



Unit 1: Finding Your Passion

Activity 1. Jake and Jennifer – A Case of Values and Lifestyles

Jake Bradbury

Jake Bradbury ground the Porsche Carrera to a halt, checked his Rolex, and slapped the wheel in frustration. Six o'clock and still three blocks to go. He glanced around impatiently. Late! Why today of all mornings! The light turned green. The car ahead didn't budge. Jake honked angrily and muscled the Porsche out into the right lane and fishtailed through the intersection. Two minutes later he swung into the circular driveway of the downtown hotel and surrendered his car to the valet, passing him a bill for his trouble. He ran his hands through his damp hair and entered through the dark carved wooden doors heading for Antonio's. His lucky restaurant. He made magic happen here. He sighed, confident the deal would work out.

Jake, aged twenty-five, was barely two years out of university and already he was something of a legend at the investment firm, Jacobs, Lim and Young. Just last month, he had brought in over twelve million dollars worth of new investments, smooth-talking some of the wealthiest investors in Canada into investing in stocks and bonds through their firm. Lim, the Hong Kong partner, had hinted broadly that a partnership was not far down the road.

Jake left Antonio's at ten o'clock, somewhat exasperated. Despite a long meeting, the two investors had not signed. They were going to walk around Stanley Park, taking the rest of the day off to think over the deal. They'd call him later that evening. Jake arrived at the office just in time to take a call from his wife.

"Sue?"

"Hi honey. Called you twice already. I booked the tickets."

"Huh?"

"I'm at Granville Island market with your mother. I've booked the tickets."



Jake closed his eyes. A week in Hawaii. Marion Bradbury, his mother had been watching her son closely these last few months, proud and yet worried. Proud of his rocketing achievement and astute business sense and growing wealth, yes, but also increasingly worried. Jake still had his athletic frame. Still a good-looking young muscular man. But already she could see the beginnings of a paunch. At times he seemed more than a bit weary. She was all too familiar with the stress involved in investment advising. Right now Jake was headed down the same road her husband, now deceased, had ventured.

“Jake?”

“Oh, yeah, Sue. Hey, I’m looking forward to the trip, you know.”

“It’s been months since we got away. We deserve it.”

“You bet,” said Jake.

He too was thrilled at the prospect of spending a week alone on one of those gorgeous beaches with his beautiful wife. Three or four times a year the young couple flew to some overseas destination -- but of course, never out of reach of a fax or phone. Jake would be on the cell five, perhaps a dozen times a day, every day of their holiday. In the two years he had worked at the firm, they’d stayed in Puerto Vallarta, Cuba, and Hawaii. He’d flown twice on business to Singapore, three times to Hong Kong. Sometimes his wife accompanied him. Thailand and Korea were on next month’s business agenda.

Jake and Sue were very much in love. But Jake also knew that as content as his wife was to have “temporarily” given up her career as a personal trainer at a posh fitness centre, Chloe, their two-year old was becoming a bit of a drain on her.

“Sue, honey, we’re going to go a bit late tonight. Maybe nine-thirty?” He closed his eyes, grimacing.

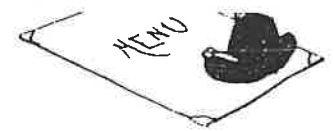
Silence. And then. “You promised you’d be home for dinner at 7:30.”

“I know. I can’t. I’m sorry...”

“Jake. Four nights a week, seven, eight, nine o’clock. I know your work is important to you. To us. But Chloe...”

He rubbed his forehead. “Sue, Sue, this is my life... our life. We’ve discussed this. A few years of this and—“

“—and?”



Neither one dared go further. They had already argued over this. It had all been said before. They had a dream home, two dream cars, and two years ago, a dream child. They dined out extensively, went to plays, and Jake had even tried the symphony. Each played squash, tennis and golf given the opportunity – although lately, Jake seemed to have fewer opportunities. They had ski passes at Whistler north of Vancouver. Their spacious loft was decorated with some of the best furniture from Healey & Black. With assistance from his well-travelled mother, a retired interior designer, their place resembled a museum with its boldly painted walls, its paintings, sculptures, and artefacts from around the world. Of course, money was required to pay for all that. But money aside, the couple knew Jake would simply never back off on the workload. And when he made partner, he'd surely be working more and not less.

“Jake?”

“Hum?”

“Jake, I’m sorry. I’ll see you tonight, okay?” Almost a whisper.

“You see, Sue, they’re bringing in four and a half million.”

“I know—“

“—and even half of one percent of that...”

“Honey, I know. I understand,” Sue sighed.

Jake hung up and sat back in the leather chair, thoughtful for a moment. Sure, it was the money. But it was more than that, wasn't it? His father had said the money was, well, like a “by-product” of his efforts. It wasn't the main thing. The truth was he found his job thrilling. And the money? Well, it was like winning chips in a poker game. It was the winning that mattered. Living a bit on the edge. Knowing that despite his youth, he outperformed most people in his office. He measured up. It was like being on his high school basketball court. He couldn't imagine doing anything else in his life. Of course he would never give up on Sue and Chloe, not for all the world. But his job came a close second. Why else would he get up at five o'clock weekdays, sometimes Saturdays, to go to the office? He remembered the phrase his old CAPP teacher had used: “You know you're in the right job when you get up in the morning and you want to go to work!” Despite the little worries he now faced, Jake felt fulfilled. He had discovered his passion.



Jennifer Pham

For the second time that morning, Jennifer rolled over onto her stomach and covered her head with the pillow. The sun streamed through the skylight of the studio apartment. She couldn't avoid it any longer. She glanced at the clock radio. Ten twenty. She rolled to her feet, stretched and yawned and glanced towards the clay sculpture across the room. She frowned. Now that it was bathed in golden sunlight, the piece seemed less perfect than it had at three o'clock in the morning. She knew better than to work on her art by electric light.

The next two hours flew by as Jennifer ignored breakfast, her hairbrush, even her usual cup of coffee. She stood over the clay, mesmerized by her work. She jumped when the phone rang and wiped her hands hastily.

"Jennifer?"

"Oh, no! Kristy!" It was her closest friend.

"Did you forget?"

"No," Jennifer lied. "Give me ten minutes."

Jennifer hurried through the shower, dried, brushed her hair and jumped into jeans and a T-shirt. She ran out of the apartment, down the stairs, out into the narrow cobblestoned alley and through Granville Island. She arrived at the seaside café to find Kristy perched comfortably in a corner sipping coffee and reading a magazine.

"Hi. Sorry I'm late. First cup I hope?"

"Second," Kristy smiled. She paused for a moment and then asked, "So?"

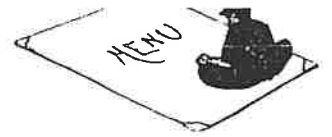
"So?"

"C'mon, Jenn. The gallery?"

Jennifer allowed a quiet smile. "Well, they like the pieces."

"Oh, that's wonderful."

"Now they never said they'll take them, although I think they really liked two or three of them."



Over the course of the next hour, Jennifer informed her best friend of the latest developments with her attempts to find a new gallery for her art. Jennifer specialized in three-dimensional, multi-media works. She blended acrylic paints with paper, papier-mâché, wood and metal, even straw, feathers, and hair. But it was her clay sculptures that had lately drawn the interest of a few galleries. Not that there was any chance of her breaking into the so-called “big times” anytime soon. Last year, she had made just over \$14,000 – barely enough to pay the rent, groceries, and utility bills. She didn’t own a car. But then, why own a gas-guzzler when you lived in a studio apartment on Granville Island? And traffic in Vancouver was horrendous to begin with. Her old mountain bike took her most places she needed to go. For everything else, there was the bus.

Twenty-five year old Jennifer Pham had never been one to go for the flash. She hardly traveled outside the Greater Vancouver area. Her father had taken her to Taiwan where he had been born. She had backpacked Nepal and Thailand after high school and planned to go again sometime soon. She enjoyed simple and generally inexpensive pleasures: her art, her friends, the library, the movies and the cafes where she could sit for an hour. She cycled everywhere, walked the beaches and hiked the nearby mountains whenever she could. She’d had two serious romantic relationships. Right now there wasn’t anyone. For the moment, Jennifer was glad for the calm. She knew she wanted a lifetime companion, but for the moment, she was just glad for the peace and tranquility. And now there was time to really get serious about her art.

Her art. She didn’t need much else. It really had become her life. Even before high school, her teachers had told her she should be an artist. “You’ll never be rich,” Miss Richter had laughed, “but you’ll be happy.” In high school, Mr. Singh, her Social Studies teacher, had discussed Renaissance artists, illustrating how the successful ones found patrons who supported them with an income thus freeing them to paint and sculpt full time. Mr. Singh pointed out that the term, “starving artist,” was perhaps more true in twenty-first century Canada as it seemed there were fewer patrons. Her high school art teacher, Mrs. Williams, had continuously encouraged her to go with her true passion and tap into that creativity within her.

Kristy sat across from Jennifer, both hands supporting her chin. The two friends sat in comfortable silence. Two sailboats glided slowly past their window-side table. They could make out the cries of seagulls and the laughter of children as the birds descended for the grain they held in outstretched hands. Two or three times a week, the women met in this manner. Sometimes other friends joined them.



Kristy glanced at her watch. "It's two o'clock. I've still got to buy fruit and vegetables and get home by three."

"I should get some too. Let's go together?"

It was almost four by the time Jennifer reached her apartment. After storing away the food, Jennifer approached her sculpture, cut into the cheek, snorted, laid down her tool, backed away from the piece, crossed her arms and glared at the sculpture. Finally she left for the kitchen, glancing back at her work every few minutes. She ate dinner lost in thought, cleaned up, and called her parents. At seven o'clock she began to read. Just before eight, she suddenly put down the book, and moved deliberately toward her creation.

She jumped when the telephone rang. It was Lina Digsby from a small, but distinguished gallery that featured promising artists. Digsby offered to show twelve of her eighteen pieces. Three of her customers were particularly struck by Jennifer's work.

"Would you be able to do a half-dozen more pieces in a similar style?" she enquired, "Say in the next two months?"

Jennifer laid down the receiver somewhat stunned. She tried to stay calm. "Don't over-react," she told herself. Ten minutes later she could not contain her excitement and telephoned Kristy with the news. Finally, she approached her art, but this time in a self-assured manner. "Wait, let's make some coffee," she told herself, laughing, "This is going to be another long night."



Name: _____

Activity 2a. Lifestyle Comparison Chart

Complete the following chart by listing both what appeals and what does not appeal to you about each of the lifestyles.

LIFESTYLE COMPARISON CHART

Individual	What I LIKE of Lifestyle	What I DISLIKE of Lifestyle
Jake Bradbury		
Jennifer Pham		



Name: _____

Activity 2b. Values and Lifestyles Checklist

VALUES AND LIFESTYLES CHECKLIST

People have different needs, values and priorities. Indicate whether or not these things are very important (V), somewhat important (S) or not important (N) to Jake, Jennifer and you? Leave the space blank if you are unsure or if it is not applicable.

	Jake	Jennifer	Me
Very high income			
9 to 5, Monday – Friday job			
Owning a nice home			
Pursuing your passion			
Owning an expensive car			
Extensive travel			
Marriage			
Post-secondary training of some kind			
Post-secondary must be University			
Having children			
Physically challenging work			
Stress-free life			
Excitement			
Wilderness Recreation			
Helping others			
Big city life			
Community volunteer work			
Influencing other people's values and opinions			
Time for friends			
Plenty of quiet time alone			
Gaining expert knowledge and skills			
Plenty of time off work			
Being the boss			
Being your own boss			
Pursuing hobbies			



Activity 2c. Discussion Questions

Complete these questions individually before discussing them with your group or class.

1. According to the Values and Lifestyles Checklist, are you most like Jake or Jennifer in your values and priorities? Explain with several examples.
2. Take your top 5 “Very Important” needs, values, and priorities and rank these in order of importance to you.
3. List all of your “Not Important” needs, values, and priorities. Explain why these are not important to you.
4. Why is it important to consider values and lifestyles when thinking about future careers?

More topics for class discussion

1. As a class, brainstorm unforeseen events and circumstances, which could occur in Jake’s life that might cause him to re-evaluate his values, needs, and priorities. Explain the effects these might have on his plans for the future. Do the same using Jennifer.
2. What does career “success” mean to you? Does it involve money and power, does it have more to do with having time and energy needed to fulfill your emotional, mental, physical and spiritual needs, or is it a combination of these?
3. What factors influence our sense of needs, values, and priorities? Think of family, school, church, the media (television, film, music, etc.).