



FIND ...

YOUR GIFTS
& TALENTS

GUIDEBOOK

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Title: Find Your Gifts & Talents Guidebook (version 1.0)

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- ... you realize that this free guidebook helped you find some valuable insights and you would have gladly paid for? You can let us know by making a donation to our Find Your Gifts and Talents Guidebook. We know that many of the people who most need our products are the ones who least can afford them. So we give this guidebook away at no charge. But we always welcome donations.

Paper Printing Instructions: We have formatted this guidebook for double sided printing so the page numbers always appear on the outside edge. This creates “full two page spreads” for all the assignments which make them easy to fill out. To have the graphics show up on black printouts, please use the darkest copy setting.

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Introduction

Overview

This guidebook provides a step by step process to reveal your gifts and talents. Your answers to over 20 insightful questions help you discover what you naturally excel at. Once you have a list, you can use it to understand what professions and life paths you are best suited for, as well as generate business ideas and fine tune your resume.

This guidebook features the gifts and talents assignment from our [Step One Guidebook: Discover Your Dream Job, Career or Business](#). If you like our process of self discovery, you can use our other guidebooks to take the next step in discovering what makes you unique and how to create an extraordinary life.

Who Should Use This Guidebook?

We recommend this guidebook if you want to ...

- try out our guidebooks
- find your gifts and talents
- earn more money
- go back to school to prepare for a different career
- select a major or choose better classes
- change your job or career but are not sure where to start
- update your resume to reflect the skills you excel at
- start your own business and do not know where to begin

Guidebook Focus & Results

This guidebook asks you lots of questions to get the ideas flowing and guide you to find answers to ...

- What am I great at?
- What are my gifts and talents?



At the end of it you will have a list of your top 5 to 10 gifts and talents. Look at our [before and after example](#) to get an idea of what your list can look like and see how it starts to define [work you are naturally great at](#).

Find Your Gifts & Talents

Everyone has things that come easily to them. Things they do that are almost effortless yet create amazing results. The tasks you excel at reveal your natural [gifts and talents](#). They describe what you are naturally great at doing. If you develop them and put them to work, you have the beginnings of a great career or business.

The Self Discovery Process

The answers to what you excel at lie inside of you, and are reflected in the everyday (as well as unusual) tasks you are already great at, or could be with a little training.

To find them, you need to take a journey inside yourself to discover what they are. So this guidebook features 20+ insightful questions which help you explore your skills -- from the time you were a child up to the present. Your answers illuminate the knowledge you already have inside you. Our questions just help you get started thinking and help focus your thoughts on identifying your skills.

Once you become aware of your gifts and talents, your life can begin to change. How?

- Your confidence goes up because you start to realize how gifted and talented you really are.
- You begin to recognize and take advantage of more opportunities to excel when you realize "Hey, I can do that!"
- You start to notice the gifts and talents you already use and start thinking about how to take them to the next level of development.
- Over time, as more ideas keep surfacing, your ideas about who you are and what you can excel at keep evolving.

If you have never done self discovery work, please take a moment now to read our helpful [self discovery guidelines](#). We also have tips to help you deal with the [emotional impact](#) this type of journey can have as you realize more about yourself, your opportunities and your past decisions.

Workbook Guidelines

This guidebook is made up of five assignments. The first helps you prepare for using this guidebook. The second and third help you find and summarize your gifts and talents. The fourth assignment lets you evaluate this guidebook. And the fifth helps you decide what to do with the new knowledge and insights you have created.

We recommend that you ...

- **Do these assignments in pencil** because you may need to do some erasing and rewriting. You may also want to have a highlighter to identify your top answers.
- **Do all five assignments** to get the full benefits and experience of this workbook.
- **Do every step in the assignments.** The second assignment has several steps to take you from answering the questions through analyzing your answers to capturing insights. You need to do them all to get the full benefit of this guidebook.



Assignments

Assignment 1: What Do I Want Out Of This Guidebook?

Thinking about what you want to take away from a self help tool helps you determine how much the results and "takeaways" are worth. And that helps you put a value on your time and effort.

So take a few moments to think about these questions and write your answers down in the space provided.

Exercise 1: Getting a Starting Point

We strive to provide valuable insights you can use to change your life, and so encourage you to evaluate our guidebooks to see if they are a good investment. You can see how much you have learned by comparing your answers from before and after you used this tool.

Question: How well do you think you know what you excel at?

Question: What are your top skills? What do you do best?

(If you need help, check out our [Before Example](#).)



Exercise 2: Valuing the Answers & Takeaways

Question: Has your life been impacted by **not knowing** what you are great? What has it cost you in the past? What is it costing you now?

Question: How would your life be different if you knew what work you were great at?

Question: How much time, effort and money is it worth to know what you excel at and have a list of your top 5-10 gifts and talents?

Time: _____ (hours) Money: \$ _____

Now you have completed Assignment 1 and are ready for the Assignment 2.



Assignment 2: My Gifts & Talents

Are you curious about what you excel at? Do you wonder what professions you could be great at?

Your gifts and talents define the tasks, jobs and careers you have the natural ability to be great at. When you tap into or develop your innate abilities, you can achieve amazing results that lead to being handsomely paid to do the work you love.

Each of your gifts and talents represent an ability to do, sense, be aware or know something. And although you may not be able to list them, you have at least 5 and more likely 10 abilities that are as much a part of you as your smile or laughter. Things such as being able to ...

- sense when the weather is going to change
- keep a cool head under pressure
- tell great stories
- establish an instant rapport with people
- know how to make anything grow
- come up with lots of ideas (brainstorming)
- debug complex computer code
- sense when you have found a real treasure at a flea market
- know a hit song when you hear it
- create gourmet dishes
- access a photographic memory



Often our family and friends know our gifts and talents better than we do. Why? Because they are such a natural part of us, many times we barely notice them. And our gifts and talents are often so easy for us to do, that we do not see them as unusual and valuable. However, they stand out, especially to people who know what to look for or who cannot do them.

Think about it. You probably know what your friends are great at -- who can always find the right words, throws the most amazing parties or can always see the silver lining in a situation.



If you are one of the lucky ones, someone (a parent, teacher, mentor) pointed out one of your gifts or talents to you when you were growing up. In order for that to happen, they had to:

- catch you in the act of using it
- recognize it as an uncommon skill or ability
- tell you about it in a way that made it meaningful

Unfortunately, this happened to very few of us. And for the ones who were lucky, often by adulthood they only vaguely remember those moments.

The result is that few of us are developing and using our gifts and talents today. Instead, we are using the everyday abilities we learned in school to earn our living. Our resumes, and the jobs they are aimed at, are centered around the same set of skills everyone learned. This is why many of us are competing for the same jobs -- because we all sell the same skills to our employers.



Our talents mostly go unrecognized, untapped and undeveloped. And yet they are one of the things that [make us unique](#) and special on this planet. You are the only person who has your set of gifts and talents and [potential](#).

So if you are ready to start finding out what the first ingredient of your potential is, go to the next page and start Assignment 2: My Gifts & Talents.



Step 1: Answering the Questions

The first step in this assignment is answering lots of fun, open ended questions. These questions are designed to **get the ideas flowing and evoke answers** from deep inside you and help you come up with lots of answers. Answer as many as you can and skip any that do not fit you.

When doing step 1, remember ...

- **Write down all of your answers**, no matter how silly, strange or unusual, ordinary or ho-hum they sound. Capture your first impressions as well as your more thoughtful answers.
- **Be as specific in your answers as you can.** Instead of saying you are good at "writing", put down exactly what you have a knack for: imagining and crafting great characters, making pithy statements, coming up with a great turn of phrase, or inspiring others to action.
- **Avoid editing yourself** as well as writing down ideas based on what you think you should or what is expected. If that happens, read the [FAQ](#) in the appendices.
- **Think back over your entire life.** Write down what you have consistently been great at, as well as past skills you were recognized for and what you did really well as a child - - especially the things that were considered odd, unusual or that you were scolded for.
- **Include what other people have told you were your gifts and talents.** If you were told you would be great at a specific job, see if you can remember what gift or talent prompted that remark.
- **Focus on creating a list of what you are great at**, by writing down what you are already great or could be with the right training and resources.
- **Get input from others if you need it.** You can discuss these questions with people who may know what your gifts and talents are and you trust to give you honest and supportive feedback.
- **Modify the question** to make it relevant to you if a word or time frame does not fit. Just so it leads you to creating a list that reflects what you excel at.

Go to the next page to start the first assignment. Write your answers down in the "Initial Answers" column.

Growing Up Questions

When growing up, what did people tell you that you were gifted at or had a talent for?

What did people point out as something you had a knack for or the potential to do?

What were you always being recognized, admired, scolded or reprimanded for?

What did you do well growing up that seemed unusual or unique?

Self-directed Insight

What do you have a knack for?

What comes so easily to you, just like breathing?

What makes you animated and lights up your face?

When do you lose all sense of time?

What are you phenomenal at?

What amazes you that you
can do without even trying?

What are you doing when
you hit a groove?

What do you do that just
flows out of you?

What do you do that taps into
some innate ability?

What activity connects you to
a well-spring of energy and
ideas?

What are you drawn to
doing?

What would you pay to be
able to do?

What activity would you do
if money was not an issue?

What could you excel at and
be in the top 1% of?

What can you do that you
can't explain how you do it
when asked about it?

What ability have you been
blessed with?

Compared to Others

What things do you pick up or learn to do much faster than others?

What do you do better than anyone you know?

What are you sensitive to that you notice others aren't?

What do you amaze others by doing?

What can you do without effort that everyone else struggles with?

What do your family, friends, or significant other truly love you to do for them and are always asking for more of?

Observations by Others

What have you been told you do better than most people?

What are you doing when others tell you it is a pleasure to watch you working?

What are others telling you that you are great at?

What have you done that someone knowledgeable has told you that you could make a living doing?

What did the person who spots talent in your field point out as your passion, gift or strongest skill?

At this point, we hope you are starting to see how gifted and talented you really are! When you are ready, go on to Step 2.



Step 2: Getting More Specific

This second step makes your list more descriptive so that every gift and talent is clearly and accurately described.

So look back over your answers to the previous questions and ...

- **Describe your gift or talent in more detail.** Often our first description of a gift or talent is very general. So take a few minutes and see if you can be more specific and write down exactly what you excel at. Refine and fine tune what you wrote. For instance, "making funny comments" could be described more accurately as "creating humorous and quotable political satire". Or your gift of "writing great characters" is refined into "writing heroic female science fiction characters".

You can use the space below or mark up your list from Step 1.

Detailed Gifts & Talents Description

Your Insights:

Now go to Step 3



Step 3: Prioritizing & Learning More about Your List

Once you have your list of detailed answers, you need to trim it and identify the most important ones, based on their strength and rarity. Use your list from Step 2 and ...

- **Start trimming the list** by crossing out any answers that no longer fit you. Also cross out any that fall into the "should" category, or are trivial compared to the other answers. You want to focus on getting a clear, short, accurate list of the items that you are gifted at. If you have trouble coming up with the 5 to 10, ask a few people you trust and see if their answers ring true for you.
- **Next, write down how you use each gift or talent.** (Optional) What do you use it for? When was the last time you used it? This step helps you better understand your gift or talent.
- **Now estimate how rare each of your skills is.** (Optional) This may at first seem hard, but it is not that hard. See if you think you are the only one out of 100 people who went to your high school who has this skill. Are you the only one out of your college dorm (1,000 people) or at a concert (10,000 people) who has this gift or talent? Are you one of only a handful of people who live in your country who have this skill? This will give you a good idea how rare your skill is and a number to use to describe your 1 in a 100, 1000, 10,000 or million kind of skill.
- **If you can, identify the "sensitivity" or the extraordinary results you achieve which makes your gift and talent so powerful.** (Optional) This helps you really understand what you excel at. For instance, great singers can be sensitive to which songs resonate with their audience, or how to stretch out a lyric or note. Some athletes are great at consistently scoring while others are sensitive to when the pressure is on and excel best then.
- **Now identify your strongest gifts and talents.** You can put a star next to them or give them a number from 1 to 10.

You can use the space below to rewrite your list (or add it to the one you created in Step 2).



Life Path

Gift or Talent

Where Used

Rarity

Results

Your Insights:

What you should have now is a clear, short, accurate list of your unique gifts and talents. Go now to Step 4.



Step 4: Identifying Life Path Activities

Once you have your list of detailed answers, you want to see if you can spot how they are related. Often, the best way to do this is to group them into common activities and [Life Paths](#).

- **Take a look at each gift or talent and write down what you are doing when you use it.** You can use the list below arranged by life path.
 1. **Pioneer, Explorer, Discoverer, Inventor & Visionary** - exploring, envisioning, discovering, imagining
 2. **Nurturer, Caregiver, Counselor, Advisor & Developer** - counseling, supporting, developing, helping, nurturing
 3. **Artist, Writer, Performer, Actor, Musician & Expressive** - expressing, writing, illustrating, acting, speaking
 4. **Planner, Designer, Builder, Organizer & Manager** - organizing, managing, constructing
 5. **Adventurer, Warrior, Cowboy & Protector** - adventuring, hunting, protecting, guarding
 6. **Teacher, Healer, Knowledge Worker** - illuminating, explaining, informing, healing, easing, balancing, thriving
 7. **Researcher, Scientist, Journalist, Philosopher** - researcher - investigating, analyzing, documenting
 8. **Executive, Owner, Founder, Director, Administrator** - directing, administering, founding
 9. **Guide, Mentor, Sage, Humanitarian, World Leader, Philanthropist** - assisting, enlightening, revealing, uplifting, mentoring



- **Now see how your activity groups fit into one (or several) life paths.** You could have several tasks (such as writing, speaking and performing) that all fit into one Life Path. Group your answers by activity group or life path and rewrite them below. (Looking at our [before and after example](#) may give you an idea of the type of list you want to create.)

Write the life path or activity in the left margin in the Step 3 worksheet. If you don't have enough room, you can use the space below to re-write your list.

Gift or Talent

Activity & Life Path

Now you are ready to go to Assignment 3.



Assignment 3: My Top Gifts & Talents

In this third assignment you summarize your top answers and look for patterns that indicate what great work is for you.

Step 1: List Your Top Answers

You want to create a list of your gifts and talents that inspire you and make you feel that you have a good, basic understanding of the things you excel at.

- **Take a moment to look over your list and change any wording** to make your descriptions resonate more with you. Delete or add to them as needed.
- **Next, look to see if there are any other insights you want to add** next to a gift or talent. This could how it relates to your calling, or a profession you have thought about.
- **Keep revising your descriptions** and groups to make your entire list more powerful and compelling. Play with the words and phrases to create an improved version. You may need to take some time to let the impact sink in so you can see how to improve your list. Write your revised statement in the space provided below.
- **You want to end up saying "WOW! I really could excel at these things!"** If you do not, read the [FAQs](#) in the Appendices.

My Gifts & Talents (Top Answers)

I am naturally great at work that uses, to the highest degree, my gifts and talents of ...



Step 2: Self Discovery Insights

If you have had any insights from this guidebook, you can write or summarize them here:

Step 3: Additional Ideas & Insights

Keep this list handy and post it some place where you can see it daily and easily add to it. Good locations include posting it on the refrigerator, on a bulletin board, inside a school locker, or taped to the inside cover of your daily planner or journal.

As more ideas come to you, write them down so that you can see your list grow. And also jot down notes if you start to notice when you are using your gifts and talents or have ideas about them.

You are now ready for the Assignment 4.



Assignment 4: Evaluating This Guidebook

The final assignment is evaluating the progress you have made, the results you have achieved, and what you take away from this guidebook. This is an important step that most people tend to want to rush through or skip. But we think this is where investing a few moments can really pay off in making better decisions in the future.

Too often we take courses or buy self help books and never take the time at the end to see if what we learned was worth it. Every investment of your time, effort and money should be giving you a dividend. If you do not look at what you get out of your investments, how can you make informed decisions whether to invest more?

This is especially important when you are blazing new trails to find your dream job or start a dream business. So take a few moments and see what you learned from this guidebook and can take away with you.

Exercise 1: Evaluating Your Results

Question: Does your list describe your gifts and talents?

Question: Does it help you describe the work you are naturally great at (or could be with the right training and resources)?

Now compare your list with the first answer you gave in [Assignment 1](#) to "What are my top skills? What do I do best?"

Question: Is there a difference? If yes, how significant is it?



Exercise 2: Gathering Knowledge & Insights

Question: What are the major self insights that you gained?

Question: What ideas or knowledge have you learned?

Question: How will you use the knowledge and insights you have acquired?

Question: Is there anything you wish you had learned but did not? If so, how important is it and how can you learn it?

Exercise 3: Valuing This Guidebook

Take a moment and put a time and money value on this guidebook. Doing so will help you decide if it was worth your time and if you want to make a donation.

Question: How much is your list of gifts and talents, the knowledge of what you excel at, and the insights you gained worth to you in terms of money and time?

Total: _____ hours \$ _____

(If you compare your answer above with the one you gave in [Assignment 1](#), you can see if you made a good decision when you chose to use this guidebook.)

You are now ready for the next step.



Assignment 5: What to Do Next

Now that you know what your natural gifts and talents are, the question is, "What do I do next?" The answer depends entirely on you.

We have outlined five options below to help you take the next step with the knowledge and insights you have gained. They are listed in the order of the most active to the most self-reflective options. You can choose to do some, all or none or them.

Option 1: Send Us Feedback, Purchase A License to Make Authorized Copies or Make a Donation



We would love to hear your feedback about this guidebook and the discovery process. Your comments help us improve this tool for others. You can take a survey, e-mail us [your comments](#) or post your feedback on our message board. Just go to the Guidebooks & More page on our web site at ManifestYourPotential.com and follow the link for the [Find Your Gifts & Talents Guidebook](#).



If you gained a lot of value from this guidebook, you can also tell us by [making a donation](#) which reflects the value or benefits that you received.

Option 2: Use Our Next Guidebook to Discover Your Dream Job, Career or Business



If you are ready to start discovering all the other important ingredients of your potential, consider downloading and use our [Step One Guidebook: Discover Your Dream Job, Career or Business](#). It will help you take the next step and find the 30+ ingredients which define the work you love. Our [before and after example](#) will give you a good idea of what the full ingredient list looks like.



Option 3: Use Your Answers

If you want to put your new knowledge into action, you can [use your answers](#) to help you make educational choices and improve your job hunting.

Option 4: Reflect on Your Gifts & Talents

Some people like to let the insights and self knowledge they have gained sink in. Learning what your gifts and talents are can help answer questions about past jobs and why they worked out or why they did not. This knowledge can also help you spot opportunities that you have overlooked.

In addition, your answers can also shed light on other areas of your life. For example, you may now understand why hours can fly by when you are using your natural skills but crawl when doing things that bore you.

Option 5: Generate More Insights

Asking this many questions about yourself can start a process that is like watching a flower blossoming or peeling back of the layers on an onion. You may keep getting insights long after you have finished answering this guidebook.

So keep your list where you can add to it. And post your gifts and talents list somewhere you can see it on a regular basis, instead of stored away in a drawer or notebook. If additional insights about your potential come to you, write them down. You may also start to become aware of when you are using your gifts and new opportunities to develop them. And it is not unusual to keep discovering new ones long after you have completed this guidebook. If so, write them down or go through the assignments here again. This guidebook was designed to be used over and over throughout your life to help you connect with your potential as you and the world evolve.



Appendices

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Question: What should I do if I feel that I am constantly editing myself or coming up with a list of “shoulds” that do not reflect who I really am?

Answer: This happens sometimes. We recommend that you pick one question from the list you are having trouble with. Using a separate piece of paper, ask and answer that question over and over again. Each time you ask it of yourself, write down your immediate, intuitive, uncensored, subconscious answer. It may take 5 - 50 answers to get out everything that wants to be heard, so stick with it. You are done with that question only when you are filled with total silence, you keep getting the same response for the last 5 or 10 tries, or you get a calm, quiet feeling of being done. If you get frustrated or irritated, that’s a good sign and you should push through the resistance and keep going.

This repeated questioning helps unload automatic or “pre-set” answers that come from trying to fit into cultural, generational, peer and family norms. It helps you to break out of looking for “shoulds” and editing yourself by letting all these answers be expressed. You may be surprised by how the “should” responses eventually die out, replaced by some deep insights that come from another (less often heard) part of you. These later answers may be unusual, radical or strange. Write them down and let them sink in. This may be the first time you have had a chance to express what is inside and it may take a little adjustment time to understand what the different aspects of you are saying and why.

Question: What do I do if my gifts and talents are quite diverse or I have lots of them?

Answer: If you have a variety of gifts and talents, that is not a problem. Many well paying jobs require a diversity of skills and are described by combining several life paths. Remember also that you do not have to use everything in your work. Some gifts and talents are meant to be shared only with close family and friends.



Self Discovery Guidelines

To get the most of our guidebooks, we have a few helpful tips. If this is your first time doing self discovery work, take a moment to read about how to get the most out of this experience.

Choose a Good Place & Time

You want to find a comfortable place where you feel relaxed and focused. Good choices are places where you are inspired, open and creative -- such as out in nature. Once you have the place, set aside enough time so you are not interrupted in the middle of an assignment. Give yourself enough time to allow insights to surface and new perspectives to sink in.

Work at Your Own Pace

Work at the speed you feel most comfortable with and that gives you the most insights and ideas. If you have a habit of rushing through self help exercises, slow down so that you avoid falling into the rut of coming up with "pat" answers that yield few insights. Just like putting together a jigsaw puzzle, you need time to look at each piece to see where it fits as well as the big picture.

Work with a Centered and Playful Attitude

Your attitude is one of the most important ingredients in self discovery work. You want to feel open to let ideas flow and tap into your inner wisdom. So take care of any urgent chores before you start and then prepare by focusing on what you hope to achieve from the time and effort you are investing. This will help you clarify why you are doing the work and avoid distracting thoughts.

Before you start each assignment, take a couple of deep breaths to center yourself, relax and focus on the intent of the next part. In self discovery there are no right or wrong answers, and often the best work reveals more questions than it answers. What counts is what you take away from the experience, and often good self discovery yields insights and ideas long after the book or quiz is put away. Ideas and insights have their own timing, so stay open to new ideas as they arrive.



Emotional Impact Tips

Dealing with Mixed Emotions

First, it is okay if you have a mix of positive as well as negative emotions. You might feel happy or elated as you recall fond memories, re-connect with what you love, and come to appreciate how gifted and talented you really are. However, you could also feel frustrated or angry as you look at how your past choices may not have been in your long term interests, re-connect with past mistakes, or appreciate how much your life has been impacted by not having the self knowledge you have just gained.

Dealing with Strong Feelings

Strong emotions are signals that you are dealing with important issues. Usually the stronger the feelings, the more significant they are. If you start to get caught up in the emotions, here are a few simple things you can do ...

- See these strong feelings as a positive sign that you are working on important issues for your life.
- Acknowledge everything you are feeling so that the energy in the emotion has a chance to be expressed and dissipated.
- Take the time to move beyond feeling the emotion to understand what your feelings are trying to tell you. Often the emotion is a means to make sure you feel the consequences and change your future behavior so that the same event does not happen again.
- See if you can harness the raw energy they bring and use it to motivate yourself and gain momentum for improving your life.
- Talk with friends, a career counselor, or join a community message board that deals with career issues if you feel like you need some moral support.



Before & After Example

One of the best ways to see the benefits of using this guidebook is to compare the before and after descriptions.

Below we provide a fictional example so you see the difference this book can make.

Before Description

"My best subject in school was writing. I have always wanted to do something about saving wildlife. When I was growing up, I wanted to work in a zoo. I am a fairly good storyteller. All my nieces and nephews beg me to make up bedtime stories and I love to see their eyes light up when I put them into the stories! And I am pretty good at cooking in the outdoors."

After List of Gifts and Talents

"I am naturally great at work that uses, to the highest degree, my gifts and talents of ...

Public Speaking (Life Path 3)

- telling stories that make people laugh, especially ones that highlight the humor in animals and how closely they relate to humans (rare 1 in 10,000)
- creating funny animal voices and noises
- having a warm, engaging voice

Writing (Life Path 3)

- creating compelling arguments for the need for animals to thrive in the wild
- being sensitive to people's need to live in harmony with wildlife
- seeing possibilities for man and nature to co-exist and benefit each other
- creating animal characters people really care about (rare 1 in 100,000)



Research & Exploring (Life Path 7 & 1)

- finding and sharing quirky facts and the small details that make up the daily life of an animal
- easily establishing rapport with indigenous people
- finding hidden water holes and edible native plants (rare 1 in a 100,000)
- cooking a gourmet meal on a camp stove (rare 1 in a million)
- giving great foot massages after a long day hiking

End Notes: My Next Step

Step Chosen:

Time I Want To Invest:

Action Items:

Thanks for completing our guidebook! We hope you found it an effective tool for finding your gifts and talents!

