



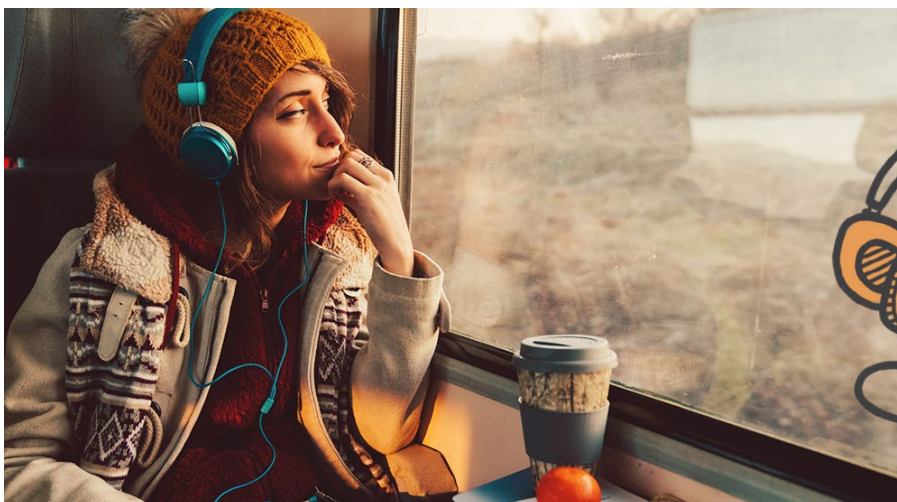
DISCOVERING INTERESTS - ACTIVITY

Whatever you believe about yourself is important.

Here's why.

Have you ever sat down and asked yourself the big hairy question, WHO AM I? (it's a serious head spin!) Who you think you are is called your 'self-concept'. It's made up of beliefs about yourself that you form from what important people in your life say about you. Along with big events that may have happened in your life.

While it might not be real or even accurate, it's amazing the influence the 'self concept' can have on your life. It can also have a big impact on the direction you'll take with your career.



How the 'self-concept' works

When other people give you positive feedback for something you've done, such as a compliment. Or a 'pat on the back', a smile of appreciation, you'll tend to feel good about yourself. You're also more likely to keep doing activities that give you positive feedback and make you feel good.

By doing activities you feel good about, you'll get better at them. You may develop an ongoing (or even life long) interest in those activities. In fact, you might even look for a course, past time or job in related activities because of the feedback*.

So, what's your 'self-concept'?

It's time to reveal your amazing talents, as you see them.



Try the "I am ..." exercise**

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- Pen and Paper
- A place to think without distractions
- A few minutes to reflect on some of the super cool things that make up who you are right now.



WHAT TO DO:

Write down 20 sentences starting with the words, I am". These are the things you like doing, you're good at, or you're always getting compliments for. You don't need to think too long and hard about it – whatever comes into your head. Also, try and write your statements as though you're talking to yourself, not someone else.

For example:

- I am kind
- I am someone who loves animals
- I am a good friend
- I am honest
- I am good at mathematics
- I am a good guitarist
- I am great at making pancakes
- I am always happy when I'm outdoors



So how did you go? When you look back over your statements, do you get any ideas about what to look for in choosing an occupation? Or a field of study? If so, then that's awesome. If not, then that's OK. It's a great little exercise to do anyway. And see, we told you're pretty amazing!



Try the "I just want to tell you" exercise

Here's another 'self-concept' exercise you might like to try with people you know well. This exercise is a way of practising to give positive feedback to important people in your life. It sounds a bit weird, but stay with us. It's incredible the difference positive feedback can have with your relationships. And how the 'self-concept' you nurture in other people can lead to positive feedback in return.



NEXT PAGE!



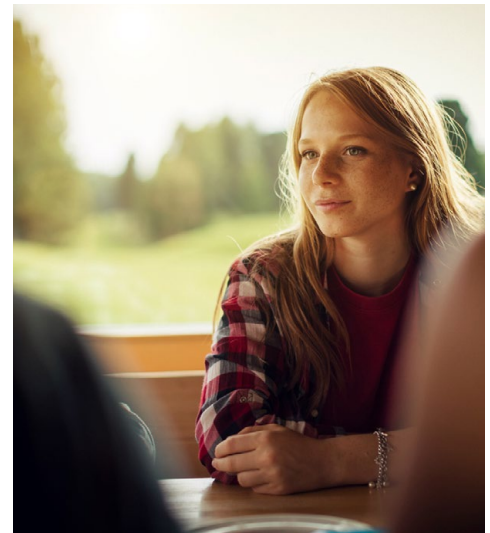
WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- Pen and Paper
- Three people you know well

WHAT TO DO:

1. First off, write down the names of three people you know well. It might be your mum or dad, your brother or sister, a good friend, an aunty or uncle, or even your footy coach.
2. Next, think of some positive feedback you can give each person. For example:
 - “Dad, I just want to tell you I really appreciate you making my school lunch every day.”
 - “Coach, I just want to tell you I’m kicking the ball so much better because of your tips.”
 - “Hey Sis, thanks for helping me with my maths homework. It means a lot to me.”
 - “Rosie, I know I can be a bit salty sometimes. But you’re always there for me, and I really value our friendship. Thanks.”

It doesn’t have to be much, but it should be sincere.
3. Now, choose a date by which you will give this positive feedback.
4. Give the positive feedback you’ve come up with for each person, and then put a tick alongside the person once you’ve said it.



Here’s an example of how to do this exercise

Person	Positive feedback I will give	Date I will give it by	Tick when done
Dad	Dad, I just want to tell you I appreciate you making my school lunch	30 June	
Mum	Mum, I just want to tell you I love going fishing with you	30 June	
Coach	Coach, I just want to tell you my kicking has improved so much because of you	30 June	



Key takeaway

Try and recognise the positive feedback about your skills. Your interests. Your values, and your personal qualities. These can often be great clues for subjects to study, as well as career options that are perfect for you.

*Mitchell L. K. & Krumboltz, J. D. (1996). Krumboltz’s learning theory of carer choice and counselling. In D. Brown & L. Brooks, Career Choice and Development (3rd ed.), Jossey-Bass Publishers.

**Kuhn, M. H. and McPartland, T. S. (1954). An empirical investigation of self-attitudes. American Sociological Review, 19, 68-76