

PRIDE AND JOY EXERCISE

Have you been asked, “What do you like to do?” While this appears to be a simple question, it is often very difficult to answer. The Pride and Joy Exercise will help you answer this question by having you examine the experiences in your life where you felt fulfilled. By listing 5-10 examples and examining the details of each situation, you will begin to notice common themes emerge where you felt happy and proud of your accomplishments.

For this exercise, consider times in your life when you were proud and joyful due to your actions and efforts. Did you feel a sense of accomplishment and pride when working on a project for a class? A volunteer experience? An interaction with a co-worker? An event you planned? Whether the event/project/effort was a success or not is not important – only the fact that you were proud of your effort and experienced joy in the process. After identifying the moment, deconstruct the experience and examine the details to help you identify which parts were instrumental in producing your positive feelings. Writing out the details of the example in a story format will help you with this.

When you have completed this exercise, review all the examples you chose looking for common themes or traits from the various experiences. Share these themes and the stories of the experiences with friends, family, mentors, and career consultants to help your “**CONNECTIONS**” better understand you and allow them to begin to understand the types of career paths that may be a good match for you.

EXAMPLE:

TROOP COMPETITION AT CAMP TAMARACK

When I was in fifth grade, I was chosen to be lead scout for my troop at summer camp. One of my responsibilities while at camp was to assign troop members to different activities for the Friday competition among the groups of scouts (canoe race, egg toss, tug-o-war). I assigned different scouts to various events where I thought they would excel, created a master list of who needed to be where and when, and followed up with each competitor (when not competing myself) to ensure people were in the right places at the right time. In the end, my troop won the overall competition and I was presented with a prize at that evening's awards ceremony – a watermelon to share with my fellow troop members.

I felt pride because I was responsible for leading my troop members. Having the responsibilities on my shoulders and executing the plan still resonates with me today. During the competition, I enjoyed visiting each venue, finding my troop's representatives, giving a pep talk, and keeping them abreast of how other team members were performing. Creating a sense of pride for our team was something that produced pride in me and joy in my effort.

Externally, I enjoyed winning the competition. Being called up in front of a crowd to receive an award was memorable – I enjoyed the competition and leading a team to victory. Additionally, my parents were able to attend the Friday night awards ceremony and I felt pride when they saw my team's accomplishment.

After reviewing this example, we can easily identify some potential themes. The person who wrote this piece enjoys being in charge and motivating others. External recognition is a motivating factor and this person enjoys competing for that recognition. This individual may prefer to lead as an individual rather than building a consensus in a group setting – although building a sense of pride and teamwork among a team is also important to the author.

When outlining your experiences, be certain to consider the following questions: What was the scope of the effort? Who was involved? What was your role? Where did the project/event take place? Why were you proud? What specifically caused you joy? While this is not an exhaustive list, it can help you remember the important details of your experiences.