The background of the book cover features a dynamic, abstract pattern of blue and white brushstrokes. The strokes are thick and expressive, creating a sense of movement and energy. They are primarily blue on a white background, with some white strokes on a blue background, forming a repeating, organic design.

FIND THE PATTERNS

PURPOSE

CONNECT THE DOTS

Diogo Nunes

the mindset and exercises you need to uncover your "ikigai"

WELCOME

If you don't know where you are going, any road can take you there. – Lewis Carroll

But not me, I need to be constantly chasing a goal. That's how I feel progress, otherwise all days look the same and I feel like I'm stagnating and wasting my life. Not so long ago, I was living every day like a robot, surviving by doing what I was told. It hurt.

My mind was full of unanswered questions which all boiled down to: Why? For what?

Eventually a voice in my mind became louder than the questions. It said, “*Stop walking without a map. You can do better, at least try! Take a break, get your 💩 together, then chin up and start again. Sincerely, your brain*”.

So I did. **This book is the result of my self-discovery journey.**

These subjects of success, purpose, fulfilment are very personal. It's not something you can search online by typing “what is the purpose of” followed by your name. You need to search within you.

I had big questions and no idea how to answer them. So I had to improvise (or “desenrascar” as we say in Portuguese). I sensed I had the answers within me, I just had to find the right tools to reveal them. I looked for anything that would **structure and guide my thinking**. That included obviously personality tests but also other exercises for me to muse about motivation, priorities and my view of success.

This self-discovery journey was very rewarding and insightful to me.

That's why I decided to summarise my experience in this ebook, so that others like you don't have to start from scratch. Some exercises might fit you better than others and that's fine. The goal of this book is to help you get started on your own journey.

Fun fact: I spent invested 33 hours in this journey and 27 hours in this ebook.

Exercise	Type	Purpose	Effort	Insight
<u>The Mood Journal</u>	Routine	Track your mood, find patterns, notice what triggers your emotions		
<u>Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI)</u>	Survey	Match your personality to a Myers-Briggs type and learn its traits		
<u>The Four Tendencies</u>	Survey	Profile how you respond to inner and outer expectations		
<u>Connecting the Dots</u>	Musing	Recall life events and identify recurring themes or patterns		
<u>Draw a person in the rain</u>	Drawing	Draw to reveal how you handle pressure		
<u>NEO Personality Inventory (NEO PI)</u>	Survey	Discover your personality traits, behaviours and tendencies		
<u>Attuned</u>	Survey	Identify what motivates you at work and which roles would be ideal		
<u>Fantastic Five</u>	Musing	List activities you enjoy doing and discover why you like them so much		
<u>The \$100 Million Dollar Question</u>	Musing	Guess what would fulfil you in a world without worries		
<u>Draw a House, a Tree and a Person</u>	Drawing	Draw to reveal your attitude towards yourself and others		
<u>Friends' Feedback</u>	Chat	List what you do that people find valuable or done well		
<u>Ikigai</u>	Musing	Intersect passion, skill, impact, salary to discover your "reason for being"		
<u>A Taste of Success</u>	Musing	List accomplishments that made you feel successful and look for patterns		
<u>Define Your Success</u>	Musing	Use everything that you learned to define what success means to you		

The hardest part is starting.

Once you get that out of the way, you'll find the rest of the journey much easier.

— Simon Sinek

MINDSET

Everyone knows it's a good practice to warm up before any physical workout.

Well, before you proceed to the mental exercises I recommend that you do some mental warm up too. This will help you get into the right mindset and challenge some of the assumptions and biases you might carry with you.

Read the next pages with an open mind and let the ideas sink in.

TOUGH CONVERSATIONS

A person's success in life can usually be measured by the number of uncomfortable conversations he or she is willing to have.

The most uncomfortable conversations we can have, the ones that really hurt and really matter, are the ones we have with **ourselves**.

– Daniel Mirolli

The beauty of it all is that **you have the answers** to your questions.

The trick is to find the right tools, people and situations to let the answers out.

– Neha Datt

You're the only one with the exact answers to be happy and successful.

Ignore what the world says you should want and **listen to yourself**.

– Emil Baltman

EXERCISES

What fulfils you?

That is probably the most open-ended and personal question in the world. Only you can answer that question – not the internet, not society, not your parents. And when you do find a plausible answer, you are not totally sure if it's right or wrong, it's more of a hypothesis that you need to validate.

Some people either spend most of their life without an answer to that question, or don't even try to ask it. But not you, you're here, you're committed. You sense the answer within... yet you don't know where to start.

The exercises below might be able to help you, though. They act as a starting point, a tool to gradually dig out the answers within you. Each exercise will narrow that big question into easier questions. This method focuses your mind and avoids analysis paralysis.

So why 14 exercises? Why not less? Or more? Or different?

I used several criteria to pick each exercise. Some are trusted and generic tools, like the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator. Others are the exact opposite, innovative and specific, like the Four Tendencies. I've adapted and developed some of my own too. Oh, and I've added a few drawing exercises to relax your mind too.

Mind that some of these exercises overlap, that is they might ask similar questions or evaluate similar traits of your personality. That's fine, you're not wasting your time. Since this subject is quite subjective, having overlapping exercises is a good thing, because one validates the results of the other. Remember, it's all about finding patterns.

Ahead you will see a summary of all the exercises that I recommend. I've evaluated how much effort or time they require and how insightful they were to me. You'll soon figure out that the good ones take time, so don't rush.

Tip: Use a paper notebook to write the results of each exercise. The paper disconnects you from distractions and handwriting improves information retention in your brain. #ScienceFacts

Exercise 4

CONNECTING THE DOTS

Recall life events and identify recurring themes or patterns

EFFORT  ➤ INSIGHT 

1. Identify major or recurring events in your life and write them down.

2. Note every detail that comes to mind, even if it seems irrelevant.

3. Review your list and underline/add keywords.

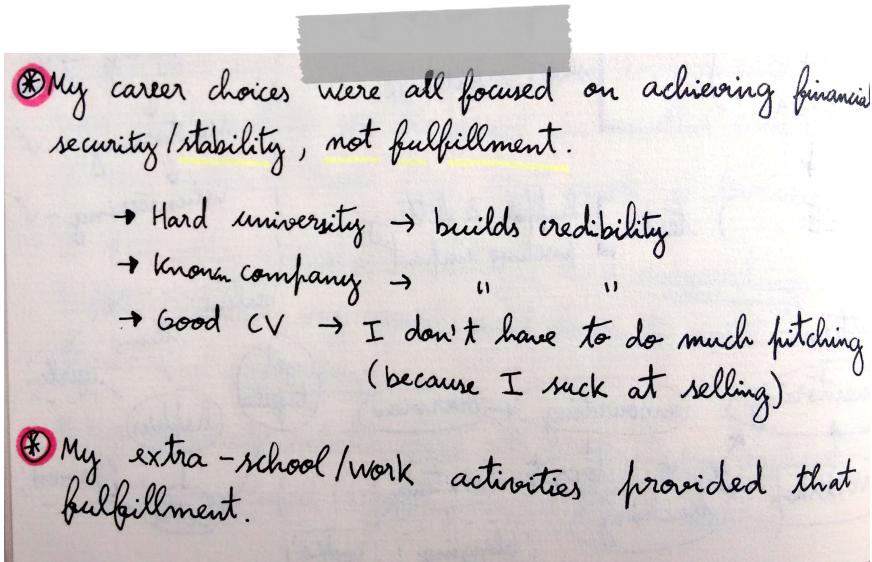
Try to relate those keywords and look for patterns or common themes.

4. List your conclusions. For each statement, give one example from step 1.

Can you see how one event influenced or led to another? Steve Jobs called this [“Connecting the Dots”](#) — he said “you can only connect the dots looking backward; you have to trust that the dots will somehow connect in the future”.

This exercise was adapted from the book [The Art of Work](#) and it is the first stage to find your calling. Finding fulfilment is less about grand moments of discovery and more about a habit of awareness.

Here's an example of the results:


My career choices were all focused on achieving financial security/stability, not fulfillment.
→ Hard university → builds credibility
→ Known company → " "
→ Good CV → I don't have to do much pitching
(because I suck at selling)
My extra-school/work activities provided that fulfillment.

Exercise 12

IKIGAI

Intersect passion, skill, impact, salary to discover your "reason for being"

EFFORT  ➤ INSIGHT 

The “ikigai” diagram is phenomenal to structure your thinking, as it lets you validate your current situation and your ideas for the future. To achieve fulfilment, you must consider:

- **What you LOVE**

- In my opinion, this is the most straightforward index of the four, because you know better than anyone what you love doing (see Fantastic Five). If needed you can influence this index, i.e., the more you learn about something the less it scares you.

- **What you're GOOD at**

- This index is biased – it's you evaluating your own skill. If you want to make it more objective, then ask your friends and colleagues their opinion (see Friend's Feedback). You can influence this index by investing time and effort on improving your skills.

- **What the world NEEDS**

- This requires awareness, knowing your market, and a bit of guess work. You can't really influence this criteria. Mind that this can change with time, i.e., something the world needs today can be deprecated or automated tomorrow.

- **What you can be PAID for**

- Again, this requires knowing your market and a bit of luck. You can influence this index in several ways: you can be so good they can't ignore you, you can lower your pricing, you can change the business model, etc.

IKIGAI

Find your reason for being

