

The excerpt below is from the “Five Ways to Boost Your Career Through Targeted Reflection” article on Forbes.com.

Use this as a guide for yourself. Use your own notebook, notepad, notes app, or Google doc to write down your reflections.

What Fascinates You?

When you find information you’re manipulating naturally interesting, you’ll be more engaged and more likely to perform at a high level.

Given this, start a running list of topics that fascinate you. Make sure it’s easily accessible - such as in the notes app on your phone, or an Evernote or Google doc - so that you can jot them down as they come to, wherever you happen to be.

You might consider topics that you:

- most eagerly share with friends and family
- enjoy reading, listening to, and watching
- move to the top of a social media feed (versus what you hide)
- loved studying in school, even if you didn’t get to pursue them further

Once you have a solid list of what interests you, step back and see if you can identify a theme. A friend’s help can be invaluable here, too.

Centering on a topic itself isn’t as important as the “what” behind the topics you list. For instance, everything I find fascinating has to do with what motivates people - that’s my “theme” - but my topics of interest are far-reaching and could look very unconnected on the surface, including medical memoirs, demographic reports, career transition research, findings on meaningful work, positive psychology research, and so on.

How can you apply your reflections to your search for research at UC Davis?