

# Life After the Doctorate

Based on the Colloquium experience and the panel session “Life After The Doctorate.”

## What now?

Many people pursue the doctoral degree feeling as though they should be done after having put in all that time, money, dedication, and sacrifice only to miss the fruits of what could be. It’s important to remember that it is okay to say “I am finished.” You can bask in the glory of the journey you have been through, and the outstanding accomplishment of a doctoral degree.

But, what if, at this point, instead of having worked for the degree you earned, you now made it work for you? What could that look like?



## Revisioing

From an existential perspective, we are constantly revising our lives, every minute of every day. However, we can be so busy that we forget to be mindful of what we want after we just finished what I call, the first marathon. It’s

a great place to be at the finish line. We take in the applause of people who are in awe of what we have accomplished, family and friends praise the herculean efforts, friends congratulate us on LinkedIn. And then a question comes perhaps after a few days, “so what’s next for you?”

## A few important practices can help shape the “what’s next” inquiry-If you choose to answer it!

Keeping a strategic journal can not only help shape your mental health but also help shape your “possible self.” What is your possible self? The term was actually conceived back in 1986 by the [social psychologists Hazel Markus and Paula Nurius](#), and emerged from their thoughts on self-concept and self-perception. And although much of what they were stating was rooted in the present, the researchers discovered that people were engaged by ideas about what they might become.

Below are a few self journaling ideas for exploring how you will move into your life after the doctorate. Explore the possibilities and use it to cast your vision of growth. Having a growth mindset can also be beneficial to evolving your knowledge and brokering the possibilities!

I also want to encourage you to embrace the possibilities of working with one of the centers as a “fellow in residence.” This allows you to utilize the title, work with the Chairs regarding your own interests, jumpstart your publishing career, establish an academic blog, write for the Phoenix Scholar research periodical and more! To do so simply reach out to any of the Chairs with your interests.

## Your Growth Journal

Hopefully you come back to this on a regular basis as your thoughts may shift and change, and that’s okay.

Allow your thoughts to flow, it may not make sense right now but they may be the initial roots of something bigger.





4. Write down 3 potential short sprint goals or tasks you can think of after you graduate that connect your degree to your personal or professional aspirations (i.e. 1-Get published-maybe blogging for the centers will be my palace to start).

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5. How can I continue to grow myself after the degree for the next few years?

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If we can be of further help in your growth after you graduate, again, please reach out to any of the Chairs. Keep this somewhere that reminds you of what you seek, how you think about your “possible self” and use it as a beginning action plan to cultivate your newly minted doctorate!

