A Way to Use “Calling Cards” (Inventure Group product) or What I Do Best Cards (Gallup)

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**Why this approach?** This process encourages players to pay attention to their talents in their daily life—as opposed to an approach that leads to a mission statement.

**The First Sort:** These instructions assume a “dealer” and a “player.” Dealer shows the

**Does this fit me?** cards to the player, reminds them of the instructions and encourages them to work quickly and honestly.

In the first sort, the player is to consider the question, Does this fit me? The player is going to make three piles: Yes, maybe and no.

**The Second Sort:** The dealer discards the maybe and no piles. Time to sort again—this

**Is this a talent?** time with the question, Is this a talent? A talent is to be seen as something that comes naturally and that is energizing.

**A Third Sort:** The dealer again discards the maybe and no piles. If there are more than

**This or that?** 12-15 cards in the yes pile, do a “this or that” sort, by showing the Player two cards at a time and forcing them to choose only one. Once the cards have been split into two piles the Player can swap 1:1 between the piles. The keeper pile cannot grow in quantity, however!

**Pare it down:** The Player is to eventually end up choosing 1-5 cards that are especially

**Find the Core** resonant, especially fitting. This may take a while. There is no magic number…but it is more meaningful to have a smaller number. Here are some questions that can help them discern which cards to keep:

* 1. Do you carry this with you in multiple contexts (work, play, task, relationship, on campus, off campus, etc.)?
  2. Do you carry this with you from day to day…OR, if you don’t have that opportunity, do you notice its absence?

**Reflection question: Were there any decisions that were particularly easy or difficult? What was going on in those decisions?**

**Explore Holland** If you’re using the Calling Cards, introduce the Holland codes labeling the cards. Conceived by researcher John Holland, these categories refer to capacities/skills as well as to preferred environments. Group the cards up by category, introducing the categories:

🡪At the center of investigative is inquiry, research, idea.

🡪At the center of artistic is creativity, creative process.

🡪At the center of social is relationship, people.

🡪At the center of enterprising is the endeavor, entrepreneurship.

🡪At the center of conventional is maintenance, resourcing.

🡪At the center of realistic is hands-on, concrete.

**Reflection question: Are there any affirmations or surprises in the Holland codes of your remaining cards? [Note: You can look back at the most recent discards for more information.]**

**Make a Map** Ask the Player to arrange the cards in such a way that they make a map, a visual and physical illustration of how these capacities relate to one another. Here are some prompt questions that can help:

1. Can you make a map of these cards to show how they relate to one another?
2. Is any of these cards central or core?
3. Are any of these cards in service to another. (i.e. Do you “add humor” in order to “build relationships?”).

Note: If the Player wants to handle the cards, let them do it! If they prefer to watch, then continually ask for their feedback, trying several different maps. There is no right or wrong answer but relationships are helpful for further reflection. There may be

**Reflection Questions: What did you discover while making the map? What questions do you have about your own map?**

**Record the Map** Have the Player draw the map and record the information from the cards.

**Follow up?** Is there a chance to follow up? Consider sending a follow-up e-mail or having another conversation some weeks…or even semesters later.