

WORKBOOK

HOW TO FIND YOUR CALLING



SPREAD YOUR WINGS AND START FLYING
WITH THIS MINI COURSE.

POWERED BY

Born to fly

A SHORT STORY TO START

Once upon a time...

After a horrible storm, a man found a **young eagle** that had fallen out of the nest. He picked it up, put it **among his chickens** and gave it chicken's food to eat.

Five years later, a naturalist visited the owner and, seeing the bird, said to him, "That's an eagle. **Why is it acting** like a chicken?"

"Well," the owner replied, "It now thinks it's a chicken. It's just the way it is. It **adapted** to his environment. And it's is having **a good life.**"

The naturalist was surprised and insisted he could try to make the eagle fly. The owner approved it, knowing it wouldn't make a difference. His many attempts to let the eagle fly had already failed before.

The naturalist threw the bird skyward, the bird attempted to fly, but, when it looked down and saw the chickens eating, it came down and joined them.

"I told you so," is what the owner said.

Undaunted, the naturalist persisted to continue the exercise. But the eagle **kept going back** to the chickens. "Can I try one more thing?" the man asked. The owner nodded.

The naturalist stood on a hill, held the bird up, and shouted: "Eagle, you are **meant** to fly. You don't belong here!"

This time, the eagle **looked up** and saw other eagles flying in the sky. And suddenly, it stretched out its wings and, with the screech of an eagle, soared to the sky—**higher and higher** until it disappeared from sight.

The eagle never returned.

It never came back to eat the chicken's food, or **act like one.**

introduction //

The moral of the eagle story is clear:

The eagle, unlike the chicken, is born to fly.

As long as the eagle thinks it's a chicken, it will never fly—it won't do what it's ought to do.

As long as the eagle is comfortable and satisfied with acting like a chicken, it will never experience the sensation of doing what it was made to do.

How many times have you—have I—acted like a chicken? Staying comfortable in the life you have, not having to stretch much?

Did being comfortable made you **lukewarm** toward what you do in life? Is your life fine—not exciting nor boring? That sounds like an eagle among chickens. But you wouldn't be here if you didn't see a glimpse of an eagle in you. Somewhere deep inside you know there's **a calling for you** too, but what is it?

I get it. Finding your purpose can be quite **challenging**. It's not handed to you on a silver platter. But the pressure to find it is high for a reason. Because you feel **miserable** in the position you're at now. The truth is, if you are not fulfilling this God-given calling in you, you are wasting your precious, miraculous life.

There is a plan for you!

You were born to fly!

You were meant to go to great heights.

To do things that are beyond your imagination.

—Not to be content with the comfortable or safe but to conquer your dreams!

Who said that?

Well, God.

About that plan...

In Ephesians 2: 10 He says: *“For we are God’s masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago.”*

I don’t think it can get any clearer than this. **God planned** good things and works we can do in our life to **glorify** Him and build **His Kingdom**. That’s why it shouldn’t be a surprise every one of us has a unique set of talents and skills. Given by God. But more on that later 😊.

About flying to great heights...

Paul says about the truth of our human nature in Ephesians 4:21-24:
*“When you heard about Christ and were taught in Him in accordance with the truth that is in Jesus, you were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires, **to be made new in the attitude of your minds, and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.**”*

When we come to Christ, we are to **put off** our old self and get rid of our old, sinful habits—for me that was always doing the safest and most secure thing. We become a **new person**, created by God himself. It’s a process, considering the expression “put on”. The attitude of your mind doesn’t change overnight. However, the core, and most exciting, part of this verse is that we are created to be **like God** in true righteousness and holiness.

WOW!

To be like God in righteousness means to be adept at doing good and excellent at being good. And to be like God in holiness means to be of a totally different order, of a different category. And that, that's God's will:

A life of a totally different order from the life you see around you.

—Born to fly!

outline of the program //

Let me just say it from the start: finding your calling and passions requires **work**. The odds are very low to find it right away (Why? I'll explain later). It's a **process** of getting to know yourself and picking up the clues that are around you. All while being in conversation with God.

That's why I invite you to do the work.

This program contains a lot of writing exercises. On purpose. You're 42 percent more likely to **reach your goals** if you *write them down*, according to an oft-cited study done by Dr. Gail Matthews, a psychology professor at Dominican University of California.

So, do them!

During this program, the eagle will be used as an **analogy** to find your calling, which will make it easier and more fun for you to remember.

For centuries, the eagle has had an important role in several myths, poems, songs and folk tales. Also in the Bible the eagle is mentioned over 30 times to **showcase spirituals truths** and to show how the characteristics of an eagle can be applied to the life of a follower of Christ. Hence, the pretty neat eagle-framework 😊!

The outline:

- Chapter 1: the destination
- Chapter 2: the eyesight – what do you see in your dreams
- Chapter 3: the heart – passion
- Chapter 4: the wings - competence
- Chapter 5: fly – turning things into action

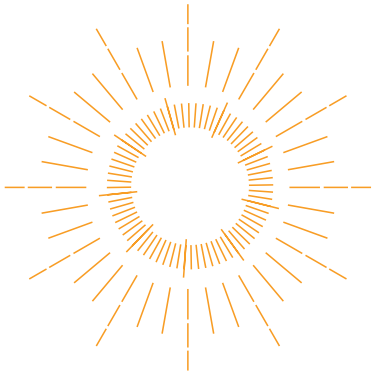
Let's get started!

xoxo

Jane



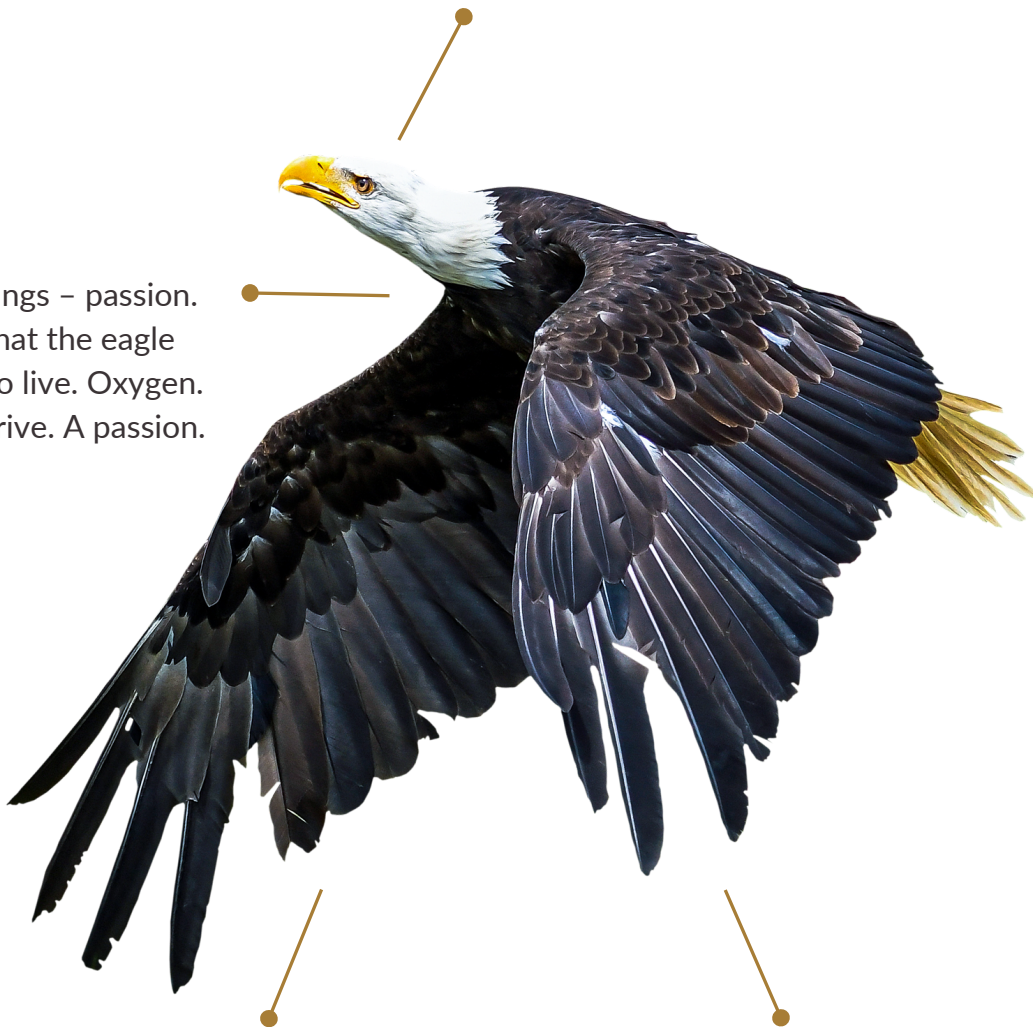
eagle framework //



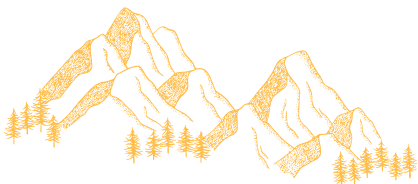
1. the destination. We're grounded in it. This gaze upwards is part of who we are and what our ultimate being connects to.

2. the eyesight - what do you see? The vision, the dream that is crystal clear and sharp.

3. the heart & lungs - passion. They provide what the eagle needs in order to live. Oxygen. Heartbeats. A drive. A passion.



4. the wings - competence. Aptitude and skills, we need them to function. Knowing them will direct your steps toward what you want.



5. fly - turning things into action. Once the theory is in place, practice comes next. Learn how to take the first steps, fly.

disclaimer //

God has **His own timing**, also for revealing your calling. Doing this program will definitely help you to focus on what's necessary to figure out—a lot has to do with knowing yourself. But God is the One **who's in control** of this process.

In the Bible are four examples of how God reveals purpose:

1. As a thunderbolt.

Like He did for Paul.

Your purpose becomes clear in a moment or event instantly.

2. As walking through open doors.

Like Esther.

It's being revealed over many years, step by step as you capitalize on opportunities.

3. As a call from birth.

Like Jeremiah.

Early in your life you have this clear idea of what your calling is.

4. As growing awareness.

Like Joseph.

First God reveals the purpose in a general sense. As you move toward it, more details will be provided.

Be patient while you're taking the first steps.

CHAPTER 1 // the destination

When I interpreted 'flying to great heights' as doing **impressive, risky** things, I've battled with thoughts like "but we're not all called to do miracles and be sought-after missionaries."

So I totally get it if that's the fear or doubt on your mind.

And you're right, but that's not what's meant.

What's meant is to **not get comfortable** and act like a chicken, forgetting to focus on what **truly** is an eagle's destination: the sun.

With its eyes, the eagle tries to look into the sun. Even though the eagle is not capable of directly looking into the sun, scientifically speaking, it does have a tendency to **face its gaze upwards**, with eyes focused on it.

This is exactly what we as believers are called to do in very first place: To focus on our destination, our God. To spent time in the place we belong.

Paul tells us: "**Seek the things above**, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. **Set your mind on the things above**, not on the things on earth" (LEB. Col. 3: 1 -2)

Seek the things above. Focus your heart, your mind, your entire life on the reality of the **living Jesus**. Paul even says it twice. Above is the truth that is crucially important for our life on earth. Our own nature has the **tendency** to focus on earthly things and worldly desires, which is a sin. But it's also a sin to **not focus enough** on the good, on God. We get caught up in ephemeral pleasures that lead us astray from our destination, lulled to sleep by countless pleasures and activities that are not wrong in themselves but make us miss the life we're made for.

How to seek the things above?

Spend time e-v-e-r-y day with your Father.

Read the Bible.

Pray.

Journal.

Sing about His marvelous grace.

Getting to know God is made possible through Jesus and the cross. And when He left the Earth, He left us with the Holy Spirit to guide us in our spiritual life and earthly life.

Perks of seeking the things above

Did you know a remarkable truth of life is that you *become* what you see and *think*? Several psychological researches have proofed it.

Our thinking has enormous power: on how you feel, what your attitude is, how you look at the world. Even a big part of your health is influenced by thinking. Our thinking is influenced and fueled by what we expose it to. Hence, if you fill your thinking with the purity of God and His words, you'll automatically act and think **more like God** and give Him more opportunities to speak into your life—and we were created to be like God, remember? (Ephesians 4:21-24)

Just because we've found the most important destiny in life—lifting our eyes to the sun—doesn't mean we're done and can cruise on autopilot through life. We live with **both feet planted** on this Earth, and God has a plan.

What that is exactly, is what you'll start uncovering in the rest of this program.

EXERCISE CHAPTER 1 //

Grab a pen and something to write on, like a journal or a sheet of paper.

Answer the questions below:

// What does "the destination" mean in your own words?

// What does it mean for your identity and for your life that our very first purpose is being with God?

// What can you do to focus more on your destination, on God, every day?

CHAPTER 2 // the eyesight

“Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.”

—Matthew 6: 9-10

Our destination is in God. Yet, at the same time, we have a **calling on Earth**. The eagle also doesn't just focus on the sun. Regularly, it needs to search for food and will focus on the earth to search for its prey.

It's what we as believers do as well. It's the field of tension in which we are allowed to live: we live, move and abide in **God** and work on **Earth**.

Did you know that eagles see clearly about eight times as far as humans can? All birds of prey have excellent long-distance vision, but the eagle stands out. With their strong eyes they can spot a rabbit 3.2 km away! You could say, they have a **sharp focus** on what they want. Even though that little rabbit is still 3 kilometers away, the eagle is already **preparing** to get there. Having that dot on the horizon—or on the ground—is what I call **vision**.

The power of dreams

When a man or woman finds his or her destiny in the glory of God, the call of the Earth inevitably comes. **You are needed!** You are needed for God's Kingdom, for His will to be done, on earth as in heaven, —but **how** can you discover where God wants you to contribute?

There's **not one general answer**. We're all different, just like eagles: one hunts salmon, other hunt monkeys.

There is a place where you can **start** though: *your dreams*.

We all dream, or dreamt, about something.

But you wouldn't be doing this course if you had your dreams all written down and ready to be executed.

A dream is not an actual dream when you sleep—it can be—but a **notion** in your head and heart that triggers your passion; the imagination of what could be, an aspiration, an image of where you want to go in life, a preferred situation, or a *vision*.

You might have had dreams when you were younger.

Perhaps they faded away.

Perhaps you were not allowed to follow that dream, for whatever reason.

The thing is however... **dreams are important!** We just don't take them seriously.

Our education system and our society are very supportive when your dream is realistic. But dreams never are. They go **beyond** our power and ability.

So, if I ask you, what do you dream about—what is your answer?

Do you know?

Do you think your dreams are silly?

Do you feel **anxious** when thinking of your dreams?

Don't worry.

Not knowing what you want is **more common** than you might think. Some of us have been pleasing others and doing what's expected of us while suppressing our own dreams for so long that **we've lost touch** with our dreams.

You, like me, also never took a "Dream Clarity Class. Most of us have little-to-no instruction on how to figure out what we really want in life. Or how to get back on track when we've lost our way." (Everything is Figureoutable - Marie Forleo).

But dreams are in fact really **important**.

They provide a **vision**.

They give **purpose** and **meaning**.

They can become **actionable**.

They will make you feel **energized!**

They will **reveal** what God has put on your heart.



"A dream is a notion in your head and heart that triggers your passion; the imagination of what could be, an aspiration, an image of where you want to go in life, a preferred situation, or a vision."

Psalm 37:4 says: “**Delight** yourself in the LORD, and He will give you the desires of your heart.”

I interpret this as twofold.

One, if you are in the Lord, He will grant you the prayers that are **according to His will**.

And two, if you are in the Lord, He will **reveal His dreams** for you. For your life.

Remember? If you are in God, you will be more like God. You will receive thoughts and dreams that are aligned with His plan for you.

It's time to dream!

EXERCISE CHAPTER 2 //

I guess it won't be a surprise that these exercises will be all about your dreams. One man who was really good in dreaming—and expressing it—was Martin Luther King. He gave a speech about something that he dreamt of. A vision. Did he know HOW he was going to do that? Did the dream tell him that? No. He gave the “I Have a Dream” speech, not the “I Have a Plan” speech.

Keep this in mind when you are going to dream.

Dreams are allowed to be out of your reach, to go beyond your power and ability, to feel overwhelming—but exciting! They have to.

How you are going to make dreams a reality is something you will deal with later.

So let it go for this exercise.

Step 1: Reflection

Get your pen and paper ready and reflect on this question.

// What does it mean for us that heaven and earth belong together?

Step 2: Determine your dreams

*This step requires **seven days** of written work, approximately ten to fifteen minutes per day. It is highly recommended to complete this written exercise by hand. And to make sure you don't forget to do this exercise: PUT A REMINDER IN YOUR CALENDER. **Seriously, do it.***

Every day, carve out 15 minutes and set a timer. Work at a spot where you can't be disturbed.

Open your journal, pick up a pen, **ask the Holy Spirit to guide you**, and write at the top of the page:

// What I really want is...

Step 2a: Write down **anything** that comes to mind. Things that you'd dream of. It can be things you'd like to start, stop, pursue, create, learn, change, experience, explore, become, achieve, etc. Anything. Nothing is too outlandish.

IMPORTANT NOTE: There's no time frame on these dreams.

Here are some prompts, if you need help to get started:

- If I were to pop open a bottle of champagne before I die, what would I be celebrating?
- If I could wave a magic wand and change one thing about my life or the world, what would it be?
- If money was no issue, what would I do?
- If I could create an ideal life, this is what it looks like...
- If I would die tomorrow, what I would most regret is...
- What I would do if I was braver...
- Finish this sentence: Wouldn't it be cool if...

For example: Wouldn't it be cool if...

- I stopped working on Fridays
- Everybody believed in Jesus' grace
- Human trafficking wouldn't exist anymore
- I could build a social enterprise
- I could use ministry as business
- ...

Keep writing and writing. Don't edit, or worry about spelling or grammar. Write until the timer goes off.

Then stop, **DON'T REREAD** what you've written, and close the journal.

Repeat this exercise for the next five days.

Step 2b: YOU'VE DONE IT?

You're back here after six days of writing?

Good!

Now, on this seventh day, you have to read all of the pages you've written.

While reading it, **circle** what's most repeated.

Then, on a fresh page, write down what you've circled.

Step 3: What is it that I truly want?

Look back at your list. There's likely a couple of your dreams that make your heart jump because God has put them on your heart. Select those you feel most drawn to, circle them, and answer the questions below.

1. **Importance.** Why is this dream important to you?

And dig deep. Every answer that you give, ask yourself again: "Why?"

Peel away every layer until you get to the core of why this dream matters and what you want to feel, experience, or share as a result of achieving it.

Do not skip this step. Purpose fuels persistence.

2. **Past attempts.** Have you ever attempted this dream before and fallen short? If so, what went wrong? Be as objective as possible. A moment of self-reflection can prevent repeating costly or disappointing mistakes of the past.

Step 4: Choose

Just enjoy what you've dreamt of these past few days. Wasn't it amazing to do this with God? Well done!

Now it's the time to look at what you've done in step 3 and choose. Choose which dream is most dear to you.

Which one is God pointing out for you?

Which one do you think is aligned with God's Word?

Which one can be His vision for your life?

Pick ONE!

I know you might feel resistance, but pick one for now. Pick one that feels the most like a vision rather than an activity you're passionate about (like writing or cooking). You will see that it will make it easier to focus. And sometimes dreams will intertwine after all.

If you need help, ask yourself this question: "When I'll be on my death bed, will I regret not chasing this dream?"

Step 5: Write it down

Congratulations!

You've dreamt and chosen a dream. It might feel unreal or awkward. That's OK.

But we're not done yet with this program. For now, I'd like you to write this to yourself:

My dream is _____ [fill in
the blank with the dream you chose]

because _____ [fill in
why this is important to you]

CHAPTER 3 // the heart

Without its heart and lungs, an eagle wouldn't be able to fly to great heights. An eagle's heart and lungs are **perfectly shaped** and build for what **it needs to do**. An eagle needs its efficient heart and lungs so it can get enough *oxygen* to fly at really high altitudes. Oxygen, as we know, gives and sustains life.

The same is true for you: Your burning passionate heart will help you fly. Your passion will provide the oxygen to give your dreams life.

Passion is from God

There is a calling for everyone.

We all can serve God in our own, **authentic way**. You can be in your element while doing so.

But what is that authentic way?

What is it that you will be doing passionately?

What makes your heart burn?

Now that you have an idea about your God-given dream(s), how are you going to act on that?

That answer is **different** for everyone, but it's a combination of passion and strengths (chapter 4). Those two combined will make sure you will fly to great heights. Those are put into you by God's will.

Philippians 2:13 *"for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill His good purpose."*

Those things that trigger deep emotions are **nourished by the heart of God**. That's why your destination is so important to begin with! Spend time with God, and His will will become more and more clear. He will **kindle** in your heart what He has in mind for you. He will **equip** you.

The true meaning of 'passion'

Where does this buzzword passion come from?

It derives from the Greek words 'Pascho' and 'Philia'.

Pascho

Pascho means 'suffering'. That's why Christians call it "the passion of the Christ". **Jesus loved us so much that He suffered for us.** Love and suffering seem to go hand in hand.

Passion thus arises from an inner suffering and dying. How does that work?

The story of Dutch lady, Caroline, who lost both her parents in a short amount of time, illustrates best.

Besides the suffering of the loss of her parents itself, dealing with funeral homes added to that suffering. Overwhelmed with grief, she was sincerely shocked by the standardization and lack of emotion with which she was confronted in the funeral industry. The seed of 'this can be done better' was then planted and soon grew into her own beautiful, powerful funeral home—serving people with care.

Caroline's story shows how from inner sorrow the will and energy can arise to turn something for the better. The suffering made her so sad, angry, and upset that she wanted to turn it around. This is how passion works: turning something **bad into something good**.

Tirza Design (from Nikkie Affholter) is another example. She didn't experience human trafficking herself but got to know a lot of women who did. Now she sells jewelry to create awareness and a platform to fight human trafficking. A percentage of every sale goes to organizations that fight trafficking.

From pain to action!

Philia

Passion is a **form of love**. If you work on your passion, you love what you do. You probably heard this saying before: "When you found your passion, you'll never work another day."

A word Ken Robinson relates to passion is the Greek word 'philia', which is often used for **friendship** and **loyalty** to others. It also means natural attraction to particular things or activities, like "chorophilia," a love of dancing.

The person who has philia for something or someone, has an **experience-based** love. Because it's also used to describe friendships and loved ones, it kind of gives the clue. You are loving these people, or things you do, because of the *experiences* you have had. Passion **doesn't just pop up** out of nowhere. Passion is shaped and formed in you. Your passion reveals itself because you spent time thinking about it, doing it, practicing it and ultimately finding it by naming it. Only by doing can you feel the philia.

You can work on a certain dream, a certain vision, a bigger picture, all you want, but if you're working on it **without passion, you will never enjoy it.**

Therefore, passion is about *doing* what you love.

So: first dreams, then passion

You can see your dream(s) as the bigger picture, as your vision, as a broad goal, as your purpose, as your **WHY** (why do you do the things you do)... Dreams are vague and big, beyond comprehension.

Passion—a love for certain things or for doing things—is needed to make that bigger dream happen and cut it into smaller pieces in order to figure out **HOW** you are going to do it.

How do you find your passion(s)?

Passion can be found in a number of ways:

1. What are you against? What makes you angry? What makes tears jump into your eyes? What injustice, what lack, what shortage makes your heart leak?
2. Your past. Take advantage of the years that are behind you. What do you remember in the blink of an eye? What made you really happy? What did you always want to become as a child? And why?
3. What are you good at? We normally are passionate about the things we can do well. Those can be strengths you have developed over the years or natural talents, also known as your aptitudes.
4. What do you love? What certain things do you love? What do you love to do?

Passion is knowing yourself. It's knowing where your strengths lay, and what has sparked a fire in you before. You have to take steps, you have **to DO**, before anything can happen at all.

EXERCISE CHAPTER 3 //

Your passionate heart will drive you to keep going. It will provide the oxygen for your dream. In this exercise you will uncover your passions, step by step.

SIDE NOTE: It is very likely that some passions are also your strengths. That's okay, keep going.

Step 0

Grab your journal and a pen. You'll need it 😊.

Step 1

Ask yourself and write down your answer:

// What am I against? What makes me angry? What injustice, what lack, what shortage makes me incredibly mad?

Step 2

Take advantage of the years that are behind you. Take a trip down to memory lane, from now to your childhood.

Write down what stood out in those years.

What made you really happy? What did you enjoy doing as a kid, teenager, young adult? What did you want to become? And why?

Step 3

What is a subject that you can talk hours about? Write it down.

Step 4

What are you good at? Natural or taught/learned, it doesn't matter. Write it down.

Step 5

What do you love? What specific things do you love? What do you love to do? Write it down.

Step 6

Out of all that you've written down, **cluster** what overlaps and name it. You might only have found one passion. That's fine. It's also fine if you've found out that you are a **multi-passionate** person.

Step 7

Look at your clusters, look at the word that you attached to those clusters. Those are your passions. That is what **fires up your heart**.

To finish this exercise, fill in the blank:

I have a passion for _____ [fill in all your passions that make you burst of energy]

CHAPTER 4 // the wings

David received a calling from God for his life: Kingship for the nation Israel.

“He chose David his servant and took him from the sheep pens; from tending the sheep he brought him to be the shepherd of his people Jacob, of Israel his inheritance.”—Psalm 79:70-71 (NIV)

I don't think David was expecting to become a king one day when he was sheep herding. Let alone, believing he was equipped to do that. However, God pulled David away from his sheep, gave his life a whole new direction and gave him what he needed to succeed. As we know in hindsight, the road to kingship was a long and arduous one. For ten years David was fleeing through the desert from an insane king. But these ten years **did not cloud** his calling. God **would pave the way**. God would **shape** him; his character and his competence.

Let that be an **encouragement** for you too when it seems like it takes a long time before anything for your calling happens.

SIDE NOTE: Even though character is extremely important in *fulfilling*—not finding—your calling, for the sake of this course we're not looking into this.

The wings

The eagle is a bird with unprecedented abilities. I've talked about its magnificent eyesight and heart and lungs, but its wings are what causes the most amazement. Without wings, the eagle **wouldn't be able to function**. It wouldn't be able to hunt and get food, to fly to the sun, to survive...

Flying and hunting like an eagle is a skill. The eagle is not afraid to take on larger and perhaps stronger animals than itself. Can you imagine how well-trained it must be in order to do that? Mastering the hunting technique isn't easy, it **takes time** and it can be frustrating, but it's a **necessity** of life.

Your wings—your competence—will ultimately determine whether you can actually reach your calling.

Your competence is essential.

What is competence?

One wing can be seen as your **aptitude**, you're born with those **talents** and they function no matter what. The other wing can be seen as all the **skills** you've learned.

Competence is formed by a **mix** of aptitude (gifts and talents), skills, knowledge, results and experience. Your competence will help to determine how you will fulfill your calling. Your competences are those areas and actions in which you **excel** time and time again.

What are your talents?

Feel anxiety when I ask that? Do you feel like you don't have any specific talents?

You're not the only one.

In our society, there's a lot of **pressure** on people to make life-impacting choices at an early stage in life. We often **don't know ourselves** well enough when we are asked to make those. We end up going with the flow, not really exploring what our talents or gifts are.

Luckily, that's about to change 😊.

Thinking about your talents for a minute or two will not give you *the* answer. It **doesn't fall** on your lap like that. You have to start exploring and trying.

Finding your calling, with everything that comes with it, is a **quest**. Meaning "*a journey undertaken whose outcome is not certain. A journey of discovery.*" (Ken Robinson).

Therefore, it's actually a really good and healthy idea to **try out** many different things and become proficient in all sorts of areas between the age of 20 and 30 to get to know yourself. But also if you're passed that phase, **trial and error is key!**

In order to fly well, you need to train your wings.

What are you expected to do with your competence?

Matthew 25 and Luke 19 both have a parable about talents or minas that are given to servants by a lord. In Luke, the lord gives each of his servants the same number of minas. In Matthew, one servant gets five, the second three and the third one.

Both stories end similarly. Two thirds of the servants have multiplied their talents and have made a profit. The third servant, however, has put his talent in the ground and made no profit or loss. The **lord praises the first two servants** and gets angry with the third servant. What can we learn from this?

1. It's given.

Everything on this Earth is given by God. Your house, your possessions, and also your skills and talents. Not using what you've been given is showing a **lack of understanding** that it was a gift in the first place.

2. God gives what you can handle.

That's so important to understand. He entrusts you with an amount of talents that **suits** you as a person and suits your character. It's tailored to you uniquely.

3. God expects growth.

God wants you to work with what you have received. You are responsible for what you've been given. If God approved that we do not grow our skills, Jesus wouldn't have told this story to begin with. The third servant didn't lose the money, he returned the exact amount, but this is not why the talent was given. The servant with one talent is not held accountable for the fact that he had 'only' one talent, but for the fact that he **didn't even try to do anything to improve it** (not even putting it in the bank for interest). Staying where you are is losing what you have. It's declining God's call. Playing safe is wasting your skills.

4. God wants you to take a risk.

It is obvious that the man who was given one talent or mina was afraid of **losing** the money. Therefore, he hid it away, making sure he wouldn't lose anything. But the lord saw this as cowardly behavior and highly disapproved of it. This shows us that God wants you to **conquer fear and dare to take risks**.

Growth in competence is always accompanied by risks. A motivational speaker has to face the growing audiences, has to trust their mind not to forget the speech. Nobody can experience 100 percent growth without running a risk!

5. God wants you to focus on your talents.

The lord granted some servants **more** than others—what they could handle and utilize, right. And that's for a reason. **Don't compare** yourself to others. God's plan for your life is different from that of your neighbor. You will get exactly what you need. So does everyone else. In the end we will be judged according to what we **did with what we had**, not what we ended up with or started up with.

I guess it's clear. If you want to shape the calling for your life, you will have to focus on those competences with which God has specially endowed you. We need to **utilize** our talent and skills.

Isn't that motivating?!

EXERCISE CHAPTER 4 //

The "wings" that ultimately determine whether you can actually reach your destination and fulfill your calling form your competences. What are your wings?

Again, grab your journal and write down your answers.

Step 1

Fill out these questions. Ask yourself:

// Which activities give you the most appreciation of your environment? (just by observing, not because they tell you?)

// What do your friends compliment you on?

(if you don't know, ask around. Email friends and family (at least 5 people) and ask them what they think your talents are.) You can extract a lot of your environment when it comes to your strengths. Pay attention to what is around!

// What do strangers notice really fast?

// What were you good at in your previous job(s)?

(again, if you don't know, ask your former colleagues.)

// Which things are you naturally good at?

This is what we call aptitude. These talents that you've been given will make you feel intuitive, productive, comfortable, satisfied, natural, and influential when we execute them.

// What were you good at as a child?

// What are things you do for fun or for your job that you are good at? What are the skills you possess?

Step 2

Take some time and fill out this personality test:

<https://www.16personalities.com/>

Try to be as honest as possible and go with your first response. Answer from the person that you are, not the person you want to be.

After finishing the test, answer these questions:

1. What personality are you?
2. What are your strengths according to the test?

Step 3

Now determine for yourself your competence, based on all of your answers in step 1 and 2:

- 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
- Etc.

Which of the answers above do you enjoy or **LOVE** when doing them? *Circle those.*

Sometimes you can be good at something, but that doesn't mean you *like* or *love* to do it, which is essential to flying to great heights! To be in your element.

The last step

Let's assess where you are at now.

Don't get **too caught up** in this exercise. You can shape it along as we go. You probably have an idea of your dream, your passion(s) and strengths (natural and taught/learned) that come in handy to achieve that dream.

Fill in the blanks below.

KEEP IN MIND: If you are a multi-passionate person and you have been gifted with an interest in many things, and perhaps you are also proficient at a number of things, focus on the passions and the skills that will be **beneficial** to accomplish your bigger purpose. Only then can you feel the true bliss of a calling coming to life.

My dream is _____ [fill in the dream you chose]
because _____ [fill in why this is important to you]

My passion is for _____ [fill in your passions]

I can best contribute to this with these competences/skills/talents
_____ [fill in the most helpful strengths]

CHAPTER 5 // fly

Purpose, dream, vision, passions, strengths, element, calling... It can all confuse you. And I don't blame you. There are so many words out there to describe a feeling inside of you and an image for your life.

Let me simplify it for you:

Calling = dream + passion(s) + competence + whom is it for?

Calling has to do with your strengths. It is also an extension of your passion and aptitude. A calling narrows down what **precisely** it is that you want to do.

Let me share an example with you that shows how this works (based on Henk Stoorvogel's and Eugène Poppe's example in their book *Geboren om te Vliegen*).

Let's say it's your dream doing something meaningful for the orphans in Africa. Your heart cries for all the orphaned children and you want to give them a home and education. There are a couple of options to look at. To name a few:

- You are **pedagogically** very strong (one of your strengths). An option could be living in a house in Africa and being a father or mother for eight to ten children under your care, educating them.
- You are very **handy**. Helping with the physical construction of an orphanage and school in Africa is an ideal option for you. For this, you dedicate an x amount of time of your life traveling there and helping out.
- You are a good **motivator**. Raising funds and donors in your own country is a piece of cake for you. You decide to dedicate a large part of your free time to this and are thus indispensable to an orphanage project in Africa.
- You are a good **director**. You decide sitting on the board of a foundation in your country that manages an orphanage in Africa.

As you can see, all these things have something in common: a dream for helping orphans in Africa. But the **way** in which each person fulfills this dream is **largely determined** by the passion(s) and competence God has given.

The beautiful thing about it is that you can **change** what you do in the long run. You can use other competences you develop as you **mature as a person**. That's how a calling can change. At first, when you are younger you might have a calling in teaching English two weeks a year at an orphanage in French speaking Africa in order to prepare these kids for the future.

At a certain point, when you are older and have children of your own, you might change what you do, e.g. starting a fundraising project in order to collect money to support a local initiative in Africa to build schools in rural areas. –You still want to make a difference for the children in Africa, you just **use different strengths** to make it happen.

A calling is pretty **precise**. A calling is born out of your dream. The desire is there. And to make it pragmatic, you add your passions and competences into the mix and you get the formula on how you can make it happen. Adding whom you are doing it for **makes it easier** for yourself to determine the next steps. If your dream is to write stories to change people's life's, you might get a better understanding and idea on how to do that if you add whose lives you want to change: elderly, moms, teenagers, ex-inmates, etc.

One thing to remember

One might have different callings in life. That is great! However, it is important **not to focus on them all at once** since it might overwhelm you. That's why you had to pick one dream at the beginning of this program. The other dreams are also important, but if you want to get started, if you want to practice how to fly, you have to focus on one thing at a time.

People who find their calling can live in such a way that they actually achieve God's goals for their lives. What a satisfaction that will give, right?!

Time to fly

When you sorted out the calling God has placed on your life, the next step is to determine **how to fulfill** that calling. This can be challenging or scary. But... *If you want to walk on water, you have to get off the boat.*

Dreaming about something to happen is so much safer and more convenient than actually doing it. Even if you've taken all the steps in the previous lessons, you might still feel **doubt** to get started.

Did you know that **most of the energy** of an eagle's flight goes **into the first few meters**? Jumping up from the ground, the first few powerful strokes with its wing, and bridging the distance to the first air thermal cost about twenty times as much energy as just hovering on the thermals. **Starting something takes a lot of energy.** That's why we have become particularly good in postponing the start of something new, even though we're looking forward to it.

Remember that, how risky your first step may be, how big the leap of faith is that you're going to take, your **foundation is in God**. And your guidance comes from the Holy Spirit. When you have been faithful, you can be confident that your wings are sufficiently strengthened by the Lord's sophisticated training. If it goes wrong however, and you see rock bottom rushing towards you fast, then, God will still carry you, like on eagle wings.

There is **no ideal time** to start. Any time is the ideal time. When you wait for the ideal moment, you will wait a lifetime. God will give guidance in this as well. At some point you will know. **It is now.** Or never.

Action is needed

It's beautiful to have dreams, to find your calling, but nothing's going to happen if you just think. Action is needed. Therefore, the last exercises in this program will focus on taking action.

EXERCISE CHAPTER 5 //

Let's start with the first step!

Fill out the blank—even though it might feel scary, or exciting, or both (mostly that's a good sign!):

My calling is _____

Use the formula (calling= dream + passion(s) + competence + whom is it for?) to create a beautiful sentence that motivates you and stick it onto your fridge.

Starting something new is scary. Following your God-given calling might feel daunting. If you experience such a feeling, please move forward with step 1.

However, if you feel confident and don't doubt yourself, move on to step 2.

Step 1: Dealing with doubt

Grab a pen and paper.

You are pretty sure you found your calling, and are nearly ready but something is **holding you back**. The first step is to figure out what it is that is holding you back.

Ask yourself the following questions and write down your answers:

1. What is holding you back from executing your calling? In other words, what is **hindering** you from flying like an eagle?
2. Ask yourself if what **worries** you now will still worry you in ten, twenty, or forty years. Will that concern still matter?
3. Can you think of a moment that you **stretched** yourself, took a leap of faith, and it ended well? What was your experience?
4. What does it take to stretch your **comfort** zone?
5. What can you do to **deal** with your answer on question 1? Is it just an excuse? Is it fear? Is it a bad experience from a previous attempt? Is it a darker power preventing you from stepping out in faith? —PRAY!
6. The ultimate question to test if your calling really sparked something in you: "In ten years, will I regret not doing this?" —If your answer is yes, then you know what to do 😊!

“All too often we stop ourselves from doing anything new because we want so badly to get it right. (And get it right from the start). We want to present an image to the world that we have it together. We have little to no tolerance for allowing ourselves the space and grace to be a beginner.” (Marie Forleo, Everything is Figureoutable).

We're not going to do it right the first time. **Perfection doesn't exist.** However progress does.

We're going to focus on **progress**. One baby step at a time.

Some wisdom nuggets:

1. Growth never goes in a straight line. But always aim for growth. Ask yourself in a difficult situation: Do you go for growth or do you avoid the challenge and stay where you are?
2. Refuse to be refused, God will help you through it if it's His plan
3. Henry Ford is right: *“Whether you think you can or think you cannot, you're right.”*
4. Is the obstacle really an obstacle or is it just an excuse to take the easy path?

Step 2: Learn from the Greatest

Grab a pen and paper.

Jesus had a clear calling in life and He knew exactly what to do when, where and what to focus on, and why. He knew when to rest, when to speak, when to pray, when to teach and when to start His ministry. He was flexible and **perfectly balanced**.

Ask yourself:

// What can I learn from Jesus' way of taking action?

Write your answers down.

Step 3: The tasks

You have defined your calling. Your bigger picture is written down on paper. It's time to connect the dots. What are the things you need to do to make your dream happen?

Grab your pen and sum up all the things that come to mind. Write as many to-do's as you want:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- ...

Step 4: First things first

Some of the things you just wrote down can be quite big or require time. Seeing them might make you feel **overwhelmed**. Reading the million things you need to do can tempt you to give up. But we don't want that, do we?! The key to break that feeling and to make progress is to *focus on the most important things first*.

We all know what the Samaritan *did* in the parable "The Good Samaritan", but have you ever thought of the things he *didn't* do? There were many things he could've done, like taking the wounded man home, staying with him for a couple of nights to keep an eye on everything, taking revenge on the robbers, securing the road, etc.

Although all of this would have been helpful and useful as well, the Samaritan didn't do it because he knew what was important and what was not. That's living in balance, that's focusing on the most important thing with the highest return on investment.

Look back at step 3 and **circle** what makes the most progress. What has the highest return on investment? Circle it, even though it's still a big step like creating a course, developing a website, or writing a book.

Then look at it again, and put an **asterisk** (*) at the tasks that you are good at and like to do (your heart/passion and wings/competences, remember?). Those are tasks that are high on your to-do list. But having a to-do list is not necessarily going to push you to take action. So let's move on to step 5.

Step 5: Start small

Grab a piece of paper and write this down:

SMALL THINGS I CAN DO TODAY TO MOVE MY CALLING AHEAD:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Write down a couple of small things, based on your starred tasks in step 4, that you could do today to make progress.

Then underneath that list, write this:

ONE SMALL THING I CAN DO RIGHT NOW:

And do it.

Congratulations. You've **started!**



Join the Born to Fly community if you want to be around like-minded, early-stage, faith-centered entrepreneurs.

now what? //

Valuable assets to stay active, focused and motivated

There are two last things I would like to share to keep you going. As you can understand, figuring out your calling and first steps toward it, is one. But **following through** is another (challenge).

We humans are community beings. God has **given us people around us** who, from their wisdom and life experience, can be invaluable for our adjustment. There are two factors that can have a tremendous influence on your professional (and personal and spiritual) motivation and growth:

1. like-minded peers, and
2. mentors

Fellow calling-executioners

Especially when starting out, you might get overwhelmed with all aspects of doing business/your passion project. Therefore, it's crucial to **surround yourself with like-minded people** who get what you're going through—finances, marketing, technical issues, etc. People who can **support** you and **pray** for you. People who can give you **advice** on how they are dealing with similar problems. People who will **hold you accountable** for what you're planning on doing.

Make sure you have a group of people like that! A good suggestion is to become part of the Born to Fly community 😊! A community of early-stage, Jesus-following entrepreneurs who are on this journey together.

Mentors are a blessing

Mentors are people who are more mature and a few steps further ahead in life than you. They are amazing guides and sources of wisdom and experience. Mentors are **invaluable**.

Jethro and Moses are an example of a mentor and mentee. Jethro, the father-in-law of Moses, was brutally honest—in a good way—with Moses. He pointed out that Moses had lost the clarity of his calling. It was time for Moses to cut the branches and go back to focus on the things he was called to do: to lead the way and to keep the communication with God open. The rest needed to be delegated.

I don't have a mentor


If you don't have counselors or mentors in your life, pray to God for the grace of finding one or more. Keep your eyes open and **reach out** to people. They will help you to find the right mentor.

Also, the Born to Fly community gives you access to mentors. It's a good place to start.

God bless you!

Born to  fly

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