Cultivating the Spirit to Work
Assisting Students Through Change and Transition

"What lies beyond us
and what lies before us
are tiny matters
compared to what lies within us."

- Ralph Waldo Emerson

For Complete information on Denise's work and publications, please visit:
www.denisебissonnette.com
Activity 4-11.1 STEPPING STONES

FOOD FOR THOUGHT:

"The journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step."

- Lao Tzu

Ah, the power of a single step! To make our way in the world, rather than against it or in spite of it, we must walk our path with clarity of purpose, with committed steps and a determined stride. And yet, we must also remain open to new turns in the road, obstacles and opportunities not marked on our map. The territory never turns out to be exactly like the map we laid out on paper or charted in our minds. If we remain open to uncharted possibilities, amazing things will happen.

Our purposes are greater than our goals; for while our goals must remain fluid in order to conform with the realities of the road, our underlying purposes serve like a steady compass guiding us along the ups and downs of our journey. During times of our lives when we feel we have lost control, we can regain our self-confidence by making the commitment to keep our actions true to our purposes.

Of course, it is easy to panic when the landscape of our decisions makes us feel like we are perched on a high cliff overlooking the Grand Canyon. But even in the Grand Canyon, there are many short, manageable paths leading, step by step, down to the canyon floor. Similarly, it is immensely easier to make a series of small choices than it is to make major life decisions. Making small choices one at a time allows us to watch the developing pattern of events and helps us to be open to new directions. The leaps of faith we have to make, then, are not so great, the decisions not so overwhelming.

It is important to conserve your energy as the precious resource it is. We gain energy by managing it well. This activity is designed to help you make good use of your energy and to concentrate on taking "little steps" which lead to important places, those targeted in your heart of hearts.
Activity 4-11.2a  SAMPLE LIST OF SMALL STEPS  
Cultivating True Livelihood Worksheet

1. Check and return phone messages every day by 3:00.

2. Pick up today's newspaper on the way to Job Club meeting.

3. By Tuesday morning, return call to Mr. Burns regarding an informational interview.

4. Make 20 copies of my revised resume this afternoon.

5. Make changes on employment proposal for ABC, Inc. by Friday.

6. Pick up company information packet from IBM's human resources office on Tuesday.

7. Find out when and where next job fair is being held at local community colleges.

8. Discover fastest way to take public transit from home to the east side. Try a new route today.

"Grain by grain, a loaf; Stone by stone, a castle."

- Scandinavian saying

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9. Pick up newest issue of *Careers in Computers* from the library to share at Thursday's networking meeting.

10. Call Renee today to sign up for an Internet workshop.

11. Do physical exercise four times per week.

12. Finish *Work Priorities Assessment* for Tuesday's Support Team meeting.

13. Read Jefferson's resume and call him by Wednesday to give him feedback; Ask for his recommendations on mine.

14. Talk to Bud about possible positions at Safeway for Melissa when I do my shopping Wednesday morning.

15. Post employment-wanted ads at local businesses and public bulletin boards. Write them with help from Support Team on Tuesday; Post them by Friday.

"The difference between stumbling blocks and stepping stones is how they are used."

- Anonymous

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Activity 4-11.2b  YOUR LIST OF SMALL STEPS
Cultivating True Livelihood Worksheet

Using the list on the worksheet entitled "Sample Lists of Small Steps" as a springboard for your own ideas, itemize 10 steps you will take to maintain momentum in your work search and a feeling of order in your life. When appropriate, put a timeline on accomplishing each of the steps you listed.

Let your List of Small Steps be a guide for your actions each day. As you complete each step on your list, replace it with another.

1. 
2. 
3. 
4. 
5. 
6. 
7. 
8. 
9. 
10.

"What saves a man is to take a step. Then another step. And another."

- Antoine de Saint-Exupery

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Activity 4-13.3 YOUR WORK SEARCH PLAN:
GOALS AND ACTIONS FORM

OBJECTIVES FOR THE WEEK OF:______________________________

1. GOAL
   SPECIFIC ACTIONS

2. GOAL
   SPECIFIC ACTIONS

3. GOAL
   SPECIFIC ACTIONS

4. GOAL
   SPECIFIC ACTIONS
**ACTIVITY 4-13.4 DAILY PLAN OF ACTION FORM**

Cultivating True Livelihood Worksheet

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## Activity 4-13.5 Weekly Balance Check

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The 12 headings across the top of the page of your Weekly Balance Check represent the 12 categories of action that characterize a healthy, effective and well-rounded work search. The ideal work search plan includes participation in activities from all of these categories, and on a regular basis. There is tremendous freedom within each category to incorporate your own style and utilize your particular strengths. This form is not intended to limit your efforts, but to lend a structure which may be used as a springboard for your creativity. Use this form and the accompanying list as a guide to help you plan and maintain a focused and well-rounded work search. Notice when there are categories of work search without any focus or attention and ask yourself, “What can I be doing today or this week to keep this part of my work search going?” Also notice when one or more categories of action are receiving more focus and energy than is beneficial. A healthy work search maintains a balance of activities among the 12 categories.

For example, work seekers who spend all of their time researching employers need to devote some attention to initiating contact with employers from their targeted list. An ever-growing list does not bring value until it is used!

Another example is the person who is singly focused on mailing resumes with cover letters may need to devote some time following up on the employers who have already received her resume.

**CATEGORIES FOR WEEKLY PLAN OF ACTION**

1. **Self-Assessment:** Activities which assist you in the ongoing process of identifying and targeting your hopes and aspirations, your skills and abilities, and your choices and decisions as they relate to seeking or creating work opportunities.

2. **Researching and Targeting Employers:** Activities in which you explore, uncover and identify employer information and potential work prospects through a vast variety of research methods.

3. **Preparing Proposals, Resumes and Cover Letters:** Ongoing development and tailoring of the written tools necessary for an effective work search.

4. **Networking and Informational Interviewing:** Contacting or meeting with people you know (or want to know) in order to build further connections with people in business. Includes setting up personal interviews with employers for information on the business or industry, and on technical training and employment opportunities. Includes participating in community workshops, seminars, and professional development activities. Includes participating in job clubs or support groups, and other activities which provide networking opportunities.

5. **Initiating Contact with Targeted Employers:** Introducing and presenting yourself to targeted employers through the use of targeted mailings of employment proposals or resumes with cover letters, walking in the door and presenting yourself in person, and calling businesses on the telephone to introduce yourself and reach agreement on the next step for application.

6. **Responding to Advertisements:** Uncovering and following up on job search efforts with the use of the phone, fax, e-mail, and written correspondence. Includes participating in multiple resources and options for job search.

7. **Rallying Resources:** Taking advantage of employment services and outside community resources for work search assistance and information; includes private and public employment agencies. Includes participating in community job clubs or support groups, job search workshops, seminars, and training events related to the work search.

8. **Job Interviewing:** Preparing for, completing, and following up on employment interviews. Includes job search workshops, seminars, and training events related to the work search.

9. **Follow-up Activities:** Following up on your efforts with use of the phone, fax, e-mail, and written correspondence. Includes participating in community resources for work search assistance and information, including employment offices and community workshops.

10. **Life/Spirt Upkeep:** Activities which serve to keep up your mental, emotional and physical well-being during the stressful period of the work search.

11. **Work Preparation:** Miscellaneous activities relating to preparing yourself for the work world, from practical transportation and child care issues to technical training and vocational preparation.

12. **Rewards:** Specific ways and ideas for rewarding yourself for the successful completion of each day or weekly plan!
Circumstances

Winds of Change

Problems

Growth Life Evolution

Transitions

Belief

Soul

Self-assessment

New experiences

Supportive Friends

Mind

Role Models

Mental

Resources

Training

Body

Support

Heart

New Information

New Questions

Strategies

Opportunities

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