MINDFUL CAREER

Psychology-Led Career Counselling & Advisory

A MINDFUL CAREER STUDENT DISCOVERY RESOURCE

KNOW THYSELF

Student Discovery Toolkit

Don't tell me what you want to be.
Give me evidence of who you already are.

THE MINDFUL CAREER PREMISE

Career choice is an output. Self-understanding is the input.

Developed by Miriam Groom, M.A., R.N.T. | Founder & CEO, Mindful Career
mindful-career.com · For Students

What This Is

A structured conversation and reflection tool for collecting clues about how a young person naturally thinks, notices, relates, learns, solves problems and gets energy. It is not a psychometric assessment and it does not assign a career.

The Idea

> ***Career choice is an output. Self-understanding is the input.***

Use this before asking a student to choose a major, pathway or career. The goal is to collect behavioural evidence first, look for patterns second, and only then explore possibilities worth testing.

How to Use It

1 **STUDENT** Answer the 20 questions quickly and specifically. Real examples beat “good” answers.

2 **PEOPLE** Ask two people who know you well three short questions. Compare what they see with what you see.

3 **PATTERNS** Circle what repeats across your answers, other people's answers and your actual behaviour.

4 **EXPERIMENT** Choose one pattern to test in the real world. Do not turn it into a career yet.

The Know Thyself Questions

Answer quickly. Be specific. There are no "career" answers hiding here — we are looking for evidence.

AGES 9–12 — STARTING TO NOTICE

Keep it concrete. A kid this age can't answer "what are your values" — but they can absolutely tell you about a book, a game, or a free Saturday. That's the same evidence, just in a language they actually have.

1. What's your favorite book, show or movie? What's the best part about it — not just that it's "good"?

2. If you had every Lego, block or craft supply in the world for a whole day, what would you build or make?

3. What's a game you could play for hours and never get bored of? What do you actually do in it?

4. When your friends need help with something, what do they usually ask you to do?

5. What's something you're really curious about, even if it seems totally random?

6. In a group game or project, would you rather be the one running it, or one of the players? Why?

7. What's your favorite thing to draw, build, write or make up?

8. If you had a totally free Saturday — no plans, no chores — what would you actually do all day?

AGES 13+ — DIGGING DEEPER: THE KNOW THYSELF 20

Same idea, more direct. By this age most students can reflect on themselves a little more — but real, specific examples still beat "good" answers.

1. YOUR PEOPLE

1. When your friend group is planning something, what role do you end up playing without anyone assigning it to you?

2. When friends need help, what do they usually come to you for?

3. Name someone you admire. Forget their job or fame — what is it about who they are that you admire?

4. What kind of person drives you crazy? What exactly about their behaviour bothers you?

2. YOUR BRAIN IN THE WILD

5. What seems obvious to you that other people sometimes do not notice?

6. What kind of mess can you not ignore — a bad plan, unfairness, wrong numbers, wasted time, ugly design, disorganization, a weak argument?

7. What do you automatically fix, improve, reorganize or comment on without being asked?

8. When you have to figure out something new with no instructions, what do you do first?

3. YOUR ATTENTION

9. Look at what you actually stop for online. What subjects, stories or problems keep pulling your attention back?

10. What is the last rabbit hole you researched even though nobody asked you to?

11. If you had three free hours and nobody could judge how you used them, where would they go?

12. What topic can make you pay attention almost immediately?

---

4. YOUR ENERGY

13. Think about the last week. When did you feel most like yourself? What were you doing and who were you with?

---

14. What can you do for a long time and feel tired afterward, but satisfied rather than depleted?

---

15. What are you actually good at but secretly dislike doing?

---

16. What seems to take much more energy from you than it takes from other people?

---

5. YOUR EARLY PATTERNS

17. Before grades, university and careers mattered, what were you naturally drawn to doing as a kid?

---

18. What did adults repeatedly tell you to stop doing when you were younger — talking, questioning, moving, correcting, daydreaming, organizing everyone, taking things apart?

---

19. If grades, praise and other people's opinions disappeared, what would you still spend time doing?

---

20. Finish the sentence: I feel most like myself when I am...

What Your Answers Point To

Whichever questions you answered — look at the theme underneath your specific answer, not the answer itself. That theme is the clue.

Type	Their answer was mostly about...
R **Realistic**	Building, fixing, sports, being outdoors, or making something with their hands.
I **Investigative**	A mystery, a puzzle, understanding how or why something works, science.
A **Artistic**	A story, art, music, style, or imagining something that didn't exist yet.
S **Social**	Friendships, helping someone, animals, or taking care of people.
E **Enterprising**	Being in charge, competing, persuading, or leading the group.
C **Conventional**	Organizing, rules, being precise, or keeping track of details.

TRY THIS

Go back through the answers above and write the matching letter (R, I, A, S, E or C) in the margin next to each one. Whichever letters show up most — turn the page to see what that opens up.

The Three-Mirror Check

Self-report is useful, but it is only one view. Add two more mirrors: people who know you and evidence from your actual behaviour.

MIRROR 1 — ME

Your Know Thyself 20 answers.

MIRROR 2 — MY PEOPLE

Ask two people who know you well. A friend, sibling, parent, teacher, coach or mentor.

MIRROR 3 — MY BEHAVIOUR

Look at what you actually do: your search history, saved videos, projects, calendar, hobbies, group roles, notes, playlists, clubs, messages and recurring frustrations.

Send These 3 Questions to Two People

1. What do you naturally come to me for?

2. When have you seen me at my best or most “myself”? What was I doing?

3. What is something I notice, do or care about that I may underestimate because it comes naturally to me?

Compare the Three Mirrors

Do not look for perfect agreement. Look for repetition, useful surprises and contradictions worth exploring.

Pattern	My Evidence
I naturally notice…	
People rely on me for…	
I keep coming back to…	
I get energy from…	
I care deeply about…	
I work best when…	
I may be good at, but not enjoy…	

From Patterns to Possibility Areas

This is not a career. It's a wider set of doors your patterns might point toward — six broad ways people tend to engage with the world, based on psychologist John Holland's well-known framework. Read the patterns you circled, then see which of these feel closest.

Type	How they engage with the world	Fields that often fit
R Realistic	*Hands-on, physical, practical. Building, fixing, operating, working with tools, machines or the outdoors.*	Skilled trades & construction, engineering technology, protective services & military, agriculture, athletics
I Investigative	*Analytical, curious, research-minded. Asking why, solving problems, working with data or ideas.*	Science & research, medicine & health sciences, mathematics & analytics, engineering
A Artistic	*Expressive, original, unstructured. Creating, designing, performing, writing.*	Visual arts & design, performing arts, writing & media, culinary arts
S Social	*People-focused, helping, teaching. Supporting, coaching, healing, guiding others.*	Counselling & human services, teaching & education, health care, community & social work
E Enterprising	*Persuasive, ambitious, leadership-oriented. Selling, leading, starting things, taking risks.*	Business & entrepreneurship, sales & marketing, management, law & public leadership
C Conventional	*Organized, precise, structured. Planning, organizing information, following systems accurately.*	Accounting & finance, administration & operations, information systems, data & records

TRY THIS

Circle two or three types above that sound like the patterns in your table. That's the territory for your next small experiment — not the destination.

Most people are a mix of two or three types, not just one. And a type is a direction to explore, not a label to live inside — the same rule as everything else in this toolkit.

Don't Pick a Career Yet.

Choose one pattern that deserves another experiment.

MY PATTERN

MY SMALL EXPERIMENT

What could you try, make, join, shadow, interview, observe, volunteer for or learn in the next 7–14 days that would let you experience this pattern in a new setting?

AFTERWARD, ASK

What did I learn about the experience? What did I learn about myself? Both count.

Read Your Own Patterns

Before you file this away, go back through everything you wrote and look for these nine things. You're not looking for a job title — just what keeps showing up.

Energy — What gave you energy, instead of just using it up?

Ease — What felt naturally easy, even when it still took effort?

Attention — What kept pulling your focus without anyone making you?

Values — What shows up when you're proud, frustrated or annoyed?

Social role — Who do you naturally become around other people?

Problem style — What kind of problems do you notice, and how do you deal with them?

Environment — Where do you seem most like yourself?

Learned skill — What are you good at mostly because you've practiced it a lot — but don't actually love?

Early signals — What did you like before grades, status and expectations got loud?

THE QUESTION TO END WITH

"What pattern here deserves another experiment?"

This is a reflection tool, not a test with a right answer. It won't hand you a label, a diagnosis, or a career — it's here to help you notice what's actually true about you, one honest answer at a time.

Mindful Career | Career choice is an output. Self-understanding is the input.