

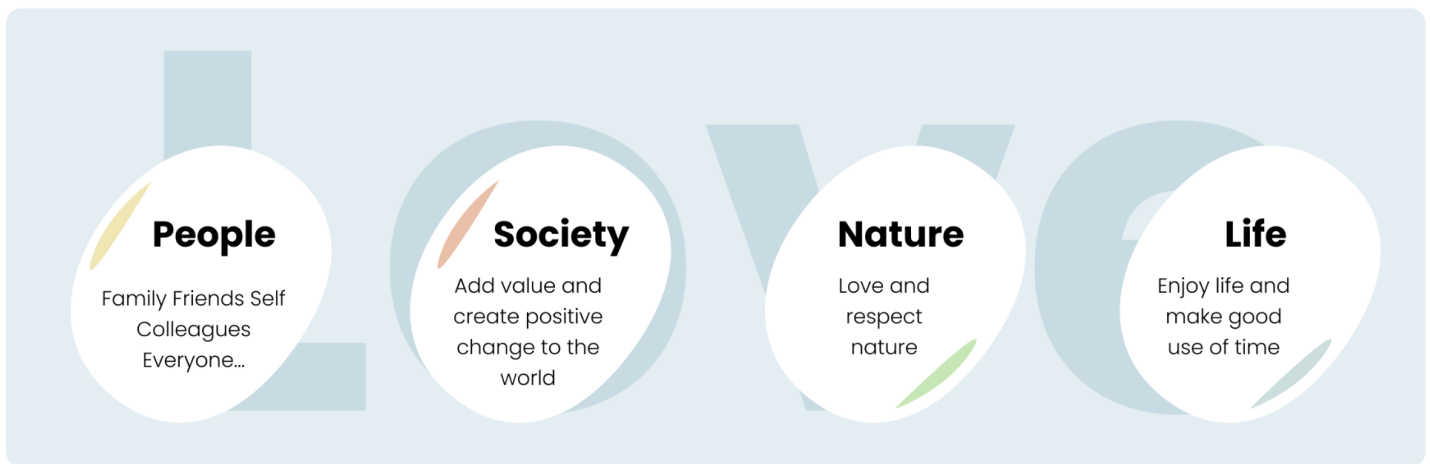
Personal Vision Essay & Leadership Reflection

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My values, philosophy, dreams & calling | My intellectual agenda | My career and life aspirations

Part01 My values, philosophy, dreams & calling

My values



Values refer to the beliefs and concepts that an individual or a society deems important and valuable. I visualize my values in the image above, with a background symbolizing the "Love" represented by water. Four seeds of my values, categorized as "People," "Society," "Nature," and "Life," are nurtured by the water.

"**Love**" serves as the foundation of my values. Throughout my growth journey, I have received ample love and firmly believe that love forms the basis for making things better. Embracing, transmitting, and giving love, much like soil, water, and sunlight, are the principles I firmly uphold.

"**People**" is my first seed, and I believe in treating family, friends, and close colleagues with sincerity and kindness. It involves fostering a flow of love among us, supporting each other, and providing both practical and emotional assistance to the best of my ability. When it comes to others, whether strangers or those with fleeting connections, I hold myself to the standards of respect and gratitude. I aim to be open-minded, actively listening, offering positive feedback, and always being friendly and approachable. Confucius once said, "Do not impose on others what you

do not wish for yourself." ¹This requires self-awareness, understanding one's preferences, and sharing what one finds valuable with others. I believe that treating oneself well is equally important. Loving oneself is not about narcissism or arrogance; genuine self-love fosters confidence, energy, and the courage to reflect and grow continually, ultimately enabling one to help others.

"Society" represents my second seed, embodying a profound sense of responsibility as a human being to contribute to making the world a better place. It is a mission that I undertake. I aspire to continually learn and explore, gradually uncovering the diverse facets and layers of this world and society. In doing so, I aim to comprehend both its shortcomings and chaos, as well as its richness and beauty. Through this understanding, I want to create something truly valuable for the world, fostering positive change within society.

"Nature" is the third seed, recognizing that living in the concrete jungles of cities for too long tends to make people forget the wonders of the natural world. I consider maintaining a perpetual sense of awe for nature to be one of my core values. I aspire to observe and experience the enchantment of nature as much as possible, whether in daily life or during travels. This involves feeling the wind, witnessing the rain, and immersing myself in the sounds of insects in the rainforest or the gusts of wind in the desert. In addition to learning from people and society, delving into the realms of science and the cosmos, there is a remarkable potential for incredible insights by studying other life forms in nature.

"Life" represents the final seed, acknowledging that time is the only relatively fair thing in this world for individuals. Each person possesses a comparable amount of time and has the right to use it for doing various things. I believe that enjoying life and making good use of time are acts of

¹ Confucius and Arthur Waley, *The Analects of Confucius* (Charleston, SC: CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2013).

reverence for life. I aim to utilize this limited time to experience a spectrum of emotions, explore diverse corners of the world, and gain a deeper understanding of both the inner and outer universes. As Sima Qian wrote "*Life may be heavier than Mount Tai or lighter than a goose feather.*"

²While we cannot determine the length of life, we can distinguish its significance. If the progress of human society resembles a ladder being built higher and higher, I aspire to contribute, within a short span of time, by adding a bit of height to this ladder.

My philosophy



My Chinese name is "源源", pronounced as "Yuanyuan." The character "源" in Chinese encompasses two primary meanings: The Origin of life and Water. Coincidentally, my philosophy finds a profound illustration in my name.

Origin of life: "Origin" signifies a beginning, transitioning from "nothing" to "existence." It represents the first "源" in my name, embodying my first philosophy—Creation. It takes this former position in my name because it aligns with my innate nature. I believe that the profound meaning of human existence lies largely in the creation of valuable things. Since childhood, I have found it interesting in painting and crafting. My parents mention that I started drawing even before I could talk, turning our home into a canvas adorned with colorful patterns and quirky creatures. Throughout my growth, my notebooks and exam papers were filled with whimsical

² Qian Sima and Burton Watson, Records of the Grand Historian (United States: Columbia University Press, 2011).

ideas from my pen. In my creative process, I dislike imitation and plagiarism, as I see conformity as a decline in both value and interest.

Water: It represents the second "源" in my name, embodying my second philosophy—Be like water (balance). Positioned as the second philosophy, it signifies an ongoing effort and a quality that needs to be cultivated postnatally. "上善若水"³ (The highest goodness is like water) is a pivotal concept in Laozi's philosophy, highlighting water's ability to nourish without contention, displaying selflessness, flexibility, and strength. I aspire to emulate water—maintaining a delicate balance between solid and gaseous states, possessing the adaptability to change in various environments. In both personal and professional aspects, I aim to be like water, leveraging its natural qualities to effectively tackle challenges and find optimal solutions.

Philosophical orientation questionnaire reflection

	Pragmatic	Intellectual	Human
Score	14	32	16

Philosophical Orientation Questionnaire assesses an individual's fundamental beliefs, guiding principles, and worldview, providing insights into people's philosophical perspective and orientation.

Pragmatic Operating Philosophy prioritizes activities that serve utility for desired outcomes, emphasizing clear objectives and measurable results. Intellectual Operating Philosophy places value on activities contributing conceptually to understanding, focusing on cognitive mapping and abstract variables in exploring life and relationships. Human Operating Philosophy assesses activities based on their impact on specific individuals and relationships, giving importance to humanism, communitarianism, and prioritizing intimacy and friendship.

These scores offer a different perspective from the self-assessment based on my name. The questionnaire enhances my understanding of my philosophy and presents a snapshot of my current state.

For Pragmatic Operating Philosophy, my score is low, aligning with expectations. I lack a habit of weighing costs and benefits and have minimal demands for returns. I prioritize enjoying the

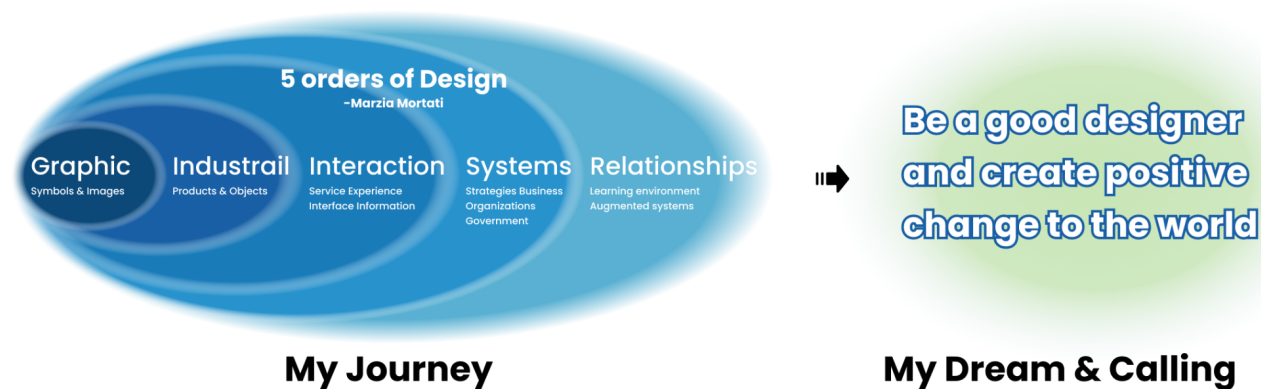
³ Laozi et al., Tao Te Ching (Barcelona: Alma Editorial, 2023).

process and recognizing its intrinsic value. Guided by Confucius in my education, I turn to avoid excessive utilitarianism, emphasizing the importance of the process and experiences. Material wealth is less crucial because my happiness often comes from the creative process, sunsets, or the wind.

In Intellectual Operating Philosophy, my score is 32, reaching 100%. It emphasizes conceptual frameworks for better understanding. I like to think deeply and instinctively visualize things and ideas, aligning with my philosophy of creation. I enjoy profound dialogues, abstract concepts, and find meaning in learning and sharing knowledge, even if some theories are relatively impractical in daily life. The joy of deeper insights into people and the world outweighs immediate rewards.

Human Operating Philosophy scored lower, reflecting my water philosophy. Despite valuing emotions, caring for relationships, and maintaining respect and gratitude for everyone, I also appreciate solitude and resist strong attachments to specific groups.

My dreams & calling



Since childhood, I've aspired to create beauty and feel a strong sense of purpose in doing so.

Herbert Simon wrote "*To design is to devise courses of action aimed at changing existing situations*

into preferred ones."⁴ deeply resonates with me. This understanding fuels **my lifelong dream to be a good designer and create positive change in the world.** Growing up, I spent a considerable amount of time playing imaginative role-playing games with my twin sister. This childhood experience greatly influences my dreams. We infused personalities into each toy, envisioning the toy room as their city, constantly transforming the space to enhance the life experiences of the toy residents. My journey in design aligns closely with Marzia Mortati's "Five Orders of Design."⁵ From studying graphic design in Belgium during my first undergraduate year to transitioning to industrial design, delving into interaction design, and later working in user experience design at a top tech company, my path evolved. Pursuing further studies in strategic design and management at Parsons then expanded my perspective, providing a holistic view of society and enriching my understanding of human beings. As I navigate the fifth step, Relationships, through leadership studies and accumulating social experiences, I believe in my ability to think globally and gradually move towards realizing my dream, fulfilling my calling.

Part02 My intellectual agenda

My likes and dislikes list

In Susan Lee Sontag's diary collection, she delineates her lists of likes and dislikes.⁶ Embracing this method as a means of self-examination, I, too, have crafted my lists, finding it a convenient way to attribute value to things and explore knowledge. This practice allows for a structured self-reflection, summarizing and identifying areas of personal interest and exploration.

⁴ Herbert A. Simon and John Laird, *The Sciences of the Artificial* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2019).

⁵ Marzia Mortati, "New Design Knowledge and the Fifth Order of Design," *Design Issues* 38, no. 4 (2022): 21–34, https://doi.org/10.1162/desi_a_00695.

⁶ Maria Popova, "Susan Sontag on Why Lists Appeal to Us, plus Her Listed Likes and Dislikes," *The Marginalian*, September 18, 2015, <https://www.themarginalian.org/2013/04/26/susan-sontag-lists-likes-dislikes/>.

My like list (Things): Warm light, Soft carpet, Toys, Acai bowl with fruits and nutella, Dark chocolate Unsweetened desserts and snacks, Scented candle, Nice but useless art and decorations, A full range of art creation tools, Stacks of white cards written with inspiration and ideas, The smell of grass after rain , Sunset, Designer Kenya Hara, Japanese-style fish, Colored cereal and milk, Maple sugar, Creative Ideas, Swish, All the beauty of nature, Gaudi's architectures, Freedom, Podcasts

My like list (Affairs): Play Lego with great music alone, Work until late night, Concentrate on my work in a small, quiet, separate space, Sitting in the passenger seat, Looking at the surface of the Earth from a window seat on a flight, Travel with friends, Basketball, Swimming, Staying with my twin sister, Getting praise and recognition, See great boardway shows, Listen to insightful and interesting discussions, Sharing new insights with others, Design, Scribble without thinking, Subway's Free Performances, Work out

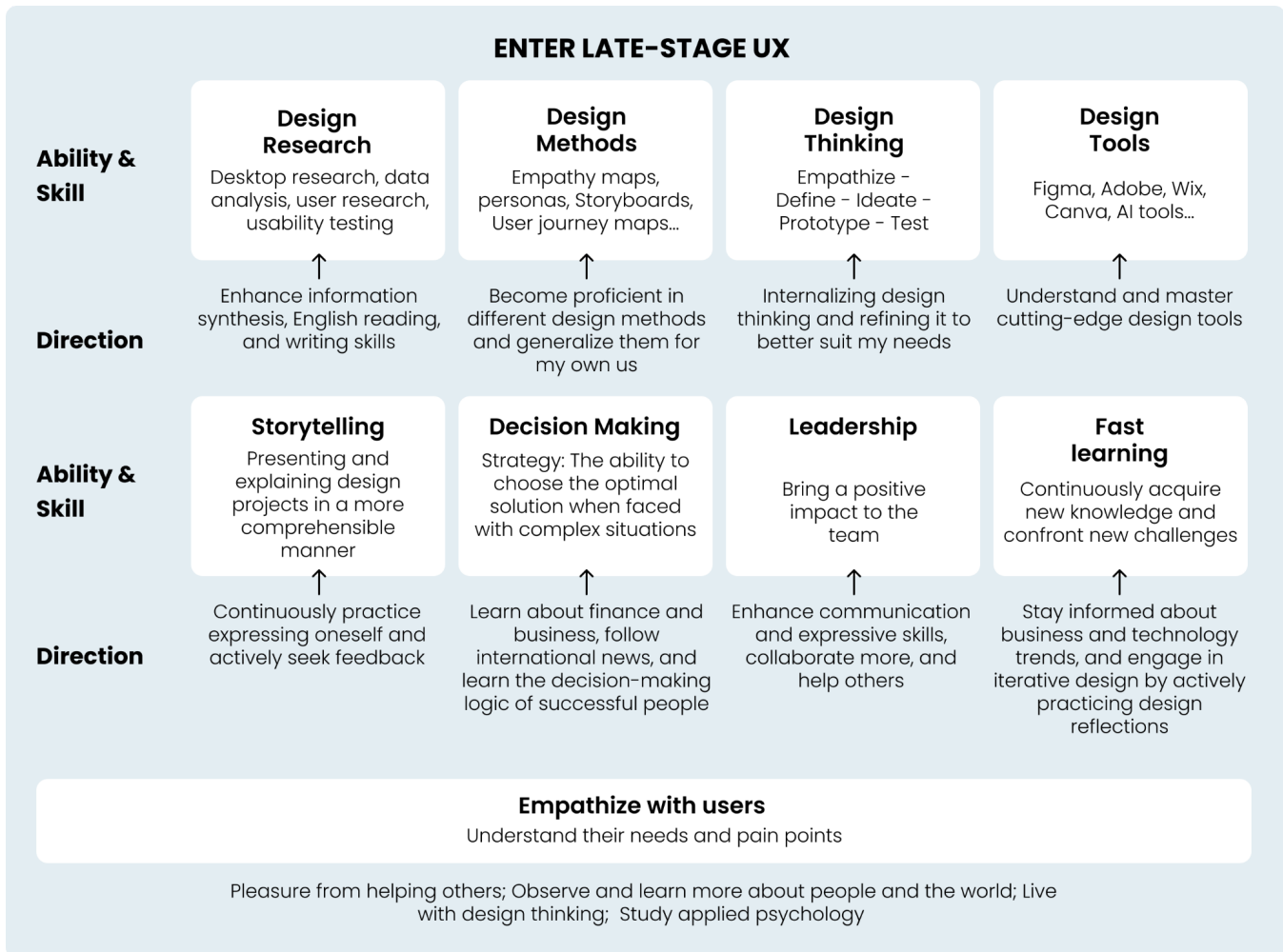
My dislike list (Things): All the dirty and ugly things, Cold winter, Smell of smoke and oil, Text-heavy book and paper, Exam, Spicy food, Supporters of women doing housework and taking care of children, Puzzling Modern and Contemporary Artworks, Pretentious individuals or literature that feign sophistication, Excessively casual and disrespectful attitude, Idle, dull jokes, Unnecessary feelings of indebtedness and self-blame

My dislike list (Affairs): KTV, Party, Bar, Happy Hour, Awkward company dinner, The Chinese custom of offering a toast to elders, Making a fool of oneself in front of acquaintances, Collaborating with assertive individuals, Feeling like an outsider in a certain situation, Successful Standardization, Blame without consideration for others' feelings, Repetitive, dull, and meaningless tasks

From my lists of likes and dislikes, it is evident that I am a person highly attuned to beauty, experiences, and sensations. For instance, my likeness to scented candles, toys, and various decorations, coupled with the insistence on maintaining a tidy living space, reflects my commitment to enhancing the quality of living experience.

Due to my heightened powers of observation and sensitivity, I am more susceptible to environmental influences, including sounds, colors, and people's emotions. This is precisely why I find noisy environments like bars and KTVs unappealing. Conversely, when requiring focus and concentration, I find enjoyable in working alone during late-night hours, facilitating deep contemplation. In summary, I not only relish but am accustomed to creating enhanced experiences for others, so **I want to continually explore and learn within the field of user experience (UX) design in the future.**

My agenda for learning



I believe that a truly outstanding UX Designer must possess an understanding of human needs and their contextual environment, making design decisions that have long-term positive impacts while adhering to ethical considerations. Moreover, they need to go beyond just being a UX designer, combining rationality and empathy while having strategic and business skills.

Completing Boyatzis' "Becoming a Resonant Leader" test⁷ revealed my preference for a direction-oriented planning style, finding it more effective in addressing my needs than

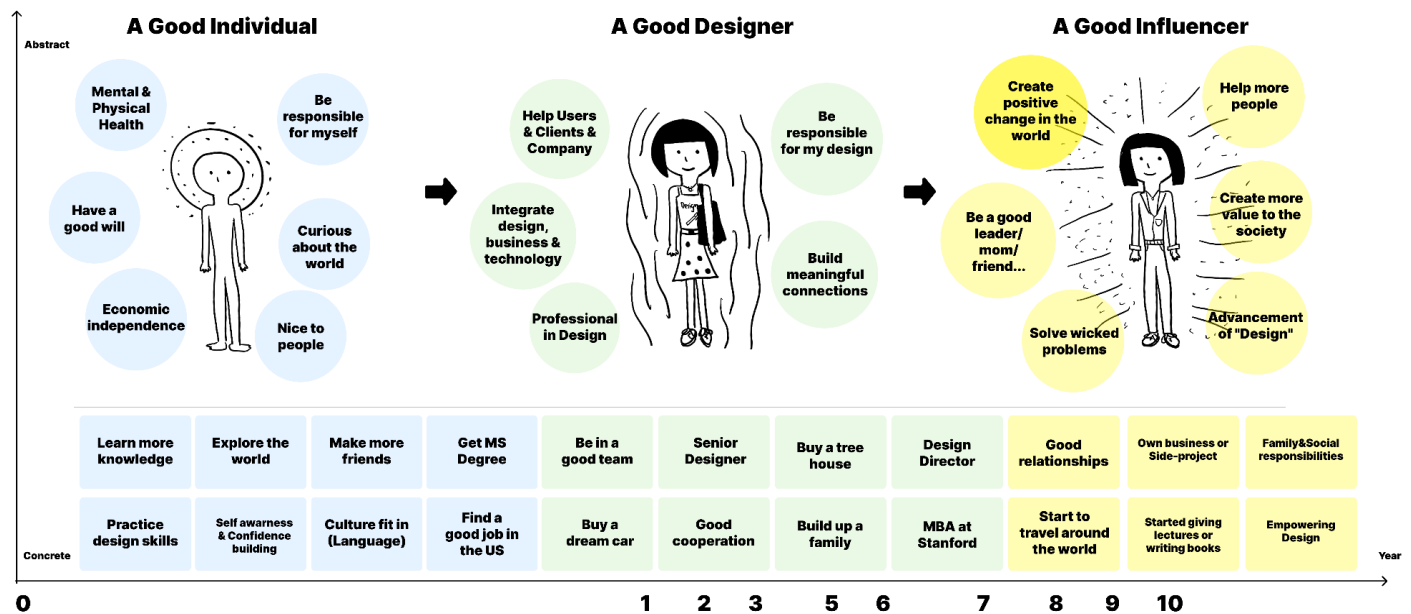
⁷ Annie McKee, Richard E. Boyatzis, and Fran Johnston, *Becoming a Resonant Leader Develop Your Emotional Intelligence, Renew Your Relationships, Sustain Your Effectiveness* (Boston: Harvard Business Review Press, 2008).

goal-oriented or action-oriented approaches. Drawing insights from the UX Collective 2024 report⁸ and the Google design team's interpretation of the skills essential for UX designers⁹. I have reflected on my professional proficiency and formulated a plan for learning and exploration.

Part03 My career and life aspirations

I perceive my work and life as an integrated and mutually beneficial relationship. I can seamlessly connect inspiration and experiences from life with design, collaborating with teams to create products, experiences, and strategies that benefit users, businesses, and the world. The diverse design projects I encounter in my work provide a comprehensive understanding of various industries and the world. Internalizing design thinking equips me to better confront real-life challenges and maintain a curious outlook on the world.

Be a good designer and to create positive change in the world.



⁸ Caio Braga Fabricio Teixeira, "The State of UX in 2024," UX Trends, accessed December 2, 2023, <https://trends.uxdesign.cc/>.

⁹ "Google User Experience (UX) Certificate - Grow with Google," Google, accessed December 2, 2023, https://grow.google/certificates/ux-design/?utm_source=google&utm_medium=paidsearch&utm_campaign=ha-sem-bk-ux-exa__geo--US&utm_term=google+ux+design&gad_source=1&gclid=CjwKCAiA paarBhB7EiwAYiMwqt5qbVcIEtGN0tgtgDXr1ycrW5VORG8kmUw7FjQlhi2mnX4BpTKZyBoCJ-cQAvD_BWE.

The diagram above illustrates my envisioned career and life path, portraying a continuous journey of growth towards my mission. The upper half of the chart depicts a more abstract development process, while the lower half delves into concrete milestones. In essence, within the next decade, I aspire to evolve from being an accountable, curious, and ethical individual to a proficient designer, capable of leading teams in design projects and helping to build meaningful relationships. Ultimately, I aspire to be an influencer, akin to water, inspiring more people. In the next year, I plan to conclude my student life and secure a design job in the United States. Over five years, I envision advancing to a senior designer role, establishing a family, and saving for personal pursuits. In the following five years, my goal is to become a Design Director, broaden life experiences, pursue an MBA, and initiate entrepreneurial endeavors alongside my design career. In 8-10 years, I aim to excel in managing relationships, travel globally, and integrate my passion for design into writing and design lectures, spreading its beauty worldwide.

My dream home and work place



[Link to the visualization](#)

These two images depict the envisioned appearance of my dream home and workspace. I aspire for a close connection with nature, envisioning a home surrounded by a forest – a treehouse

bathed in warm light. The interior features a huge plant wall for observation and learning, complemented by soft carpets and a room filled with Lego toys from my likes list. As for my work setting, I desire a hybrid model that accommodates both the need for quiet, focused contemplation in an independent space and the collaborative creativity fostered in an office environment with co-workers. I believe visualizing my ideals will contribute to their realization.

Conclusion

I delved into my values, philosophy, and professional aspirations by finishing this essay. It's akin to piercing a tunnel from the present to my future dreams, instilling greater confidence and reaffirming my determination to become a proficient designer. Much like water, I aspire to bring hope to many and contribute to positive transformations in the world.