

## **Cross-Currents: Thinking about Success: Composing Your Life**

Fall, 2024

**Instructor Names:**

**Class Day and Time:**

**Location:**

**Contact Info/Student Hours:**

**Course Description and Goals:** This course is designed for Pine Manor Institute Success Coaches and others to engage with various aspects of composing a flourishing, self-authored life and to support a mentee in reflecting on their own path during the Academic Year. Non-SCs may share course activities with a “mentee” of their choosing. In part one, we attend to components of success related to the self (e.g., identity, goals, values, stress management). Throughout the semester, students will ponder the following questions:

1. Who am I?
2. What does success mean to me?
3. How can I compose a life that feels meaningful?
4. How can I support others’ ability to compose a successful life?

While attaining financial gain, reaching specific career goals, and/or positioning oneself to support their family are all worthy success-focused goals, this course seeks to broaden students’ definition of success to include such components as values-alignment, self-care, and the ability to reflect and revise one’s goals.

**After taking this course students should better able to able to:**

1. Answer the question “Who am I?” using an assets-based lens.
2. Articulate a personal definition of success, after engaging in intentional introspection, one that goes beyond societal standards of affluence/career choice to a sense of meaning/ purpose/ flourishing.
3. Articulate a personal goal, strategy to get there and be able to reflect and adapt.
4. Navigate challenges by leveraging strengths and resources and utilizing discernment.
5. Practice self-compassion and self-care.
6. Accompany another on their path to success.

**Supplies Needed:**

Blank Notebook or Paper that you can use as a journal during and outside of class.

**Course Expectations**

Five Minutes of Silence

We will begin each class with five minutes of silence. During this time, students may read silently, journal, or simply sit quietly. No phones or laptops are permitted during this time.

Participation and Discussion Questions

This course relies heavily on full participation from all students. Students should come to class prepared with questions and observations from the week’s readings and preliminary thoughts regarding pre-class reflection questions.

Written Reflections

Each week, students will submit a written reflection, with at least 2 observations and 1 question responding to the week’s readings. At times, you also may be asked to respond to specific prompts. All written responses should be about 1-2 pages in length, using 12 point font, submitted electronically to the

Canvas site by 11:00 pm the evening before class. You may miss 2 reflections for full credit. Please title your document, as follows:

LASTNAMEreflection\_date (e.g. ANDERSONreflection\_9.15.24)

It is highly recommended that you keep a journal this semester that you bring to class to jot down items of personal significance or interest.

### Field Notes

Starting on the week of September 30, you will be beginning your role as Success Coach. Each SC session will start off with a check in, then homework support, then an activity from the relevant week of this class. If you are not in a success coach role, you may select someone of your choosing to serve as your mentee, and submit field notes on your weekly interactions with them.

After each session, you will report on your sessions with your mentee/s, answering each of the following questions: Did each student attend-if not, why not? What did you do during the session, generally? How did you use course materials/activities? What do you notice/wonder about the student/next steps? What is something that went well or felt positive? What support would you like, if anything, from us?

Before September 30, your field notes will be structured as reflections on class, planning for SC sessions.

### Culminating Assignment

At the end of class you will be asked to submit and present your composition portfolio, your responses to questions around composing your life. See [attached document](#) for more details. If you would like to propose an alternative assignment that shows your learning in this course, please reach out.

### Attendance and Punctuality

The strength of this course is the learning community that we form throughout our weeks together. Because each student is a vital participant in this community, attendance and punctuality is mandatory. If an unavoidable conflict arises, the student should meet with either instructor to discuss the conflict. In order for an absence to be excused, communication with either instructor must take place prior to the start of class. If a student misses a class in addition to one previously excused absence, the student will not pass this course. If a student is consistently late, the student's inability to fully participate will result in not passing the course.

### Accommodations

Your experience in this class is important to me. In addition to any established accommodations you may have with **Connors Family Learning Center** (learning disabilities and ADHD) and/or **Disability Services** (all other disabilities), We hope you'll speak with us about any barriers you experience to learning in this course. We are interested in working with you to find ways for you to engage in the core learning of this course and to provide opportunities for you to demonstrate your learning to the best of your abilities.

### Academic Integrity Statement

Please see the full BC Undergraduate Academic Integrity Policy [here](#). The pursuit of knowledge can proceed only when scholars take responsibility and receive credit for their work. Recognition of individual contributions to knowledge and of the intellectual property of others builds trust within the University and encourages the sharing of ideas that is essential to scholarship. Similarly, the educational process requires that individuals present their own ideas and insights for evaluation, critique, and eventual reformation. Presentation of others' work, [including work created by AI] as one's own is not only intellectual dishonesty, but also undermines the education process. Given our course assignments are focused on personal reflection and that this reflection is an important means of coming to know yourself and your view of success more fully, we trust that you will share your own insights and questions in each assignment. Please share any questions or concerns with us.

### **Course Schedule**

## **Week of August 26: Taking a Pause**

Before class, please read:

Nichols, Morgan. (2023). [Give yourself permission to pause](#)

Ruiz, Benedicta. (2014). [Pause](#)

Please respond to the following prompts on Canvas: What most spoke to me from these readings? What is a question I was left with? What is one way I might use what I read in my own life this semester or this week? How might I help a mentee practice pausing?

Please bring a journal or paper and writing utensil to class each session.

## **Week of September 2 (No class on Monday): Thinking about Noticing and Wondering**

Before class, please read:

Chavez, R. (2019). [The art of paying attention](#). *Thinkgrowprosper.com*

Chödrön, Pema. (2023). [How we get hooked and how we get unhooked](#). *Lion's roar: Buddhist wisdom for our time*.

de Mello, A. (2000). [Selected Passages](#). In *Awareness*. Bantam Doubleday Dell.

Please respond to the following prompts on Canvas: What most spoke to me from these readings? What is a question I was left with? Stopping to notice, what is going on with me right now? How might I practice looking at my own struggles and those of others with compassion and curiosity? What are my habitual patterns that keep me from being present and aware?

Monday class only. Please watch the first 6 minutes of Levien, Richard. (2009). [Immersion](#).

Please submit your notes on the following: What do you notice? What do you wonder? If you were this student's success coach what might you do?

## **Week of September 9: Thinking about Courage and Confidence**

Before class, please read:

O'Donohue, John. (2008) . [For a new beginning](#). In *To bless the space between us: A book of blessings* (p. 14). Convergent..

Gillies, Isabel (2019). [You are cozy](#). In *Cozy: The art of arranging yourself in the world*. First edition. Harper Wave.

Brown, B. (2010). [Courage, compassion, and connection: the gifts of imperfection](#). In *Gifts of Imperfection: Let go of who you think you're supposed to be and embrace who you are* (pp. 12-20). Hazelden Publishing.

Please watch:

Packnett-Cunningham, B. (2019). [How to build your confidence: And spark it in others](#). TED.

Please add a song or two (name, artist, link) that helps you feel more brave and confident to our google doc [playlist](#). Also, please listen to at least 3 songs from the list with which you aren't familiar.

Please respond to the following prompts on Canvas: What most spoke to me from these readings? What is a question I was left with? The Academy Pledge says, "I have all the tools I need for success within me." What are some of the tools for success that you possess?

Please make sure to bring your journal to class today.

## **Week of September 16: Thinking about Curiosity and Self-Compassion**

Before class, please read:

O'Brien, Tim. (2010). [What they carried](#). *The things they carried: A work of fiction* (pp. 1-14). Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.

Pipher, Mary. (2009). [Despair and self-acceptance](#). *Seeking peace: Chronicles of the worst Buddhist in the world* (Pp. 191-210). Riverhead Books.

Weber, S. (2019). [Self-love isn't easy: 10 things I do to practice radical self-love](#). *The body is not an apology* website.

Please respond to the following prompts on Canvas: What most spoke to me from these readings? What is a question I was left with? What are some of the things I carry? Which of these might I want to let go of and which might I want to shift and why? What is a challenge for me when it comes to self-love or self-acceptance? What is one thing I might try in order to cultivate more self-love or self-compassion?

Please make sure to bring your journal to class today.

## **Week of September 23: Thinking about our Stories**

Before class, please read:

St Onge, Natallie. (2018). [I am first](#). Marquette wire.

1/2 more short readings.

Please watch:

Adichie, C (2009, July). [The danger of a single story](#). TED Global.

Please respond to the following prompts on Canvas: What most spoke to me from these readings? What is a question I was left with? Add to this.

## **Week of September 30: Thinking about Growth and Self-Motivation**

Before class, please read:

Coursera Staff (2023). [How to motivate yourself: Eleven tips for self improvement](#).

Cherry, K (2022). [The six stages of change: The transtheoretical, or stages of change, model](#). Verywellmind.com

Hartney, E (2023). [Understanding motivational interviewing](#). Verywellmind.com

The one you feed. <https://www.oneyoufeed.net/about-the-parable/>

Yazdi, H. (2016). [How educators can foster student motivation](#). The Digital Promise.

Please respond to the following prompts on Canvas: What most spoke to me from these readings? What is a question I was left with? What is one way I might use what I read in my own life this semester or this week? In working with a mentee? What is a goal I would like to think more about in class this week, and why does it feel important to me? What am I feeding? When do I feel most motivated? When is it challenging to feel motivated?

Starting this week, please remember to complete your field notes.

## **Week of October 7: Thinking about Navigating Challenges/Adaptability**

Before class please read:

Angelou, M. (1978). [Still I rise](#). And still I rise. New York, Random House. Poetryfoundation.org  
Stülberg, B. (2022). [6 principles for navigating challenges in life](#). In *Outside online*.

Please watch:

Ward, J. (2018) [Navigate your stars](#). Commencement speech given to the class of 2018 of Tulane University.

Please respond to the following prompts on Canvas: What most spoke to me from these readings? What is a question I was left with? When something feels challenging what tools can you draw upon? When something feels challenging what tools within yourself can you draw upon? Who can you go to for support or advice?

## **Week of October 14 (No class this week): Thinking about Time**

Before class, please read:

Ben-Shahar, T. (2007). [Happiness Explained](#). In *Happier: learn the secrets to daily joy and lasting fulfillment* (pp. 31-51). McGraw-Hill.  
Ben-Shahar, T. (2007). [Sixth meditation: Take your time](#). In *Happier: learn the secrets to daily joy and lasting fulfillment* (pp. 151-157). McGraw-Hill.

Please watch:

Christian, B. (2018, January) [How to manage your time more effectively according to machines](#) [Video]. Ted-Ex conferences.

In lieu of class, please complete the Mapping your Life, Integrity Mirror, and Simplify exercises from your reading. Additionally, please look over the culminating assignment.

Please respond to the following prompts on Canvas: What most spoke to me from these readings? What is a question I was left with? After completing the reading exercises, what would I like to spend more time doing? What would I like to spend less time doing? What is one thing I might try to accomplish this? What was the process of tracking and reflecting on my time like for me? What did I learn about myself and learn, in general, by doing this exercise? Also, please write down any questions regarding your culminating assignment.

## **Week of October 21: Thinking about Stress Management and Self-Care**

Before class, please read 3 of the following 4:

Scanlon, S (2020). [7 ways to manage stress and prevent burnout](#). Couple and family clinic.  
Clark, T (2019). [This is what black burnout feels like](#). Buzzfeed news.  
Clarke, Z (2022). [How to avoid BIPOC burnout](#). LinkedIn.  
Bowler, K. & Richie, J. (2022). [When you are exhausted](#). In *Good enough: 40ish devotionals for a life of imperfection* (pp. 56-59). Convergent Books.

Please watch:

Nagoski E. and A. (2021). [The cure for burnout \(hint: it isn't self-care\)](#). TED

Please respond to the following prompts on Canvas: What most spoke to me from these readings? What is a question I was left with? What am I already doing to take care of myself and/or to prevent burnout? What is one way I might use what I read in my own life this semester or this week? In working with a mentee?

Please make sure to bring your journal to class today.

### **Week of October 28: Thinking about Self-Learning**

Before class, please read:

Thibodeaux, W. (2018). [Science says this is the simplest way to remember more of what you read](#). In, *Inc.com*.

Creately. (2023). [The easy guide to self-learning for remote learning students](#). In, *creately.com*.

Please watch:

Please respond to the following prompts on Canvas: What most spoke to me from these readings? What is a question I was left with? Add to this.

### **Week of November 4: Thinking about Financial Independence**

Before class, please read:

CFI Team. [Financial literacy: The cognitive understanding of financial components and skills](#).

Money values/personality reading

Please spend a little time on [nerdwallet.com](#). Select one topic of interest to you from the top row menu and examine it.

Please respond to the following prompts on Canvas: What most spoke to me from these readings? What is a question I was left with? Add to this.

### **Week of November 11: Thinking about Values and Discernment**

Before class, please read:

Liang, B. & Klein, T. (2022). [Value Archetypes](#). In, *How to navigate life: The new science of finding your way in school, career, and beyond*. St. Martin's Press (pp 93-118).

Please watch:

Jr, M. (2017). [Know your why](#).

Faber Center for Ignatian Spirituality. (2015). [The daily Examen prayer](#). [www.marquette.edu](http://www.marquette.edu)

The Daily Show

Please respond to the following prompts on Canvas: What most spoke to me from these readings? What is a question I was left with? Who do you admire? What do you admire about them? What would you like to emulate about them? When have you stood up for something and/or taken a risk?

Looking at the list in Values Archetypes pp 95-97, try to narrow down your three core values and bring them to class. Please also complete the quick quiz on pp. 107-8.

### **Week of November 18: Thinking about Mindfulness and Joy**

Before class, please read:

Gunarantana, H. (1992). [Meditation in everyday life](#). In *Mindfulness in plain English* (pp. 151-162). Wisdom Publications.

Berry, Wendell. (1973). [Manifesto: The mad farmer liberation front](#).

Wade, Cleo. (2018). [Have your joy](#). In *Heart Talk*. Atria. (pp. 138-9)

Please read or watch:

Gay, Ross. (2013). [To the fig tree on 9th and Christian](#). In *American poetry* (May-June ed). (Link to watch is [here](#).)

Please respond to the following prompts on Canvas: What most spoke to me from these readings? What is a question I was left with? What brings me joy? When do I feel most present? What gets in the way of living more mindfully? How might I bring more mindfulness into my life?

### **Week of November 25 (Thanksgiving-No class on Wednesday/Thursday/Friday): Thinking about Gratitude**

Before class, please read:

Bowler, K. & Richie, J. (2022). [Happy enough](#). In *Good enough: 40ish devotionals for a life of imperfection* (pp. 61-67). Convergent Books.

Laméris, D. [Small Kindnesses](#).

Gay, R. (2011). [Sorrow is not my name](#). In *Bringing the shovel down*. University of Pittsburgh Press.

Caron, C. (2023). [Gratitude really is good for you. Here's what the science shows](#). In *New York Times*. June 8, 2023.

In lieu of class, please engage in a daily gratitude practice this week (journal, end of day reflection, daily thank you note/message to someone you appreciate) and create the gratitude slide for your culminating assignment.

Please respond to the following prompts on Canvas: What most spoke to me from these readings? What is a question I was left with? What is one way I might use what I read in my own life this semester or this week? In working with a mentee? If you already have a gratitude practice, what does it bring to your life? If you do not have a gratitude practice, what gets in the way? How did engaging in this practice over this week feel?

### **Week of December 2: Thinking about Self-Reflection (Examen)**

Before class, please read:

Haig, M (2013). [Advice for a Human](#). In *The humans: A novel* (pp. 259-265). Simon & Schuster.

Kurtz, A (2021). [Introduction](#). In *You are here now: A guide to finding your way* (pp. 1-19).

Tarcher Perigree.

Please watch:

Byers, G (2021). [I am enough](#). Read aloud by the author.

Woodson, J (2021). [The day you begin](#). Netflix Jr.

Please respond to the following prompts on Canvas: What most spoke to me from these readings? What is a question I was left with? When I look back over the semester, what have I learned about myself? What brings me closer to joy? What makes me feel troubled? What do I appreciate about myself? What are 5 pieces of advice I would give to humans?