



The Meaning of Work

What does our work do to us?



Program Description

- ▶ This 6-session program is an interdisciplinary inquiry into a fundamental question
- ▶ **"What does our work do to us?"** In a world where the workplace is the primary site of adult social interaction outside the family, we often struggle to balance the "money" (economic necessity) with "life" (self-realization and human flourishing). The program draws on philosophy, sociology, literature, film, and spiritual traditions to examine work as a site of identity formation, existential negotiation, moral compromise, and genuine human flourishing.
- ▶ The program moves participants through a deliberate intellectual arc: from unpacking what they assume about work, to confronting what work has actually done to them, to imagining what a working life that is truly worth living might look like.

Program Objectives

By the end of this program, participants will have:



Examined how work has shaped who they are, how they relate to their families, and how they see themselves as individuals.



Developed a personal perspective for what meaningful work looks like: one that makes room for dignity, self-respect, and contribution to something larger than a paycheck.



Arrived at their own honest answers to two questions:
"How has work changed me?" and
"How will I measure my life?"

The Intellectual Arc

Session 1

The Idea of Work

- Our relation with work.
- Our assumptions about work.
- Work as Identity and Survival

Session 2

Work as Self-Expression

- Work by Khalil Gibran
- The Working Life by Carl Jaspers
- Mat at Work by Clinton Bennett

Session 3

Work as Self-Negation?

- Alienation of Labor by Karl Marx
- Bullsh** Jobs by David Graeber
- The Aesthetic Degradation of Industrial Work by John Ruskin

Session 4

(Moral) Compromise at Work?

- Work as a moral transaction
- Gradual compromise - how professional identity erodes slowly
- The parent in me: Aspirations for raising a child.

Session 5

Other Ways of Knowing Work

- Ikigai – Japanese Understanding of Work
- Islamic perspectives on Work.

Session 6

The Place of Money in Our Lives

- Philosophy of Money – Georg Simmel
- Non-Western Perspectives on Money and Wealth

Program Delivery and Pedagogy

Program has been designed as an intellectual conversation. Each session has been paired with certain texts and/or film to anchor the conversation.

1. Six (6) thought-provoking intensive sessions.
2. Film, art and poetry.
3. Scholarly texts and philosophical discourse.
4. Downloadable resources available from LMS.
5. WhatsApp community for peer support.



Facilitator's Profile

Abdul Haseeb Shaikh

Educational Consultant

Abdul Haseeb brings over a decade of professional experience spanning educational consulting, leadership development, and training.

He has worked with various organizations across Pakistan, Lebanon, and Qatar, and holds an MA from the University of Warwick, UK.

Strengths: Social Sciences, Adult Learning, Leadership & Organizational Development.



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