



Push's Quick Guide to...

## Exploring what You want from Life

### **Life is a marathon, not a sprint:**

The Tarahumara are an elusive running tribe in the Sierra Tarahumara mountain range in the Mexican state of Chihuahua (yes, like the dog!). They are known to run as an entire family group, covering up to 200 miles in one running session. That's an ultra ultra-marathon! They don't go for speed, or count their miles. They don't set a distance either. They run for the pure joy of it, and run further and with a smile on their faces, because they are around those people who matter most to them. They run as a family. As a tribe. And they famously don't warm up, either.

*Life is like this: it is a marathon not a sprint, and there is no warm up. You set off before you can walk, and you try and move forward each day with a curiosity for life, discovering new knowledge, skills and relationships.*



We're running along our unique journey from the moment we are born. Think of your own ultra ultra marathon as an exciting journey - which will unfold step by step. And one you can't fully map out. Work out your community of runners in life: those who energise you, instead of drain you. And it is healthier for your mindset to not feel in competition with others. You can **stop, rest and reassess** at any point on your route: there might be the odd stumble, injury or wrong turn in life. But know there will be supportive people who will encourage you to get up and go again.

### **You might be inspired by some of the runners ahead:**

Think about people working right now in places you aspire to be in. Find out why they set off on a path, and why they have chosen to stick to it. Think about what it's like to tread in their shoes, the potential ups and downs, the bouts of tiredness - and how much resilience, skills and knowledge were required to navigate unexpected twists and turns. What is it that keeps them running each day at a good pace and drives them forward? Is it the deep meaning and value they get from their route? Is it the feeling of supporting others in their running tribe? Is it having inspiring like-minded people running around them that push them to be a better human being each day? Is it, simply, because this route is the one they've discovered the most laughter on?

- Look at the choices inspiring people made at your age, and how they moved from education to employment.
- Ask yourself why you relate to them: why are they inspiring to you?
- Don't focus on the name of their job: focus on how you think their job makes them feel inside. Is it their job that you like, or how they present themselves as a human being because of the happiness they get from their job?
- Set yourself realistic expectations: you may want to pursue their career path, but are there also ways you can get to feel just like them, in a different type of job?
- Don't make outer (extrinsic) rewards like money and fame your main drivers. Focus on working out what inner (intrinsic) rewards would stimulate you, on a professional work journey.
- Inner rewards (helping people, responsibility, feeling valued, feeling a sense of belonging) are what true life and work happiness are built on, not money or fame. Most successful famous people never set out to be famous: they just pursued what they loved each day.

### **Advice v Decision:**

All types of people will offer you guidance on the best routes and the best way to go about running it. There are often 3 key sets of 'influencers' in life: your parents/carers, your school and your friends. They will all offer their advice to you, about the best route to take, but you don't have to take it.

**Others can help you make your decisions, but your own feelings and research is more important.**

Do listen and be open to other people's opinions (they might notice talents of yours that you've overlooked), but remember that it's you who must make the final decision. They're not running your career ultra-marathon, so don't let them shape the whole route for you. If you listen to advice then decide if it is useful, and use it, that is called being proactive. If you just take every piece of advice people offer, or just do what you're told all the time, that's called being reactive. Proactive people have the most fulfilling life journeys.

### Do what you love & love what you do:

Make sure you think about what fuels your brain and practical energies. Stop and reflect each day. Keep a careers diary. Note down your thoughts: you never know when you'll be inspired. When building a career path think about the following 3 things:

- Your personality and how it is shaped (family, friends, hobbies, interests)
- Your values (honesty, fairness, respect, responsibility, caring, citizenship, peace, equality)
- What truly matters to you (these might be your values, but may also include people, places, and things)

Create a careers diary	Clues to your potential passions: Think about...
<p>Note down what you love doing and some things you dream of. Be honest with yourself &amp; pay attention to your strengths. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Do you cope well with high-pressure situations? Are you a quick learner?</li><li>• Do you inspire other people with your personality and ideas?</li><li>• Do you work well in a team? Do you work well independently?</li><li>• Do people often confide in you because you're an active listener &amp; good at supporting others?</li></ul> <p>Think of which careers value these qualities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What you like to read or watch</li><li>• The websites or social media accounts you like to visit, and why</li><li>• The activities you can't wait to do in break, after school or on the weekend</li><li>• The lessons at school/college that fly by because they're fun</li><li>• What types of experiences stick in your mind and make you desperate to learn more about</li></ul> <p>If you can make money doing something you love every day, then why not pursue it as a career?</p>

### What are job rewards?

Rewards are your inner and outer motivations to keep running your marathon. Here's a few rewards (although there's plenty more to explore): *work-life balance, something worthwhile, respect, creativity, flexibility, helping people, having responsibility, money, opportunities to travel, working in a team/alone, solving problems, etc.*

### The perfect career:

A career is the collection of jobs you have over your life. And you don't know how many of those there will be. The main thing to focus on is ensuring that you generate value (for your employer) and they give you value in return (the right mix of inner and outer rewards). You may never know if it is the perfect career, but focusing on the 3 foundations below, and where the overlap is, will help you stay on a challenging but fun route each day.

1. **Knowing what you want to do:** your passions, hobbies, loves and interests.
2. **Knowing what you can do:** your skills, natural talents/talents you've developed.
3. **Knowing what each job involves:** researching careers online and via events / trips, speaking to employers and careers advisers, trying out jobs through work experience, professional placements, internships or part-time or full-time jobs.



Watch Ben's Putting Pressure on Yourself video for inspiration on your life journey