilience
- Is inspiring and personally rewarding



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What Defines You?

What Defines You?

How to Identify Passion



How to Identify Passion

Consider the following five questions and ask yourself:

- 1. What did I want to be as a child?**
- 2. Where do I find meaning?**
- 3. What can't I stop talking about?**
- 4. What do others say I'm good at?**
- 5. What type of challenges do I enjoy?**



How to Identify Passion

Consider the following five questions and ask yourself:

1. What did I want to be as a child?

Although this won't apply to everyone, it can be a good place to start. As English psychoanalyst Donald Winnicott observed, people can be said to have **two selves**: one true, based on **authentic experience**, and one false, which acts as a **defensive façade**.

If, as an adult, you've lost touch with what once meant the world to you **consider looking back to your younger self for an answer**, who likely had very different criteria to you for choosing where to dedicate their time and energy.



How to Identify Passion

Consider the following five questions and ask yourself:

2. Where do I find meaning?

Perhaps you designed a poster for class and **found the process so enjoyable that you completely lost track of time** — and actually *enjoyed* an assignment for the first time in your life. Or maybe you volunteered somewhere in your local community, and selfless work helped you **gain a new perspective** on the world and its people.

You're likely to find your passion in **activities that provide you a sense of fulfillment**, where you can gladly dedicate hours and hours of your time without regretting a moment.



How to Identify Passion

Consider the following five questions and ask yourself:

3. What can't I stop talking about?

When speaking with your friends or family, pay attention to **what topic or topics get you feeling excited** or expressing yourself animatedly.

If you're unsure, you can **ask your friends for feedback**. After all, those who know you well will notice whenever a spark in your eyes comes on.



How to Identify Passion

Consider the following five questions and ask yourself:

4. What do others say I'm good at?

Sometimes our strengths might be lying in plain sight and yet we might not see them. **Perhaps we're too caught up in what we think we "should be" doing** to give ourselves the chance to explore other options.

Try **asking your close friends, family or a mentor** what *they* think you're naturally good at. You might hear things you wouldn't expect!



How to Identify Passion

Consider these questions and ask yourself:

5. What type of challenges do I enjoy?

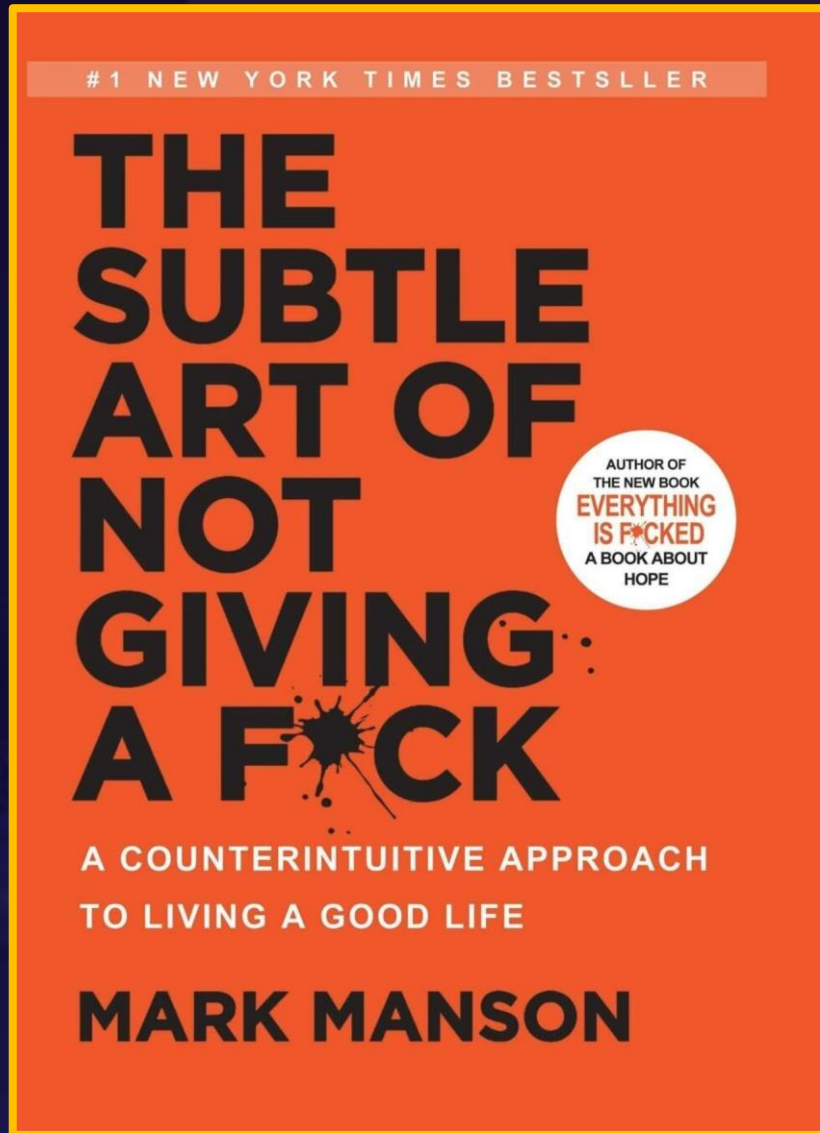
Just because **you could learn to do something doesn't mean you should**, especially if your heart's not in it. For example, an artistic person who's never had to use Excel before might find navigating the interface and learning functions challenging... But not necessarily in a desirable way.

If you don't *care* to be challenged by one particular thing, then sooner or later you're going to **give it up**.



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What Defines You?



How to Identify Passion

You may find the previous approach helpful, but if not, you aren't alone.

Mark Manson, an Independent self-help author and blogger, believes that not knowing or trying to 'find' your passion isn't the problem – it's how we view its **purpose** in our lives that may need to change.



How to Identify Passion

Mark Manson

*“Life is all about **not knowing**, and then doing something anyway. **All of life** is like this. All of it.*

*You **already found your passion**, you’re just ignoring it. Seriously, you’re awake 16 hours a day, what the f**k do you do with your time? You’re doing something, obviously. You’re talking about something.”*





How to Identify Passion

Mark Manson

*“There’s some topic or activity or idea that **dominates a significant amount** of your free time, your conversations, your web browsing, and it dominates them **without you consciously pursuing it or looking for it.**”*





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What Defines You?

How to Identify Passion

Mark Manson

*“If you have to look for what you’re passionate about, then you’re **probably not passionate about it at all.**”*

*If you’re passionate about something, it will **already feel like such an ingrained part of your life** that you will have to be reminded by people that it’s not normal, that other people aren’t like that.”*





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What Defines You?

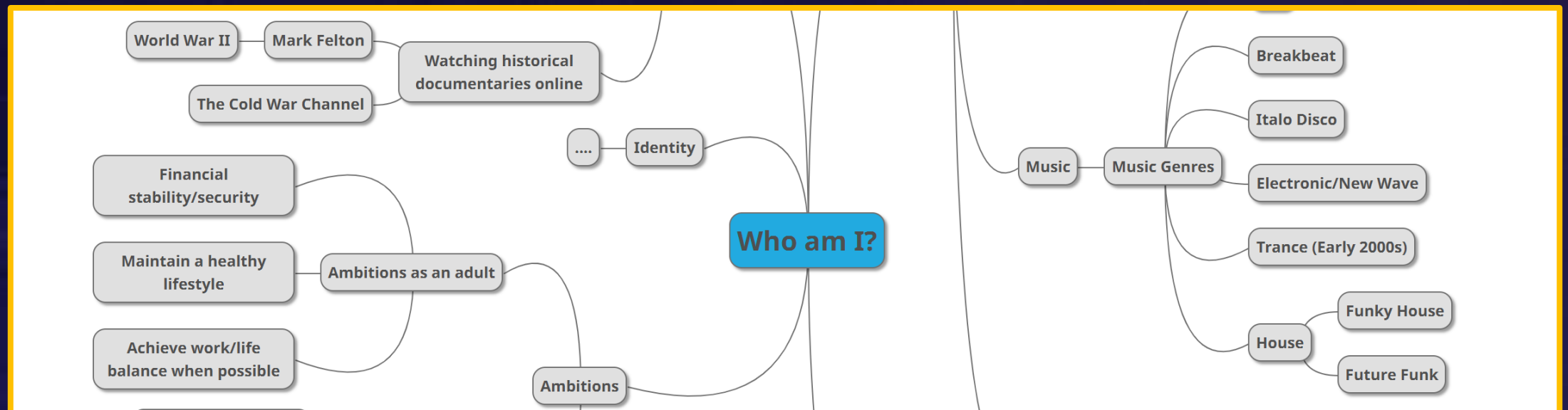
Exercise: Self-exploration



Exercise: Self-Exploration

With the points we have covered in the session, create a mind map.

You can use online tools such as MindMeister (www.mindmeister.com) or complete this as a physical piece of work.





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What Defines You?

Exercise: Self-Exploration

For now, concentrate on the following topics:

- **Ambitions (past and present)**
- **Passions**
- **Identity (Authentic self and 'public' self)**

Consider every aspect and include anything relevant you can think of.

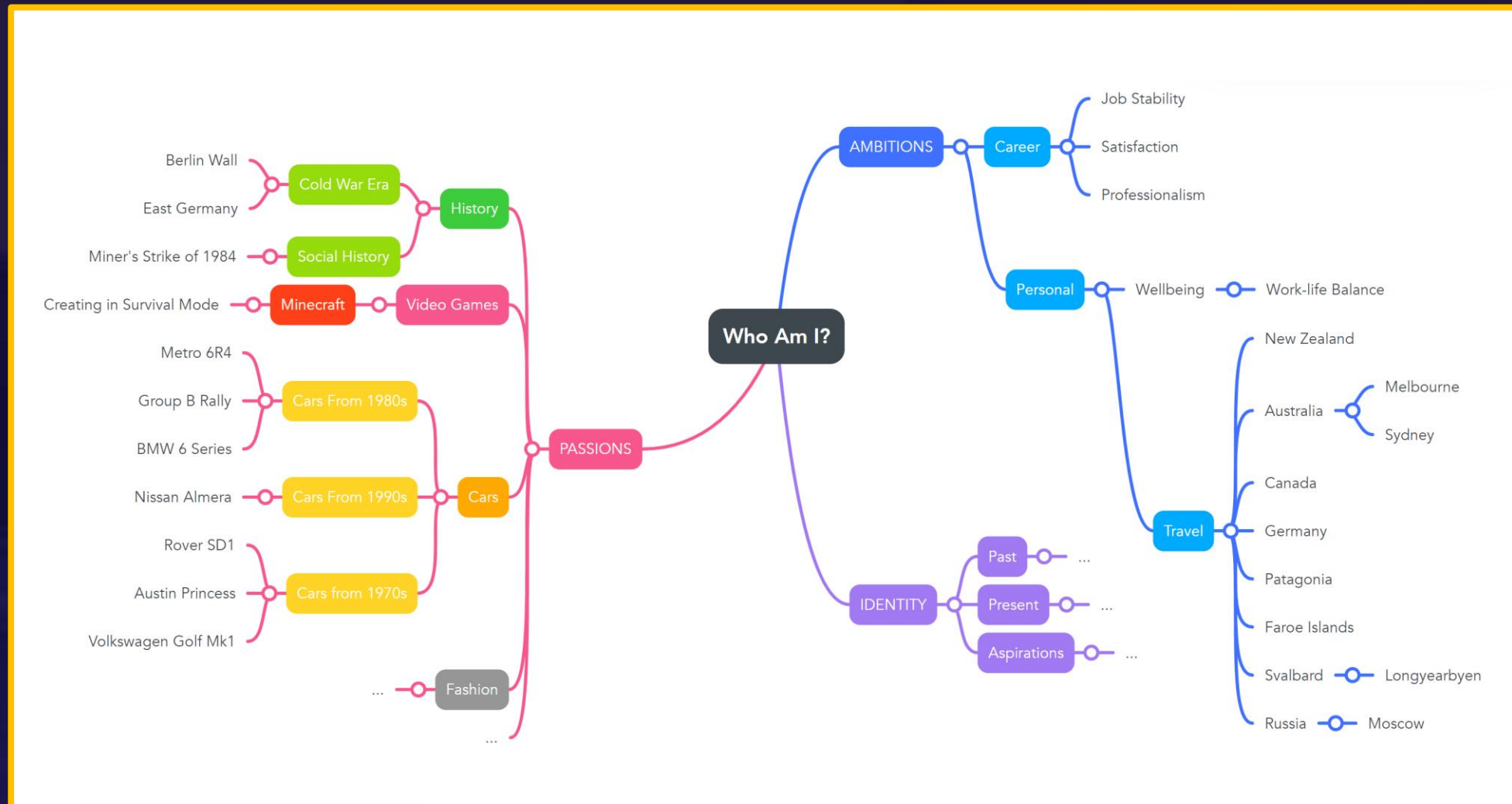
We will continue to develop this over the course of the next few weeks.



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What Defines You?

Exercise: Self-Exploration





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What Defines You?

Any Questions?



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What Defines You?

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