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The Forgotten Class

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Buffalo State College
State University of New York
Creative Studies Department

The Forgotten Class
A Master's Project in Creative Studies
by
Molly Holinger

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements
for the Degree of
Master of Science
May 1, 2016

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An Abstract of a Master's Project

in

Creative Studies

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

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Abstract

The Forgotten Class is a book designed for twenty-somethings to navigate this uncertain, often difficult time in their lives. The book offers a slightly adapted FourSight model (cite) combined with Design Thinking (cite) for creating a life you love in your twenties.

The Forgotten Class model is enriched with Positive Psychology research and tools as well as life-coaching tools. Essentially, this book is to teach twenty-somethings the important life lessons left out of traditional education, such as how to be deliberately creative and how to lead a life of well-being.

Keywords: Design Thinking, Creative Problem Solving, Positive Psychology

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Dates of Approval:

5/3/16

Dr. Cyndi Burnett
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Molly Holinger
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Printed and bound in the United States of America.

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The Forgotten Class

A Master's Project

Section One: Background to the Project

Purpose and Description of Project

The purpose of this project is to finish writing and ultimately publish a book on life planning and the creative process for twenty-somethings. The concept of this book grew from a wish to disseminate and synthesize valuable self-help resources. I saw an opportunity to combine Positive Psychology, Creative Problem Solving models (Miller, Vehar, Firestien, Thurber, & Nielsen, 2011) and Design Thinking (Brown, 2009).

This project might be called “Master’s Project: Round Two.” “Round One” consisted of writing the first draft of a book combining the aforementioned resources for a broad audience. I plan to revise the book based on a narrower audience of twenty-somethings, to whom I have come to realize this book best serves. Furthermore, “Round Two” will be heavy on collecting feedback and making appropriate revisions. The implementation phase will involve getting this book to a publisher (ideally ICSC Press). I will bring this creation to fruition by incorporating feedback, targeting the book towards a more specific audience, and, ultimately, getting the book into the hands of a publisher.

Rationale for Selection

This Master’s Project is a labor of love. I am motivated to work on this project for a number of reasons:

1. *Identifying an opportunity.* There is an untapped opportunity to combine Creative Problem Solving, Design Thinking, and life-planning for a twenty-something audience.

While the area of life planning and creativity has been explored (Birsell, 2015), it has not been explored in the context of twenty-somethings.

2. *Responding to a need.* In my own experience and in others of my generation (friends, family, etc.) I have noticed feelings of helplessness, disappointment, and depression. The content in this book can help twenty-somethings deal with the unique struggles of this generation such as a declining quality of life and an overwhelming number of choices.
3. *Producing a tangible product.* This project has been forming over a number of years. I would like to walk away having truly brought it to fruition. I want my Master's Project to reflect with the hard work and academic rigor I have dedicated to my degree.
4. *Achieving personal goals.* This project will help me achieve the following personal goals:
 - Clarify my philosophy of creativity and the role creativity will play in my life.
 - Improve my capacity for implementation and particularly gaining acceptance. Taking the final step of getting my creation out into the world is the part of the creative process that I struggle with the most.
 - Become comfortable asking for and accepting feedback.

Section Two: Pertinent Literature

When reading and searching for these sources, I searched for those most helpful to the target audience: twenty-somethings. Three major areas emerged: creativity, positive psychology, and self-help. I deliberately chose sources that highlighted informative and applicable content for this audience.

Creativity

The creativity section of this literature review informed the model that structures *The Forgotten Class*.

Amabile, T. (1996). *Creativity in context: Update to the social psychology of creativity*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, Inc.

Amabile essentially established a social psychology of creativity with the publication of this book, originally entitled *The Social Psychology of Creativity* (1983). The main point that Amabile made in her book, and consistently supported with research throughout, was her *intrinsic motivation principle of creativity*: “Intrinsic motivation is conducive to creativity; controlling extrinsic motivation is detrimental to creativity, but informational enabling extrinsic motivation can be conducive, particularly if initial levels of intrinsic motivation are high” (p. 119). To put it simply, intrinsic motivation increases creativity and extrinsic motivation decreases creativity. It's hard to overemphasize the importance of this finding: how we motivate ourselves and how others choose to motivate us (our bosses, our family members, etc.) determines how creative our responses will be. Another caveat is what Amabile called, informational enabling extrinsic motivation. According to Amabile, there are certain exceptions when it comes to extrinsic motivators, which is why she differentiated controlling extrinsic motivation and enabling extrinsic motivation.

Brown, T. (2009). *Change by design*. New York, NY: HarperCollins.

According to CEO and president of IDEO Tim Brown, we should be “looking at every problem-- from adult illiteracy to global warming-- as a design problem” (p. 38). In his seminal book on Design Thinking, Brown outlined the Design Thinking process and where it came from (IDEO). In its simplest form, the Design Thinking process breaks down into three stages: “Inspiration, the problem or opportunity that motivates the search for solutions; ideation, the

process of generating developing, and testing ideas; and implementation, the path that leads from the project room to the market” (p. 16). However, Design Thinking is a highly iterative process and often involves circling back to earlier stages. It takes a high degree of improvisation and tolerance for ambiguity.

Positive Psychology

Positive Psychology is another major piece of *The Forgotten Class*. From the literature reviewed, I have included the most pertinent Positive Psychology research for twenty-somethings (the target-audience of the book).

Iyengar, S. S., Wells, R. E., & Schwartz, B. (2006). Doing better but feeling worse looking for the “best” job undermines satisfaction. *Psychological Science*, 17(2), 143-150.

When it comes to making decisions, there are two types of people: maximizers and satisficers. Maximizers like to explore all their options and take their time in order to choose the best one. Satisficers, by contrast, accept the first option they come across that meets their standards-- whether or not another, better, option might come along later or a greater search effort be put forth. People fall somewhere along the bell curve of maximizers and satisficers. Iyengar et al. researched these two types of decision-making and how they affect happiness. In a study of 548 recent college graduates, they looked at how these graduates chose their jobs *and* their levels of satisfaction with their choices. As one might expect, maximizers got better jobs (at least in terms of salary), earning 20% more than satisficers. Surprisingly, however, they reported less satisfaction with their jobs than satisficers. Iyengar et al. also mentioned that people shift towards the satisficer end of the spectrum as they age, just as happiness tends to rise with age.

Birsel, A. (2015). *Design the life you love: A step-by-step guide to building a meaningful life*. New York, NY: Ten Speed Press.

Ayse Birsal, co-founder of a successful design studio in New York, applied her design-thinking-like process to life planning in her book *Designing the Life You Love*. The book is beautifully designed: accessible and playful. Birsal did a nice job of balancing activities and creativity-related content; she was deliberate making the book light. She also included interesting and relevant quotes throughout. This book could actually fit into either the creativity or the self-help section and is similar to *The Forgotten Class* in uniting creativity principles and processes with self-help. The differentiator here is the target audience (twenty-somethings versus a broad audience).

Deaton, A., & Kahneman, D. (2010). High income improves evaluation of life but not emotional well-being. *PNAS*, *107*(38), 16489–16493. doi: 10.1073/pnas.1011492107

New scholarship distinguished two types of subjective well-being: emotional well-being and life evaluation. Emotional well-being refers to one's daily emotions while life evaluation refers to satisfaction with one's current position and future trajectory in life. Research found that life evaluation and emotional well-being have different correlates, one of these correlates being income. Life evaluation and income mutually increase: as income increases, life evaluation increases. When it comes to emotional well-being, however, this correlation maxes out at \$75,000. In other words, as income increases, emotional well-being increases, but only up to \$75,000. Once an individual reaches an income of \$75,000, subsequent increases in income will not significantly affect emotional well-being.

Diener, E., & Seligman, M. (2002). Very happy people. *Psychological Science*, *13*, 81-84.

In this study, Diener and Seligman looked at three groups of students: students in the top 10% of happiness (according to assessment measures), students with average happiness, and very unhappy students. Perhaps the strongest finding was that “good social relations” were *necessary*

for happiness; all those in the top 10% had positive relationships, whether romantic or otherwise. Comparing the happiest people to the unhappiest people, there was no significant difference in level of exercise, religiosity, or positive life events.

Fredrickson, B. L., & Losada, M. F. (2005). Positive affect and the complex dynamics of human flourishing. *American Psychologist*, 60(7), 678-686.

In this article, Fredrickson and Losada mathematized the emotional component of well-being. They identified a ratio (2.9:1) that differentiated “flourishing” individuals from “languishing” individuals. Flourishing individuals approached life positively; they sought growth, responded resiliently to problems, and generally led a life of well-being. Languishing individuals, while perhaps not rating as pathological, suffered distress, demonstrated antisocial behavior and disengagement, and often expressed a feeling that life was somehow “empty.” According to Fredrickson and Losada’s findings, those who experienced more than 2.9 positive emotions for every 1 negative emotion fell into the category of flourishing individuals. Those who experienced less than 2.9 positive emotions for every one negative emotion fell into the category of languishing individuals.

Self-Help

The self-help literature I reviewed spans career, twenty-somethings, and creativity-centered self-help. Some of these works truly fall into multiple sections (such as Birsell’s *Designing the Life You Love* which covers both creativity and self-help).

Gardner, J. (1994, March). The road to self-renewal. *Stanford Alumni Magazine*. Retrieved from <http://faculty-gsb.stanford.edu/aaker/pages/documents/johngardner-roadtoself-renewal2.pdf>

The Road to Self-Renewal is a speech given by John Gardner at the Hawaii Executive Conference in Kona, Hawaii, in April 1993. Gardner addressed many of the larger questions in life, offering insights based on his numerous and varied life experiences. While the content of this speech appeals to any age group, I believe the audience of this book will resonate with it. For example, Gardner stated,

You come to understand that most people are neither for you nor against you; they are thinking about themselves. You learn that no matter how hard you try to please, some people in this world are not going to love you, a lesson that is at first troubling and then really quite relaxing. Those are things that are hard to learn early in life. As a rule you have to have picked up some mileage and some dents in your fenders before you understand.

Gardner focused on those lessons that can only come from experience. Young people, who may be just starting to comprehend these lessons, can find them eloquently articulated in this speech.

Jay, M. (2012). *The defining decade: Why your twenties matter and how to make the most of them now*. New York, NY: Hachette Book Group.

“With about 80 percent of life’s most significant events taking place by age thirty-five, as thirtysomethings and beyond we largely either continue with, or correct for, the moves we made during our twentysomething years” (p. xii).

In *The Defining Decade*, clinical psychologist Meg Jay summarized narratives and advice from her career working with twenty-somethings. She advised that twenty-somethings take these years seriously, as they (apt to the title) often define the rest of our lives. Jay advised going after identity capital through meaningful, mindfully chosen experiences, using weak ties in seeking relationships and job offers, and deliberately picking one’s family rather than subscribing to the myth of the urban tribe.

Krznicar, R. (2012). *How to find fulfilling work*. London, UK: Macmillan.

In addition to outlining a brief history of work, Krznaric reflected on the current generation's changing expectations regarding work. He recognized the emerging desires of fulfillment in our work-- and furthermore acknowledged them as legitimate, not to be met with guilt or shame. Finally, this book included several substantial activities such as the *Map of Choices*, designed for readers to reflect on their past in order to inform their future.

Mau, B. (2014). *An incomplete manifesto of growth*. Retrieved from

<http://umcf.umn.edu/events/past/04nov-manifesto.pdf>

Designer and architect Bruce Mau wrote this short manifesto for growth. While certain points in the manifesto cater specifically to designers, the manifesto applies to everyone. It advocates growth, warns of the struggles of growth, and illuminates the nature of growth.

Additional Works

In addition to these works, a number of other resources have influenced my thinking. They are provided in the bibliography below:

Amabile, T. (1983). *The social psychology of creativity*. New York, NY: Springer-Verlag.

Brown, S. (2009). *Play: How it shapes the brain, opens the imagination, and invigorates the soul*. New York, NY: Penguin Group.

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https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/docs/millennials_report.pdf

Csikszentmihalyi, M. (1991). *Flow: The psychology of optimal experience*. New York, NY: HarperPerennial.

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FourSight LLC. (2006). *Your toolcards: An innovation catalyst*. Evanston, IL: THinc Communications.

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Seligman, M. E. (2012). *Flourish: A visionary new understanding of happiness and well-being*. New York, NY: Simon and Schuster.

The Paradox of Choice. [Video File]. Retrieved from

http://www.ted.com/talks/barry_schwartz_on_the_paradox_of_choice

The Psychology of Your Future Self (Video File). Retrieved from

http://www.ted.com/talks/dan_gilbert_you_are_always_changing

Section Three: Process Plan

Plan to Achieve My Goals and Outcomes

This project had two main stages: a first round of collecting feedback and writing additional content and then revising content based on feedback. The bulk of this process was a cycle of collecting feedback and revising. The other major component was contacting Paul Reali at ICSC Press, Sarah Thurber (managing partner at FourSight) and Dr. Cyndi Burnett to take a look at the final manuscript. These experts will provide additional feedback that will inform a manuscript to go to publication. I also spoke with Paul Reali about publishing through ICSC Press and got his approval.

Project timeline.

1. Asked for feedback.
 - a. Before doing anything, I asked for feedback on the book as I left it after my independent study. I asked for feedback where I could find it and with a specific focus on my target audience (twenty-somethings). In the end, I received feedback from Karina Loera (International Center for Studies in Creativity (ICSC) Master's student), Jennifer Dafcik (twenty-something), Don Chase (undergraduate Buffalo state student), and Julia Figliotti (assistant to Dr. Cyndi Burnett, ICSC graduate,

and twenty-something). As I mentioned, I will ask for another round of feedback from Paul Reali (editor of ICSC Press), my Master’s Project advisor (Dr. Cyndi Burnett), and Sarah Thurber (managing partner a FourSight). I was looking for feedback on the content of the book: Does it flow? What is most compelling? Is anything missing? Should anything be taken out? Is the process offered in the book appealing? Above all, I was looking for the honest impression of another set of eyes. As its author, I am too close to this book to judge it objectively and needed a fresh, unbiased perspective.

2. Contacted Paul Reali at ICSC Press to explore the possibility of publication. He responded positively. We left it that I would send him a manuscript when it was ready.
3. Revised content.
 - a. Since I finished the first draft of the book in May 2015, my thoughts on a few things changed by January 2016 (when I began this Master’s Project). I revised some of the content to align better with this new learning.
 - b. Added narratives. I added more personal narratives from my life that illustrate the content in a more personal manner that readers can relate to.
 - c. Improved flow. I simplified the process by changing the names of stages and removing stages. The feedback I received really helped to point out what needed changing, like taking out some sections and elaborating on others.
4. Gave revised manuscript to Paul Reali (editor at ICSC Press), Sarah Thurber (managing partner at FourSight), and Dr. Cyndi Burnett (Master’s Project advisor and professor at ICSC) for review.

Week	Task	Hours
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Feb 1-6	Collect feedback. (Jen, Karina, Don, Julia). Concept Paper.	5
Feb 7-13	Collect feedback. Print Book.	3
Feb 14-20	Collect feedback. Contact Paul about publishing with ICSC Press.	3
Feb 21-27	Collect feedback. Write new content.	3
Feb 28-March 5	Collect feedback. Write new content.	3
March 6-12	Collect feedback. Write new content. Literature Review.	10
March 13-19	Collect feedback. Write new content.	3
March 20-26	Revise content based on feedback.	10
March 27-April 2	Revise content based on feedback.	10
April 3-9	Write sections 4-6.	10

April 10-16		
April 17-23	Revise content based on feedback.	10
April 23-30	Revise content based on feedback.	10
May 1-7	Prepare manuscript for Paul, Sarah, and Cyndi. Contact Paul, Sarah, and Cyndi to hand over manuscript and request review.	10

Section Four: Outcomes

The outcome of my Master's project is a revised manuscript of *The Forgotten Class* submitted to Paul Reali (editor of ICSC Press), Sarah Thurber (managing partner at FourSight), and Cyndi Burnett (my Master's project advisor and professor at ICSC). Major changes from the original manuscript include:

1. **Tone of voice.** The tone of voice was made a consistent "we," and a more colloquial tone.
2. **The model.** Rather than calling our model, "The Creative Life Planning Process," the model is simply referred to as our model. The reasoning behind this was, again, to make the tone friendlier. Certain stages were also renamed (e.g. *formulating the challenge* became *wording a challenge*, *formulating an action plan* became *take action*).
3. I also did some major restructuring such as removing the ten forgotten class philosophies section. I replaced this section with creativity skills including empathy, bravery, a growth mindset, and making connections.

4. **Exercises.** I edited the exercises to avoid redundancy and made them more user-friendly. To be more specific, I tried to make the exercises more visual and interesting.
5. **Targeting twenty-somethings.** I revised and added content in order to make it clear that my audience is twenty-somethings. For example, I added a page addressing the unique struggles of millennials which I have included in this section (see below).
6. **General style.** Finally, I did a thorough revision of style and grammar, including elaboration on weak or underdeveloped content.

Feedback

Many of my revisions were based on the feedback I received. I organized this feedback into the following categories: clarity of purpose and audience, structure, adding content, grammar and style, names, and other.

Clarity of Purpose & Audience		
Person	Feedback	Action
Jen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the purpose of the book? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ How to encourage people to think more deeply about their path. 	✓
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audience <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ College Students <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ They are somewhat stable ■ Starting at 1 instead of starting at 0 ■ They have some momentum going ■ A framework for thinking ahead to life change <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • preventative • warning • heads-up • ahead of the game • foresight • preparedness 	✓
Cyndi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Target it to 20 somethings • What's different about 20 year olds? 	✓

Julia	I love the idea of the Forgotten Class - what you didn't learn in college and should have, but had to learn through experience instead. I'm not sure the target audience is clear, other than people unsure about life (which, let's face it, is everyone). It seems as though developing a more specific niche would benefit the distribution of this resource.	Made target audience clear by addressing twenty-somethings directly, changing the subtitle, and adding "millennial" page.
	Once I read "The purpose of this book is to fill that space, which is why we have named it The Forgotten Class" it all clicked, but before that it felt a bit directionless. I believe it could benefit from a more centralized thesis statement closer to the beginning, to draw in the audience and help them understand why you're speaking about your post-graduation confusion.	Moved up.

Structure		
Person	Feedback	Action
Jen	Introduce the model in the intro or even on the cover	I like the model where it is.
	Take out 10 rules or turn them into gray pages	Took out gray pages.
Cyndi	Gray pages- put them at the end of the chapters as ways to understand the activities	Took out gray pages.
Julia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make the model flow better <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ More visible ○ Use numbers 	Color code the model and divergent/convergent thinking. This will happen during formatting.
Julia	It is also a bit difficult to follow at times (notes below). Maybe if you can go through the whole book and write an outline based on what you've written, you could look at that outline and do some rearranging to make it flow better.	✓
	The Forgotten Class Approach (numbered) could use more detail. It seems like these are mostly headlines without much description or details.	Removed.
	9 is titled Imitate but mentions plagiarizing and stealing. These are very different concepts.	Removed.
	"Our Model" looks like FourSight?	Yes, it is similar to FourSight- okay.
	CLP comes out of nowhere. Define it before using the acronym (i.e. Creative Problem Solving (CPS))	Changed the name of the model to general Creative

	Navigating the CLP Process might be more convenient before the descriptions of the 4 steps, but after the image.	Process.
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Adding Content		
Person	Feedback	Action
Jen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Emphasize that this is cyclical <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ maybe have last step of the model be iteration? ○ You will need to commit energy to starting over again and again ○ Emphasize that you have done this before, so you can do it again <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Activity: Pinpoint the times where you have already done this (e.g. shifting from sports to music, etc.) ○ Include polarity thinking here? 	Edited conclusion with emphasis on iteration.
Cyndi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Host workshop <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ get examples from workshop to use in the book 	Future step.
Julia	Why is there so much information after Clarify, Develop, and Implement, but not after Ideate?	Added narrative content to ideate.
	The description of clarify focuses mostly on curiosity	Revised clarify description by expanding outside of curiosity.

Grammar and Style		
Person	Feedback	Action
Julia	Style of writing changes a lot: Inconsistencies with tenses, punctuation, and plurals (throughout)	<p>Made consistent. Thorough revisions.</p> <p>Revised the book to be more readable and accessible to a lay-audience.</p>
	This seems to blanket-statement a lot of creativity. For example, "those who create for the sake intrinsic rewards, such as joy and personal growth, have better creative output." In these situations, to avoid alienating people, it would be helpful to use some allowances such as "often" or "usually," or even "statistically."	Inserted words like "often" and "usually" as suggested.

	Inconsistencies with "one," "one's," "oneself;" "you," "your," and "yourself;" and "people" and "we"	Made voice consistent "we".
	Post-it notes are unfortunately registered, so they need to read Post-itR	✓
Cyndi	The model is Creative Problem Solving (not Creative Problem Solving Process)	✓
	Make sure you consistently capitalize the creativity processes	✓

Name		
Person	Feedback	Action
Jen	The Missing Course	Sticking with <i>Forgotten Class</i>
Cyndi	Carving Your Way	Sticking with <i>Forgotten Class</i>

Other		
Person	Feedback	Action
Julia	I don't understand what " — Tom Kelley, <i>Creative Confidence: Unleashing the Creative Potential Within Us All</i> " refers to. What quote does that reference?	✓

I also organized feedback into a PPCo-type format.

Strengths/Pluses

- **Overall message; responds to a real need.**
 - *"The Forgotten Class is such a real thing and I love that you decided to compile it into one resource. It's great to know I wasn't the only one who had to learn this stuff the hard way."* - Julia Figliotti

- *“I love the idea of the Forgotten Class - what you didn't learn in college and should have, but had to learn through experience instead.”- Julia Figliotti*
- *“I especially liked all of the activities in Part II, I even learned a few things about myself which I never realized...Would it be alright if I could have a copy? I want to use the process to apply to some of my problems when I have some time.”-*
Donald Chase
- **Nod to Design Thinking and Creative Problem Solving.**
 - *“Great hat-tip to the creators of CPS and Design Thinking.” –Julia Figliotti*
- **Great images! - Julia Figliotti**
- **Emphasis on iteration.**
 - *“Remember that directions are reversible.’ Love this.” - Julia Figliotti*

Building on Strengths/ Opportunities

- It would be great to make the visuals even better (outstanding visuals).
- There is an opportunity to market this directly towards twenty-somethings/ millennials; really tailor the book to this audience.
- There is an opportunity to put an even greater emphasis on iteration.

Additional Content

Since I finished my independent study, I have read books and had life experiences that I wanted to incorporate in *The Forgotten Class*. I also added content explicitly directed towards my new target audience of twenty-somethings. The first piece of added content “Millennials” falls into the latter category.

Millennials. Older generations often characterize Millennials as lazy, idealistic, and dependent (usually on our parents). We recognize, in ourselves and in others, the truth in this;

Millennials certainly have their flaws. One of the reasons Millennials face criticism, we believe, is the nature of the struggles they face: trivial to previous generations but real and even debilitating for this generation. Among those of our generation—our family members, our friends, and ourselves--there is high anxiety, intense disappointment in work life, and fear of the future. Perhaps if other generations, and even we ourselves, could better articulate the root of these issues, there would be less judgment from the outside and less self-doubt on the inside.

The first major issue Millennials face can be explained in terms of jam-- yes, jam. In a psychological experiment by Harvard psychologists (Iyengar et al., 2006), shoppers were given either twenty-four or six choices of jam. Logically, the shoppers with more choice should be happier with their jam; like buying a pair of jeans, the more choices available, the better the fit. Yet, time and time again, the shoppers with six choices of jam expressed greater contentment with their decision. Why?

Adding options to people's lives can't help but increase the expectations people have about how good those options will be...people have experiences that are disappointing because their standards are so high, and then when they have to explain these experiences to themselves, they think they're at fault. And so the net result is that we do better in general, objectively, and we feel worse. (The Paradox of Choice).

When it comes to Millennials, this phenomenon applies to more than just jeans or jam-- it applies to our life path. We have an unprecedented freedom in choosing our future and therefore an unprecedented number of options. Now, more than ever, we have the ability to choose our careers, our spouses, our geographical locations... the list goes on. Freedom certainly has its positive aspects (especially considering its limits for previous generations in the past) but, counter-intuitively, it also brings about negatives. For the sake of our self-worth as Millennials, we think this is extremely important to understand. As explained with the jam experiment,

having more options doesn't necessarily make us happier. In fact, the opposite is true: we end up disappointed in the choices we make. We are objectively better off, but subjectively less happy.

Another root cause of Millennial disillusionment, we feel, is extremely high expectations that don't necessarily match with reality. Many of us have enjoyed overwhelmingly positive experiences and an extremely comfortable life, first enjoying the shelter of our parents' homes and support and then the sometimes unbelievable quality of life at college (including state of the art gyms and modern dorm rooms). In addition to a high standard of living, we have come to expect a job that is not only lucrative, but also meaningful, and this can be a tall order. We are coming into the job market post-recession, a reality that affects our lives and will continue to do so in our future years (Council of Economic Advisors, 2014). During the post-college years, then, we are left with a sharp sense of decline and disappointment, not to mention a fear of what is ahead.

So how do we solve these issues? Happiness researcher Barry Schwartz would answer, "The secret to happiness is low expectations" (The Paradox of Choice). But let's face it, our generation does not want to hear that. Life is more than that, isn't it? We think so. We think it is about living a life you love.

Introduction. Welcome, we are excited you came and are reading this book! Reaching out for support in order to grow is one of life's most challenging lessons, but you have answered the call in picking up this book.

We are two recently graduated college graduates who, during our studies, both panicked. Where were our studies leading us? What jobs did we want? Who or what did we value? What-- money, passion, love-- should inform our choices? Essentially, we both found ourselves on paths that we didn't know we should be on, nor where they would lead. Despite being in the

educationally elite world of college students, we felt as if we knew *nothing*. While college was teaching one of us (Molly) to speak and write fluently in French and the other (Jen) how to conduct international business deals, it hadn't taught us (at least not deliberately) about life. We once had a conversation about what aspect of our college education had taught us the most-- and neither of us named our classes.

Furthermore, in talking to friends and even in casual conversations, it became apparent to us that we were not alone in feeling unprepared for, fearful of, and disappointed with life in our twenties. From our own experiences and the experiences of those around us, we believe today's twenty-somethings need direction on how to live. To help ourselves and others of our generation, we have designed a life-planning process adapted from the creative processes Design Thinking (Brown, 2009) and Creative Problem Solving (Miller et al., 2011), what we call the Creative Life-Planning Process. The creative processes that inspired this book (Design Thinking and Creative Problem Solving) function just as powerfully in creating one's life as in designing a product or service. In this book, we have adapted these processes for life planning. As Tim Brown (2009), CEO and President of design firm IDEO and author of *Change by Design* says, "*There is a big difference... between planning a life, drifting through life, and designing a life*" (p. 241).

Along the way, we highlight research, books, and websites that we wish were taught in education- but that we had to find ourselves, which is the reason this book is entitled *The Forgotten Class*. These are the lessons that have brought us to where we both are today (more on that later...) and that we still draw upon to keep afloat. The topics range from motivation to learning style, but the overarching theme is personal growth and well-being. Hardly a comprehensive list, these blurbs share the latest research on well-being.

For those going through life changes, feeling lost, overwhelmed by choice--or lack of choice--this book is for you. Life in the early twenties is often glorified-- but in reality happiness is actually quite low in this population, especially in comparison to later life. This book can help navigate these years which are often filled with change and major life decisions. We have designed it for our specific age group, and our generation, which has unique struggles such as entering the job market post-recession.

We hope that you find it useful, enjoyable, and relatable. Yes, this book is meant to be informative, but it is also meant to be the start of an exciting journey of creating change in your life. This book is meant to serve you-- pick and choose the exercises and information that most speak to you.

Conclusion. What we have shared with you in this book we have found helpful in navigating “the constant unfolding of life” (Gardner, 1994). We will reveal to you now that the stories we shared in this book are real examples of the creative process in life. Molly prototyped a life in Paris, changed her path and ideated on other life paths, prototyped a life of teaching creativity as a teaching assistant, and then implemented a life of teaching creativity for a year. With her Ph.D. search, she clarified the schools she wanted to apply to, converged on her choices, went through a divergent application process, and converged on one choice. Jen is the master of prototyping, prototyping twelve lifestyles during the year of months and trying out different cultures (she has visited twenty-seven countries and all fifty states).

In writing this book, we hope to abridge your search for answers by sharing with you what was most helpful to us in building our lives. As feminist and playwright Eve Ensler said, happiness “exists in giving away what you want the most.” But while we are giving you a

process and some accompanying wisdom from Positive Psychology, the journey is yours. We leave you with this: trust the process, be brave, seek out support, and create a life you love.

Making connections. Lateral thinking, juxtaposition, bi-association. These are all names for a simple but powerful creative ability: making connections. Recent neuroscience research confirms that making connections really is at the heart of creativity (Nielsen & Thurber, 2016), not to mention the abundant anecdotal evidence. Take Steve Jobs and the apple computer, for example. Jobs differentiated the Mac from its competitors by combining two seemingly unrelated concepts: new computer technology and calligraphy. Jobs took a calligraphy course at Reed College and then years later, when designing the Mac, insisted that the mac have beautiful typefaces (Isaacson, 2011). With the insight that aesthetics matter, and a cross-fertilizing mind, Jobs transformed the personal computer.

The divergent rules in real life. Over the past year, I (Molly) have been applying for creativity-related Ph.D. programs in order to further my dream of teaching creativity at the university level. Along with my coursework for my Master's degree, my job, and writing this book, applying for Ph.D. programs threatened to put me over the edge. I had two dream schools, Harvard and Claremont, and it was tempting to complete these applications and call it a day. Following the advice of others, though, I pushed myself to apply to four additional schools, and thank god I did. As it turned out, I was turned down by Harvard and Claremont, along with two other backup schools (The University of Georgia and Northern Illinois University) and so was left with two options: The University of Connecticut and Texas A&M. With an offer of a fellowship and generous stipend, I visited Texas A&M with an attitude of optimism and excitement. Yet, when I arrived, there was a feeling in my gut, an intuition, that this was not the place for me. But there was still another option: The University of Connecticut. Fearful of my

dwindling options, I went to visit the Connecticut campus and fell in love. I felt a connection with the other Ph.D. candidates, my future advisor, and the rolling, tree-covered hills of the Connecticut countryside.

Creating many options makes all the difference, something I learned from this personal experience, but something we also know from research. The most original thinking comes in the last third of ideas produced (Parnes, 1961), so it pays to stretch ourselves rather than give up prematurely. Like the application process, generating many options leads to better quality options in the end.

Section Five: Key Learnings

Every time I go through the creative process, I learn something new. I was reminded that when it comes to creativity, there is no such thing as “practice makes perfect” but rather “practice improves.” Through practice, we can be more effective in the creative process but will never reach the point of perfection where there is nothing more to learn. Going through the creative process again during this Master’s project brought about new learnings and old reminders about what the creative process is like. I learned a lot about the development stage, particularly, because I spent most of my time in this stage.

As I stated in the introduction, I began this Master’s Project in the development stage, having gone through extensive clarification and ideation in an independent study during which this project was born. Over the course of this project, I have remained, for the most part, in this development hell—my lowest FourSight preference. And while I have not necessarily enjoyed this stage, I have learned a few very important lessons about this stage in the creative process.

1. One thing I learned about the development stage is that it can be never-ending, so there must be a moment where you simply decide, “I must move on.” The nature of creative

work is that there is no right answer and thus no definitive mark of completion.

Therefore, it is up to the creator to decide when the project is ready to move into the implementation stage. Making this leap has been difficult for me because I am a bit of a perfectionist and therefore want to keep making improvements rather than sending an imperfect creation out into the world. In future projects, I will be more aware to ensure that I do not get stuck in the sort of “quicksand” of the development stage.

2. **Flexibility and patience.** First of all, writing a book is a *long* process that demands patience. Also, in my experience, my timeline did not go according to plan. The process of soliciting feedback necessitated adjusting my schedule based on the schedules of those providing the feedback.
3. **Feedback takes a long time to gather.** Budget time for feedback. While I had a schedule in mind, I had to take into account that the people from whom I was asking feedback had their own schedules and lives. Therefore, I had to adjust my schedule and expectations based on the reality of their schedules. Similarly, a way to curb one’s losses when it comes to feedback is to ask far more people than are needed, because chances are that many of those people will not respond or respond on time.

Section Six: Conclusion

Next Steps

Short-Term (End of May)	Deliver updated manuscript to Sarah Thurber (managing partner of FourSight), Paul Reali (editor of ICSC Press), and Cyndi Burnett (Master’s project advisor and professor at ICSC) for feedback.
Mid-Term (End of August)	Explore formatting options for the book. I believe that the visual appeal of the book will be essential for its success and therefore want to make sure the formatting is done well. Use the models of

	<p><i>Five, Seven, and Designing a Life You Love.</i></p> <p>I will explore different options for formatting, one of which is ICSC Press.</p> <p>Revise manuscript based on feedback and re-submit to Paul Reali for publication at ICSC Press.</p>
<p>Long-Term (Next 3 Years)</p>	<p>Once the book has been published, begin promotion. One idea for promotion is to create an accompanying workshop around the concepts and tools in the book.</p>

It has been more than three years since I first began thinking of writing this book. For a long time, it remained an idea, an unfulfilled wish, a future “to-do.” Finally, after a year of incubation and ideating, I took the plunge and wrote the first draft. But once again, I abandoned the book in an incomplete state, in need of major revisions and a publisher.

Bringing this book to a reality as my Master’s project has been an extremely gratifying experience. I chose this project because I wanted to produce something tangible and substantial and I believe I have accomplished that goal with the completion of an updated manuscript. I am grateful to have the luxury of a degree that provides the time, means and justification to engage in a personal creative project like writing a book. In completing this book, I have fulfilled a professional and personal goal and I am exceedingly proud of what I have produced.

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