

## WEB-PAGE

“Pathways to Purpose” is imagined and presented as an app. in the video below, but it is, perhaps, more important to recognize that the idea represents a **re-orientation of learning and exploration to feed an individual’s purpose.**

Born from a mashup of ideas explored in the course: primarily self-directed/DIY learning, artificial intelligence, and mental wellness; it is an attempt to imagine how individuals might explore OER for personal fulfillment – to help “fill the empty space inside oneself” that many feel in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

It’s a bit philosophically *lofty*, I know. Personally, I’ve never felt that I have a singular, organizational purpose to my life, and it’s increasingly difficult, I think, to separate and understand the relationships between:

- What we are **good** at
- What we **enjoy** doing
- What can **earn a living**

These are important questions for everyone to consider, yet often they are considered too infrequently and haphazardly. Given the vast amount of information, experts, and experiences we have access to, it should be easier than ever to parse a purpose out of life – and yet, it is not.

The idea is more than a ‘career counselling’ or ‘upskilling’ app., of which there are many, though it may contain some elements of each.

We are already subject to highly advanced recommender algorithms that maximize for our attention (Wang, 2020) – Why not, instead, program a system to maximize for purpose? And, rather than creating ‘echo-chambers’ and polarization, perhaps the algorithms, in the service of ‘education’ could help develop more whole and productive human-beings.

## VIDEO SCRIPT:

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Watch the Video Instead:

<https://youtu.be/1almxebJLjw>

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### Introduction:

Before I started this course, I thought mobile learning would primarily be about how to leverage mobile devices more authentically in a variety of learning contexts. Now, I understand that it is more than simply updating the technology we use in traditional classrooms; Mobile

learning is about the potential to **untether us** from **conventional systems** and **structures** of learning.

### **Rational:**

As an instructional designer and EdTech trainer working in the eLearning space for the past decade, initially I wondered if there could be a new system to help anyone 'build their own degree'. Google trends confirms increased interest in search terms like "alternative degree" ("alternative degree", 2021) and "personalized learning" ("personalized learning", 2021) and college choice.net claims that the number of schools offering the opportunity to design your own major has increased nearly 5% in the last decade. (20 Best Undergrad Programs to Create Your Own Major, 2021) Initially I imagined a future where a digital assistant could help you navigate open learning resources, and ultimately piece together a custom degree that could be recognized by a traditional learning institution. However, I soon found the idea too complicated and unrealistic for the average user.

But the problem of navigating vast amounts of learning resources, many of which are in competition with each other and exist in isolation remains. In the future, how might we bring these resources together in a unique and meaningful way?

### **Inspiration:**

Inspired by an episode of Hidden Brain's podcast about "Cultivating your Purpose", psychologist Anthony Burrow described how a sense of purpose can provide the basis to decide how to allocate time, money and energy. (You 2.0: Cultivating Your Purpose, 2021) Maybe, in the future, a digital assistant could help people **cultivate purpose**.

### **The Idea: Pathways to Purpose**

I imagine a cloud-based app. with an AI digital assistant that aggregates your digital footprints, identifies topics your interested in and makes suggestions for further learning (Monti, Rizzo, & Morisio, 2021) – pulling from the vast variety of open resources available on the web.

It could both passively collect data related to your online activities and ask questions to build a personalized profile and skills tree of information.

In the more distant future, technology like this might correlate precise neurological and biological data with your actions and choices to build a profile that offers more accurate insight about yourself – insight you would ideally use to help recognize your "purpose" and passions, which ultimately informs choices about careers and learning.

### **Analysis:**

The Benefits of this would be:

- Combining everyday digital activities with advanced artificial intelligence to provide nuanced and accurate personal insights while providing a more intuitive way to navigate digital assets and learning opportunities
- It would be useful across all age demographics

The risks would be:

- How to ensure the integrity and accuracy of all resources. It would be important that the business-model be grounded in nurturing and protecting people in the real world, and not *maximizing attention*. The service must also remain independent from the content it might recommend and should be owned and operated by educators. In the future, I hypothesize that Artificial Intelligence will be programmed will have the ability to accurately review and curate content.
- Ensuring the privacy and security of your digital profile. This is the type of data that would be incredibly useful to surveillance advertising and other predatory businesses (Wang, 2020), therefore it would be critically important for the user to own the data, and that it be stored with the most secure methods available.

### **Summary:**

Mobile and open learning is about more than updating the technology we use in traditional classrooms. At its heart, it's about how the virtualization of experiences influences individuals and how to create and participate in experiences to make a better world.

In the future, I think digital assistants will play a significant role in 'humanizing' advanced forms of machine learning and AI – which will be programmed to help us navigate the vast information available, and offer meaningful, personalized insights about ourselves, to help guide our curiosity and, ultimately, our learning choices.

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