

Becoming *You*  
L A B S

# The Becoming You Methodology

Where Values, Aptitudes, and Viable Opportunities  
Converge

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# 1 . Origins & Core Framework

Becoming You was born out of a simple but urgent question that Suzy Welch heard again and again: *“I don’t know what to do with my life. How do I know what’s right for me?”* These words surfaced not casually, but at turning points — when students, professionals, and friends felt the weight of choices without the clarity to make them confidently. Suzy understood that tension personally. Like many, she had faced seasons of detours, doubts, and difficult tradeoffs.

In 2021, after more than 15 years of refining ideas, Suzy introduced a course at NYU Stern built around a powerful construct:

**“Purpose is found at the intersection of your authentic values, your natural aptitudes, and your most energizing, economically viable interests.”**

The classroom quickly became a laboratory. Students didn’t just reflect, they mapped possible futures, stress-tested options, and forecasted the tradeoffs of each decision. Choices made through this lens proved to stick. Graduates chose not just what was prestigious, but what was aligned.

The early success of this framework revealed its broader potential. Suzy assembled a team of technologists, data scientists, and social scientists to develop tools, validate them, and evolve them with real-world data. Since then:

- Over 50,000 people have taken the Values Bridge, the flagship assessment.
- Thousands more have engaged through Suzy’s NYU course, as well as workshops for professionals, students, and leaders outside the university.
- Ongoing research collects data on course outcomes, alignment with employer values, and decision-making persistence.

Other **white papers** by our research team will hone in on specific findings. This one lays out the core methodology, the theoretical and practical framework that guides all Becoming You tools.

This framework arrives at a moment of particular need. Across contemporary society, individuals face:

- **Choice overload:** Too many options create paralysis and regret (Iyengar & Lepper, 2000).
- **Rapid skill churn:** On average, 39% of workers’ core skills are expected to be transformed or become outdated between 2025 and 2030, and in some sectors, such as technology, the share of skills in flux rises to nearly two-thirds (World Economic Forum, 2025).

- **Rising anxiety and regret:** As Jonathan Haidt (2024) shows, modern life leaves many unmoored, uncertain of how to choose well.

These conditions confirm what social scientists have long argued: clarity of values and alignment of self with context are central to human flourishing. Rokeach (1973) and Schwartz (1992, 2012) demonstrated that values are measurable and predictive of behavior. Csikszentmihalyi (1990) showed that aptitude alignment fosters flow, deep engagement linked to persistence and fulfillment. Holland’s (1997) work on vocational interests proved that congruence between interests and roles predicts satisfaction and performance. Together, these streams of research affirm the Becoming You insight:

**Lasting purpose emerges not from a single factor,  
but from the integration of values, aptitudes, and viability.**

We call this integrative zone the **Area of Transcendence**. It is where decisions are most durable, because they are simultaneously:

- **Authentic:** Aligned with values
- **Competent:** Leveraging aptitudes
- **Viable:** Grounded in real opportunities

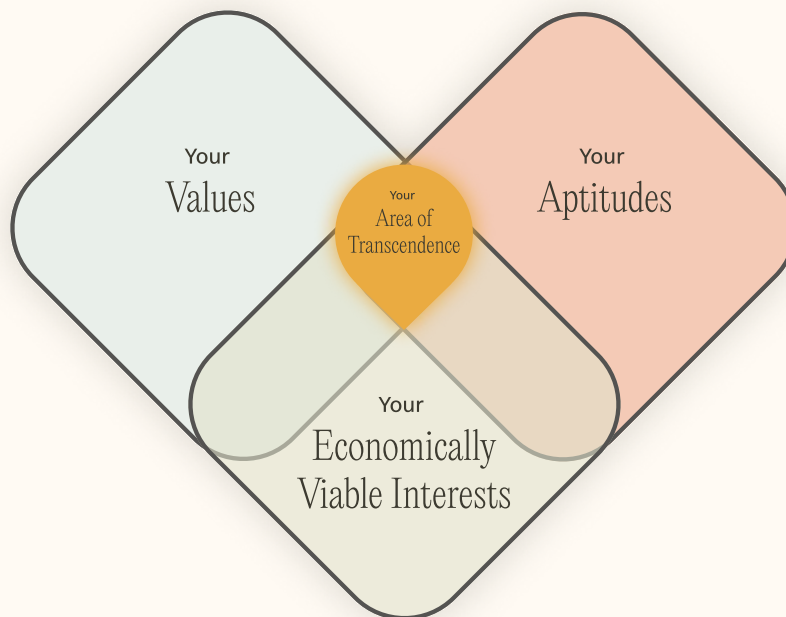


Figure 1. The Area of Transcendence

This is the foundation of the Becoming You Methodology: a repeatable, science-backed system for living and deciding with purpose. In the sections that follow, we explore each of the three pillars — Values, Aptitudes, and Economically Viable Interests (EVIs) — before returning to the Area of Transcendence, where they converge into a practice of purposeful alignment.

## 2. Values: The Anchor of Authenticity

Values are the foundation of the Becoming You Methodology. They are not just preferences or personality traits, but enduring beliefs about what matters most that guide action: how we want to live, work, and connect with others. When clear, values act as a compass, shaping decisions that feel authentic and sustainable. When vague, misidentified, or unprioritized, they leave people vulnerable to drift, regret, and the pressure to live someone else's life.

### Understanding Values, and Misunderstanding Them

Research across decades shows that values are both measurable and predictive. Milton Rokeach (1973) established that values form structured belief systems. Shalom Schwartz (1992, 2012) demonstrated their universality across cultures and their influence on behaviors ranging from political attitudes to consumer choices. Longitudinal studies such as the MIDUS survey confirm that when occupations and daily choices align with core values, individuals report greater engagement, persistence, and life satisfaction (*Midlife in the United States [MIDUS], 1995-2006*).

Yet values are frequently misunderstood. Many people confuse them with traits (“I’m extroverted”), virtues (“I value honesty”), or generic categories (“family matters to me”). In internal research led by Suzy Welch to validate the Values Bridge concept, nearly 80% of adults conflated values with traits or virtues, leaving them with lists that sounded admirable but provided little real guidance for decision-making. This is why Becoming You emphasizes not only identifying values, but also ranking, reconciling, and applying them.

Without clarity, individuals often fall prey to mimetic desire, pursuing what others want rather than what they truly value (Girard, 1987). Others may find themselves in what we call the “velvet coffin” of default conformity: life feels comfortable, but misaligned with one's deeper priorities. As we often say: Values clarity is the first pillar of resilient, antifragile, decision-making. Borrowing from Taleb's (2012) concept of antifragility, the Becoming You Method helps people design choices that not only withstand uncertainty but grow stronger through it.

### Tools for Clarifying Values

To help people surface and refine their values, the Becoming You Method includes a suite of assessments and reflective exercises including our flagship tool the Values Bridge. Each is designed to approach the question from a different angle, ensuring that what emerges is both authentic and actionable. See Table 1 for a description of the tools we currently use most commonly, but note that the specific tools and assessments may evolve as we continue to

assess and hone the impact of the Becoming You Methodology.

**Table 1. Values Discovery and Clarification Tools in the Becoming You Method**

Tool/Exercise	Description	%
<b>The Values Bridge</b>	100 question assessment that surfaces, names, and ranks values. Produces a prioritized “Values DNA,” highlights the gap between real life and ideal life, and generates a conflicts and harmonies report showing how values reinforce or compete with one another.	A clear, prioritized map of values that can be applied across life stages, with awareness of misalignments and tradeoffs.
<b>The Four Horsemen</b>	12-question tool identifying which of four forces — Events, Economic Security, Expedience, or Expectations — are most likely to distort values in practice.	Awareness of external pressures that derail authentic decision-making.
<b>The 3D’s</b>	9-question tool that maps whether choices are driven by Default, Deliberation, or Design.	A snapshot of current lifestyle and decision-making.
<b>Memoir Map</b>	Inspired by Hemingway’s 6-word story, participants write a six-word story of their own, for both their life so far and another for the next 25 years.	Reveals implicit narratives and desired shifts in direction.
<b>Whose Life Do You Want?</b>	Participants reflect on four lives they admire, noting what they would emulate and what they would avoid.	Clarifies aspirational values and potential pitfalls of imitation.
<b>First Light</b>	A daily activities audit plotting 20 activities into a four-quadrant matrix: have to / don’t have to × love to / hate to.	Identifies energizing versus draining commitments, highlighting hidden values in daily life.
<b>Proustish</b>	A 20-question reflection exercise designed to reveal a person’s values.	Surfaces deeper self-knowledge and offers a snapshot of one’s priorities and values at a given moment in time.
<b>Alpha Omega</b>	Three deceptively simple questions about legacy, childhood experiences, and future regrets.	Draws out core values tied to identity, growth, and meaning.
<b>Values Solitaire</b>	A card exercise, starting with 25 cards. Five each of cherished: people, experiences, objects, places, and goals. Then winnow down to a final ranked five.	Forced prioritization that brings hidden value hierarchies to light.

### **Participant Story: Rediscovering Alignment**

When Elena, an MBA student, completed the Values Bridge, she was surprised to see “Agency” rise above “Achievement” as her top-ranked value. For years, she had assumed that climbing the corporate ladder was her ultimate goal. But when she mapped her six-word memoirs, she wrote: “Always chasing, never fully at peace.” That contrast forced her to reckon with the truth that external recognition mattered less than designing a career where she could call her own shots. Months later, she turned down a consulting offer and joined a small, founder-led startup where she could shape her role from the ground up. She describes the decision as both terrifying and liberating, and one she has not once regretted.

### **Why Values Come First**

The Becoming You Method begins with values because they anchor authenticity. Without them, aptitudes and opportunities risk being misapplied. With them, choices gain coherence. As Aristotle suggested in his vision of *eudaimonia*, the good life is not random achievement, but alignment with one’s true nature. Modern psychology echoes this: Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985) shows that autonomy, living by one’s own values, is essential to human flourishing.

In Becoming You, values are not left as abstractions. They are elicited, ranked, stress-tested, and applied, ensuring that every subsequent decision rests on a foundation of authenticity.

## 3. Aptitudes: The Compass of Competence

If values anchor authenticity, aptitudes provide the compass of competence. They represent our innate cognitive and emotional propensities, the ways we naturally think, process, and relate. Unlike learned skills, aptitudes are more fundamental. They shape how we perceive information, solve problems, manage emotions, and connect with others. When individuals choose paths aligned with their aptitudes, they tend to experience greater engagement, persistence, and fulfillment. When they do not, frustration, burnout, or regret often follow.

### The Research Lineage of Aptitudes

Scholars have long studied the structure of human abilities. The Cattell-Horn-Carroll (CHC) theory of intelligence (Carroll, 1993) remains one of the most comprehensive frameworks, mapping broad cognitive aptitudes such as fluid reasoning, quantitative ability, memory, and spatial visualization. This body of work underpins many modern aptitude batteries used in education and workforce development.

Aptitudes are not purely cognitive. The work of Peter Salovey and John Mayer (1990), expanded and popularized by Daniel Goleman's Emotional Intelligence (1995), demonstrated that social and emotional aptitudes (e.g., empathy, self-regulation, and relational awareness) are equally predictive of success. Salovey and Mayer's research, cited tens of thousands of times, reframed how educators, employers, and leaders think about competence.

Finally, research on optimal experience and flow by Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi (1990) showed that when tasks are matched to a person's aptitudes, they are more likely to lose themselves in deep engagement. Flow states are strongly correlated with persistence, creativity, and life satisfaction. Together, these literatures confirm what the Becoming You Method operationalizes: *aptitude alignment is essential for durable success.*

### When Aptitudes and Roles Misalign

The costs of misalignment can be significant. Research on person-environment fit (Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman, & Johnson, 2005) demonstrates that when individuals' abilities are mismatched with the demands of their roles, outcomes include lower job satisfaction, weaker commitment, and higher turnover. Burnout research (Maslach, Schaufeli, & Leiter, 2001) further shows that repeated effort in areas misaligned with natural propensities accelerates exhaustion and disengagement.

Inside Becoming You Labs, we see these dynamics regularly. For example, MBA students with strong spatial reasoning but weaker abstract planning skills often struggle in consulting, a field that rewards conceptual frameworks and long-range analysis. Yet those same students excel in

product design, data visualization, or architecture, where spatial aptitude is an asset. Misalignment does not mean lack of talent, it means misplaced talent. By surfacing aptitudes, we help individuals identify not only what they can do, but where they are most likely to thrive.

## Aptitude Tools in the Becoming You Method

The Becoming You Method approaches aptitudes through both scientifically validated measures and applied, reflective tools. This dual strategy ensures participants benefit from rigorous psychometric insight while also engaging in personal reflection and feedback that makes results more actionable.

**Table 2. Aptitude Tools in the Becoming You Method**

Tool/Exercise	Description	Outcome/Insight
<b>Career Traits Compass</b>	Proprietary assessment that identifies leadership and career success traits, orienting individuals toward contexts where their aptitudes are most likely to thrive.	Highlights leadership style and career propensities; helps participants anticipate where they can be most effective.
<b>YouScience</b>	Validated psychometric platform using timed “brain games” to measure aptitudes such as pattern recognition, spatial reasoning, and problem solving. Results are linked to potential career pathways.	Provides objective data on natural aptitudes and suggests career fields where those aptitudes align with opportunity.
<b>PIE360 Feedback</b>	People, Ideas, Execution (PIE) is a 360-degree tool gathering input from peers, mentors, and colleagues to highlight aptitudes as experienced by others in real-world settings.	Reveals blind spots and strengths; surfaces how aptitudes manifest interpersonally and organizationally.
<b>Enneagram</b>	A reflective framework identifying nine core motivational styles and their relational dynamics. While not a psychometric test, it helps participants reflect on patterns of motivation and interpersonal style.	Encourages self-awareness, highlights growth edges, and complements data-driven assessments with personal reflection.

### **Participant Story: From Burnout to Flow**

When Marcus, a young engineer, completed his aptitude assessments, the results surprised him. He had always assumed his analytical abilities were his strongest asset, but the Career Traits Compass and PIE360 Feedback revealed that his natural strengths lay in interpersonal awareness and visual-spatial reasoning. This mismatch explained why, despite excelling technically, he often felt drained in roles that demanded constant solitary coding. When he reviewed his YouScience results and saw product design flagged as a top match, it clicked. Within months, Marcus transitioned into a role that combined engineering with user-experience design. The change was dramatic: instead of dreading workdays, he found himself in frequent flow states, energized by collaboration and creativity. Looking back, he describes the shift not as leaving engineering, but as finally aligning his aptitudes with how he worked best.

## **Putting Aptitudes in Context**

Aptitudes remind us that competence is not simply a matter of willpower or practice. While skills can be learned and refined, the propensities underneath them—how we process information, regulate emotions, and engage with others—often explain why some efforts feel effortless and others exhausting. When people discover their aptitudes, they are better equipped to choose paths that amplify their natural strengths rather than constantly compensate for misalignment.

This is why the Becoming You Method positions aptitudes as the second pillar: they are the compass that points toward where we can thrive with energy and persistence. Alone, they do not guarantee purpose. But combined with authentic values and economically viable interests, aptitudes make it possible to design decisions that are not only true, but also sustainable.

## 4. Economically Viable Interests (EVIs): The Reality Check

If values anchor authenticity and aptitudes point toward competence, Economically Viable Interests (EVIs) provide the reality check. Interests are the domains of work and life that capture our energy and attention. But not all interests are sustainable. EVIs represent the subset of interests that are not only energizing but also viable in the context of a rapidly changing economy.

The concept matters because passion alone is not enough. A student may be deeply drawn to journalism or music; a mid-career professional may love teaching or design. But without an honest look at market demand and long-term viability, such interests may lead to stalled progress, financial strain, or forced pivots. Viability must be dynamic, tied not only to today's labor market but also to societal megatrends such as automation, AI, climate change, and demographic shifts.

### Research Lineage

The study of interests has deep roots in vocational psychology. John Holland's RIASEC model (1997) demonstrated that congruence between a person's interests and their occupational environment predicts persistence, satisfaction, and performance. The RIASEC framework remains one of the most widely used models in career counseling and organizational psychology.

Labor economics has extended this insight by showing that misalignment between worker interests and occupational demand has measurable costs. Studies of job mismatch consistently find higher turnover, lower wages, and reduced job satisfaction when individuals pursue roles incongruent with their abilities and the labor market (e.g., Sattinger, 1993; Robst, 2007). These findings echo across large-scale surveys of work and well-being.

At the macro level, economists like David Autor (2010; 2015) have shown how automation, globalization, and technological change reshape the demand for entire categories of jobs. Interests that once promised long-term stability can rapidly lose viability. Conversely, new industries — renewable energy, AI-driven services, biotechnology — create opportunities unimagined a generation ago. The implication is clear: viability is not fixed. It must be continually reassessed against shifting economic landscapes.

## Contemporary Challenges

Economically Viable Interests have always mattered, but in today's world they are more critical than ever. The landscape of work is shifting faster than at any point in history. Interests alone, while energizing, are not sufficient for sustainable life design. To remain durable, decisions must integrate viability, and viability must be reassessed continuously. Four forces in particular illustrate why EVIs are indispensable.

- **Skill half-lives:** Research consistently shows that skills are decaying faster than institutions and individuals can adapt. The World Economic Forum's *Future of Jobs Report 2025* finds that, on average, 39% of workers' existing skill sets will be transformed or become outdated between 2025 and 2030. It further reports that if the world's workforce were made up of 100 people, 59 would need training by 2030 to keep pace with evolving skill demands. Economists like David Deming (2017) have emphasized that adaptability and the ability to combine technical with social skills are now the best predictors of long-term career success. Career viability is thus less about mastering a fixed body of knowledge than about cultivating ongoing adaptability.
- **Technological disruption:** Automation and artificial intelligence are reshaping the demand for labor. This is not new, though it is accelerating. Routine and predictable tasks, both manual and cognitive, are increasingly displaced, while demand rises for roles requiring creativity, analytical thinking, and interpersonal skill (Autor, Levy, & Murnane, 2003; Brynjolfsson & McAfee, 2014). The result is a polarized labor market, where some interests lose viability rapidly while others expand dramatically. Without an EVI lens, individuals risk preparing for jobs that may no longer exist.
- **Climate and demographics:** Global megatrends such as climate change and population aging are not abstract future concerns, they are already reshaping industries and creating new categories of work. The International Labour Organization (2018) estimates that the global transition to a green economy could create 24 million new jobs by 2030, even as fossil-fuel sectors contract. Meanwhile, demographic research shows that aging populations are driving demand for healthcare, caregiving, and social support roles (Bloom, Canning, & Fink, 2010). These megatrends illustrate why viability must be tied not just to present market conditions but to long-term structural change.
- **Choice overload:** Even in expanding economies, more options do not always translate into better decisions. Psychologist Barry Schwartz (2004) demonstrated that excessive choice often leads to paralysis, regret, and dissatisfaction. In career contexts, this means that individuals may overlook viable but unfamiliar fields, defaulting instead to well-known but saturated options. Structured tools for exploring EVIs help counteract this bias, expanding awareness of opportunities that align with both personal energy and real demand.

Taken together, these forces underscore the importance of EVIs as the third pillar of the Becoming You Method. Without this reality check, decisions risk being fragile: attractive in the moment but unsustainable under pressure. With an EVI perspective, individuals and organizations can design choices that adapt, endure, and thrive in the face of uncertainty.

## EVI Tools in the Becoming You Method

Exploring Economically Viable Interests requires more than a passing glance at job boards or following headlines about “hot” industries. It involves structured reflection and data-driven foresight, so individuals can discover opportunities that may not yet be obvious but are positioned to grow. The Becoming You Method integrates both approaches, blending reflective exercises that draw out intrinsic interest with analytical tools that highlight industries, roles, and megatrends shaping the future of work.

These tools work in concert. Reflective prompts expand awareness of what energizes an individual, while market-oriented resources provide the external check: *will this interest sustain me in a changing economy?* Together, they create a process for surfacing not just what is exciting now, but what can endure.

**Table 3. Economically Viable Interests (EVI) Tools in the Becoming You Method**

Tool/Exercise	Description	Outcome/Insight
<b>Holland Bridge</b>	An in-house adaptation of Holland’s career codes that connects personal strengths and interests to broader work domains.	Clarifies which career domains are most compatible with a person’s profile, extending beyond traditional Holland code matches.
<b>Career Catalyst</b>	An AI-driven tool that integrates Holland codes, type of organizations individuals are interested in, aptitudes, and values with emerging megatrends, industries, and roles.	Highlights future-oriented career opportunities where an individual’s profile aligns with evolving economic and cultural trends.

### **Participant Story: Finding Direction in Sustainable Finance**

Maria, an economics major, came into the program feeling torn between pursuing graduate school and entering the workforce. Through the Holland Bridge, she saw how her strengths and interests connected not just to academic paths, but also to applied roles in data analysis and policy research. When she used the Career Catalyst, the tool highlighted industries like sustainable finance and roles tied to global megatrends in climate adaptation. Seeing those results gave her the confidence to apply for internships in impact investing—an option she had never seriously considered before. She now describes the process as “the first time my interests, skills, and future possibilities all lined up in a way that felt real.”

The power of these tools lies in their integration. By mapping interests against both current opportunities and long-term megatrends, participants gain a perspective that is neither naive nor fatalistic. Instead of treating career viability as fixed or unknowable, the Becoming You Method equips people with a repeatable process for reassessing alignment as the world evolves. This ensures that the “reality check” of EVIs becomes not a constraint but a source of resilience, enabling choices that are both energizing and sustainable.

## 5. The Area of Transcendence: Where Purpose Emerges

The Becoming You Method builds toward a central insight: purpose is not found in any single dimension, but at the intersection of all three. When values (authenticity), aptitudes (competence), and economically viable interests (viability) overlap, individuals reach what we call the Area of Transcendence. This is the zone where decisions are both true to the self and sustainable in the world.

In this overlap, choices become more durable. People are less likely to abandon a path when it reflects what they care about most, harnesses their natural propensities, and sustains them economically. As we often say: *every decision can be filtered through these three dimensions, and when they are, you aren't just choosing—you are becoming.*

### Theoretical Foundations

The Area of Transcendence is not merely intuitive; it is grounded in decades of behavioral science. Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Ryan & Deci, 2000) identifies three basic psychological needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness. These map reasonably well onto the pillars of the Becoming You Method:

- **Autonomy** → Values (living by what truly matters to you)
- **Competence** → Aptitudes (applying innate strengths in practice)
- **Relatedness** → EVIs (aligning with opportunities that connect to real communities and economies)

Meta-analyses (Ng et al., 2012) confirm the robustness of this framework across cultures and domains: when these needs are satisfied, people are more motivated, persistent, and fulfilled. The Area of Transcendence translates this theory into practice, providing a tangible way for individuals to locate decisions in the sweet spot of authenticity, competence, and viability.

This integration also echoes classic insights in psychology and philosophy. Erikson (1968) emphasized identity as a lifelong project of integration. Maslow's original hierarchy (1943) ended with self-actualization, but in his later work (*The Farther Reaches of Human Nature*, 1971), he proposed an additional stage: self-transcendence. It emphasizes going beyond the self, finding meaning in connection, service, or something larger. Similarly, Viktor Frankl (1946) insisted that purpose emerges not by chance but through deliberate meaning-making. The Area of Transcendence carries forward these legacies while operationalizing them into tools and processes that can be revisited repeatedly.

## Integrative Tools

Reaching the Area of Transcendence requires weaving together insights from each pillar. To support this integration, the Becoming You Method includes practices that combine data on values, aptitudes, and EVIs into actionable guidance. These practices do not replace reflection—they organize it, turning disparate insights into a coherent system for life design and decision-making.

One such practice is 10-10-10, a framework that asks participants to evaluate any decision by considering its consequences in 10 minutes, 10 months, and 10 years. By stretching perspective across time horizons, 10-10-10 helps cut through short-term emotion and clarify which choices best align with long-term values and goals.

### **Participant Story: Thinking Beyond the Moment**

Jordan, a mid-level marketing manager, was offered a new role that promised a big salary bump but required extensive travel. Using the 10-10-10 framework, she asked herself how she would feel about the choice in 10 minutes (excited and validated), in 10 months (exhausted by the travel schedule), and in 10 years (regretting lost time with her kids). The exercise shifted her perspective: what looked like a clear financial win in the short term became a values conflict over the long term. Jordan ultimately declined the offer and instead sought a leadership role in her current company, aligning her career growth with her family priorities.

Together, these integrative practices ensure that alignment is not a one-time discovery but a repeatable practice. They help participants not only see where they stand today, but also rehearse choices, weigh tradeoffs, and reapply the framework across life transitions.

## 6. Evidence, Applications, and Research Invitation

The Becoming You Method is not just a set of exercises. It is a framework with deep roots in psychology, decision theory, behavioral economics, and foresight. Each of these disciplines provides a piece of the puzzle; together, they offer an empirical backbone for understanding why people make better, more durable choices when values, aptitudes, and economically viable interests align.

### Theoretical Foundations

The pillars of the Becoming You Method map directly onto some of the most influential theories in behavioral science. Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Ryan & Deci, 2000) shows that autonomy, competence, and relatedness are universal psychological needs; the Becoming You framework translates them into values, aptitudes, and EVIs. Identity development research (Erikson, 1968; Marcia, 1966) explains why alignment is essential during adolescence and young adulthood, while lifespan psychology (Baltes, 1987) demonstrates that tradeoffs and rebalancing are lifelong. Decision neuroscience (Kable & Glimcher, 2007) confirms that values-congruent choices activate reward circuits and reduce cognitive dissonance. And Taleb's concept of antifragility (2012) shows that systems, including human decision systems, grow stronger when they adapt through feedback and stress.

Other frameworks have been widely used to guide identity and career exploration, but they stop short of integration. Personality typologies like the MBTI or Big Five describe traits but do not offer a system for making decisions. Strengths-based tools such as CliftonStrengths build confidence but rarely account for economic realities. Vocational models like Holland's RIASEC codes link interests to work environments but leave values and aptitudes underexplored. The Becoming You Method combines these insights into a triadic system that is both comprehensive and repeatable.

### Validation

Rigorous validation is central to building confidence in the Becoming You Method. All assessments are designed to align with APA Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing. Current validation strategies include:

- **Psychometric reliability:** Testing internal consistency and stability through methods such as Cronbach's alpha and test-retest studies.
- **Ecological validity:** Ensuring that results translate to real-world contexts such as classrooms, coaching sessions, and enterprises.

- **Predictive validity:** Tracking whether alignment scores forecast persistence, satisfaction, and reduced regret over time.

Preliminary findings show promising patterns: participants consistently report that choices made through the framework feel more coherent and lead to greater follow-through. Please find our ongoing research here: <https://www.becomingyoulabs.com/research/white-papers>

The next phase of research will expand these studies longitudinally, capturing how alignment shapes outcomes across years and even decades.

## Applications Across Contexts

The Becoming You Method has been designed from the start to be flexible enough for individuals yet scalable enough for organizations. Its applications already span four domains:

- **Individuals:** Using the framework to clarify direction during inflection points such as choosing a major, pivoting careers, or planning retirement.
- **Providers:** Coaches, educators, and therapists who apply the tools to deepen and structure client conversations, adding rigor to reflective practice.
- **Organizations:** Aligning purpose and talent in leadership pipelines, team dynamics, and retention strategies.
- **Families and groups:** Using the framework to navigate tensions, align goals, and build shared roadmaps for the future.

The breadth of these applications demonstrates that the Becoming You Method is not confined to career development. It is a system for life design, usable wherever values, aptitudes, and viability must be reconciled.

## Future Research Priorities

To strengthen confidence and ensure global relevance, Becoming You Labs is actively pursuing a research agenda that prioritizes studies with high potential for impact. These include:

- **Longitudinal tracking:** Following participants over time to measure how early alignment affects resilience, well-being, and career outcomes.
- **Cross-cultural validation:** Testing the tools across diverse populations and contexts to ensure they are robust and adaptable worldwide.
- **AI labor forecasting:** Integrating machine learning and labor market analytics with EVI mapping to anticipate emerging opportunities.

- **Neuroscience of alignment:** Investigating brain and physiological markers of values-congruent decision-making.
- **Organizational metrics:** Developing “alignment capital” measures as leading indicators of culture, retention, and innovation.
- **Pre-post impact studies:** conducting systematic assessments in both classrooms and executive training programs to measure how exposure to the Becoming You Method changes clarity, confidence, and decision outcomes.

These priorities reflect our commitment to balancing rigor with relevance. The goal is not simply to generate data, but to build evidence that translates into more confident decisions for individuals, providers, and organizations alike.

## Research Invitation: Building Confidence Together

Becoming You Labs is committed to ensuring that the Becoming You Method is not only useful in practice but also validated in research. We view this as an ongoing collaboration with the academic and practitioner communities. Our aim is not to compete with existing frameworks on their terms, but to demonstrate where this methodology uniquely contributes to durable decision-making and purposeful living.

We therefore extend an open invitation to researchers and practitioners to join us in testing, extending, and refining the Becoming You Method. Areas particularly aligned with our current agenda include:

- **Predictive validity studies:** Do alignment scores (Values × Aptitudes × EVIs) predict persistence, satisfaction, and reduced regret over time? Do they correlate with other established measures, such as well-being, career adaptability, resilience, and life satisfaction?
- **Cross-cultural and demographic validation:** Do the tools hold across cultural contexts, socioeconomic backgrounds, and life stages, and what adaptations may be needed?
- **Comparative effectiveness research:** How does the Becoming You Method perform relative to frameworks such as MBTI, CliftonStrengths, VIA Character, or Holland RIASEC in producing durable choices?
- **Organizational applications:** Can alignment metrics serve as leading indicators of retention, performance, engagement, and innovation?
- **Neuroscience and psychophysiology:** What markers correspond with values-congruent decision-making, and how does alignment help reduce common negative outcomes — such as cognitive dissonance, decision fatigue, and other forms of strain that arise from misaligned choices?

We believe these studies will build confidence without overstating claims. Our focus is on collaboration: responsible data-sharing, co-design of studies, and partnerships that generate insight for the entire field of life design and decision science.

## Epilogue: Returning to the Founding Vision

This white paper began with a question Suzy Welch heard countless times: *“I don’t know what to do with my life.”* The Becoming You Method is our response: a structured, science-backed system that brings clarity to moments of uncertainty. It began in a classroom, grew into a book, and is now carried forward by a community of practitioners, researchers, and participants worldwide.

Our aspiration is simple: that every person, at every stage of life, has access to tools that help them make decisions they can trust. For researchers, that means joining us in building the evidence base. For practitioners, it means applying the framework in ways that serve individuals, families, and organizations. And for participants, it means discovering that when values, aptitudes, and viable interests converge, decisions become not only more durable — they become more true.

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