

## **FLOW REFLECTION/ENERGY ENGAGEMENT ASSIGNMENT**

1. **Read** the Flow Reflection exercise below.
2. **Write** up your Flow Reflection per the instructions. Expect this to take 30 minutes in one sitting.
3. **Bring** this write-up to the workshop

### **FLOW Exercise – A Reflection on Optimal Experience**

- Make a list of Flow Moments in your past - it doesn't matter what or when. Don't overdo thinking up your list. Just quickly ask yourself "When did I experience this state?" It can be from any time in life, as long as you remember it as being in flow - an optimal experience. Jot down any and all experiences that come to mind. If needed refer to the summary definition of flow below (ref. Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi).
- Review your list and briefly re-imagine yourself in those moments, re-entering the experience.
- Pick one that has energy and accessibility. Again – it can be any experience, but if you have one that is more recent, and especially one with fairly complete memory, that will help.
- Let your mind fully recall that experience – spend a few minutes getting back into it. Then write a detailed description of the experience; what was happening and what it was like for you in the midst of it. You should write from 200-350 words (3/4 - 1-1/2pp). (You might try writing by hand).
- Put it down for at least 30-60 minutes but not more than 48 hours, then pick it back up and re-read your write-up.
- Notice if anything new about the experience comes to you as you re-read your description.
- Last, add a brief journal note about doing this reflection exercise (eg: what was it like, was it enjoyable or not, surprises, insights, etc.)

### **Mihály Csikszentmihályi - Flow**

In his seminal work, *Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience*, Csikszentmihalyi outlines his theory that people are most happy when they are in a state of flow—a Zen-like state of total oneness with the activity at hand and the situation. The idea of flow is identical to the feeling of being in the zone or in the groove. The flow state is an optimal state of intrinsic motivation, where the person is fully immersed in what he or she is doing. This is a feeling everyone has at times, characterized by a feeling of great freedom, enjoyment, fulfillment, and skill—and during which temporal concerns (time, food, ego-self, etc.) are typically ignored. In an interview with *Wired* magazine, Csikszentmihalyi described flow as "being completely involved in an activity for its own sake. The ego falls away. Time flies. Every action, movement, and thought follows inevitably from the previous one, like playing jazz. Your whole being is involved, and you're using your skills to the utmost." [2] To achieve a flow state, a balance must be struck between

the challenge of the task and the skill of the performer. If the task is too easy or too difficult, flow cannot occur. The flow state also implies a kind of focused attention, and indeed, it has been noted that mindfulness meditation, yoga, and martial arts seem to improve a person's capacity for flow. Among other benefits, all of these activities train and improve attention. In short; flow could be described as a state where attention, motivation, and the situation meet, resulting in a kind of productive harmony or feedback.

Wikipedia excerpt (see [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mihaly\\_Csikszentmihalyi](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mihaly_Csikszentmihalyi))

In the worksheet below, map your activities and energy in a typical week. What do you notice about your energy pattern? What insights do you get for your life design? Are there simple changes you can make now to enhance the state of flow? What changes can you make to reduce the drain on your energy?

You will share your insights in a breakout room and listen to others about their energy engagement map and changes they plan to make.

# ENERGY – ENGAGEMENT MAP WORKSHEET

**STEP 1:** List your top energy giving or draining regular activities/engagements:

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

**+**



TIME