



LIVING IN BETA

One Stone

Living in Beta is One Stone's innovative wayfinding program designed to empower high school students to explore their passions and discover their purpose, while helping them develop the tools and mindset to live and learn with intention.

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OVERVIEW

Inspired by the technical term "beta testing," which describes the process of piloting and improving a product through continuous iteration, Living in Beta means that no one is ever finished growing, learning, or adding to themselves. Through a four-phase program, students design experiences that bring relevance and meaning to their learning and lives. Activities include scaffolded activities that help them understand and navigate their interests, goals, and futures; real-world experiences; and supportive mentorship from a certified adult. These transformative experiences empower students to develop a greater sense of identity, belonging, purpose, and direction as they test and iterate on their passions, explore their personal values, and discover their purpose, or "why."

The Living in Beta model has been implemented in 25 organizations in 15 states and 5 countries, in addition to the flagship, One Stone. Learners in those schools have reported increases in classroom engagement, passion for learning, relevance, and connectedness. They also felt more prepared for life outside of high school. Through its certification program, school visits, and professional development opportunities, One Stone supports school communities looking to implement the Living in Beta model.



What Makes This Model Innovative?



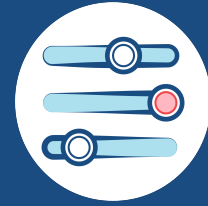
Relevance

Living in Beta provides students with real-world opportunities to test their interests, passions, and curiosities. It helps them form key insights and make discoveries informed by who they are and what they are passionate about.



Active Self-Direction

Living in Beta helps students develop a greater sense of agency and purpose, and it helps them deepen their understanding of the choices they make. It equips young people with the broad skills to become active designers of whatever path they ultimately choose to take in their lives.



Customization

One Stone uses the metaphor of each student having a rubber band with different stretchability. Each student's goal is to bend and stretch their rubber band in ways that feel right for them without breaking the band. In practice, this means that Living in Beta is different for each student depending on what they want and need.

DESIGN

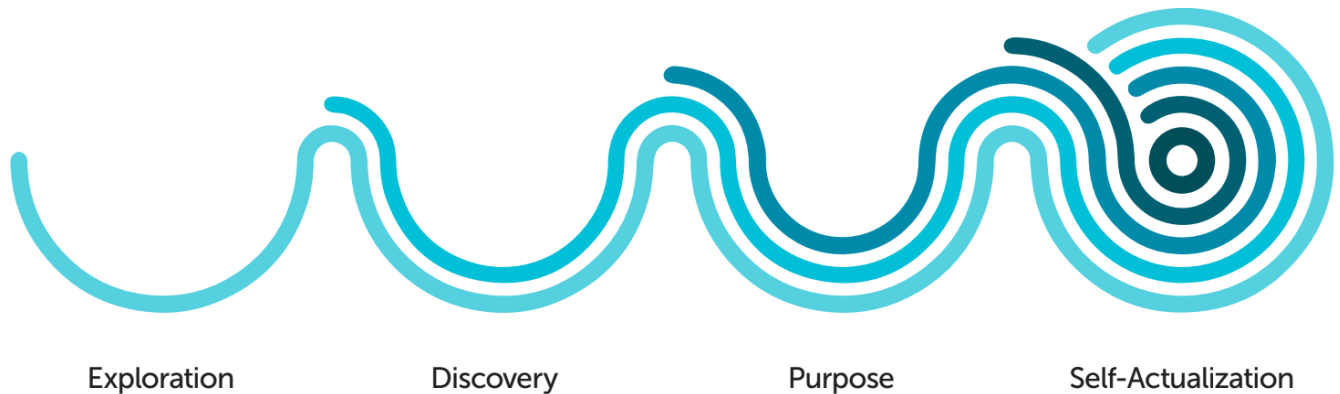
Goals

Living in Beta is designed to develop passion and purpose so young people can thrive.

Find and Explore Passions	Students can answer questions like, "Who am I and how do I know?" and, "What are my skills, talents, and passions?"
Make Insights About Passions, Learning, and Self	Students can answer questions like, "What drives me?" and, "Where do my passions come from?" and, "What brings me joy and fulfillment?"
Purpose and Wayfinding	Students can answer questions like, "What is my purpose?" and, "What are my values?" and, "What is important to me?" and, "How might I lead with my <i>why</i> ?"
Bring Purpose to Life	Students can answer questions like, "What tools are in my toolkit?" and, "How might I design my life path with intention?" and, "How might I live my life with purpose?"

Experience

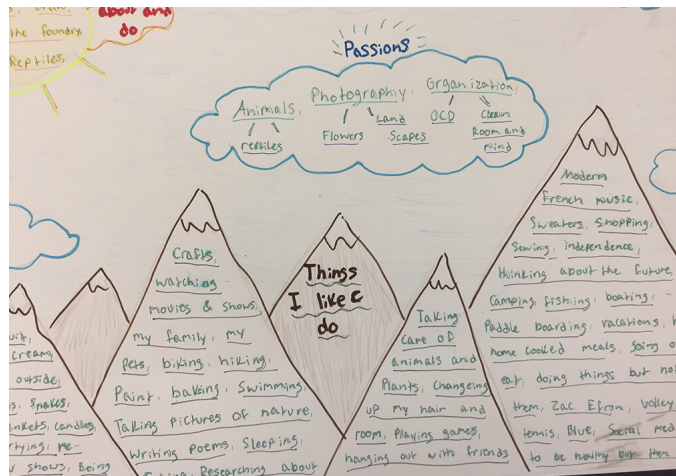
Living in Beta is a cyclical process. Through the model, young people are empowered to live with intention, driven by their values and a greater sense of purpose and direction. The Living in Beta program is a four-phase experience that culminates in a performative project. However, when living a life in beta, this process repeats itself, allowing young people to continue to grow, iterate, pivot, and realize their ever-changing passions and sense of purpose.



Stage One: Exploration

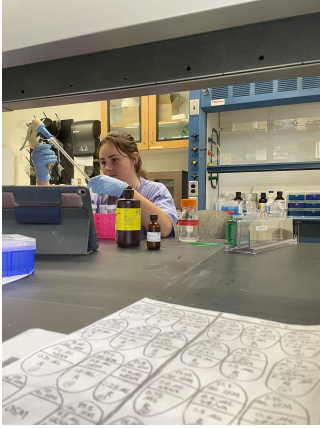
Learners engage in a personalized wayfinding process and explore ways to connect their interests and talents to real-world opportunities.

Students begin their journey in Living in Beta through a rich process of personal Exploration, where they engage in a number of activities designed to help them identify and explore their passions, interests, curiosities, and skills. As students move through this process, they develop a better understanding of how to leverage their unique strengths and talents to realize their potential and to fully engage their passions. Through close mentorship and support, learners build trust and vulnerability with their advisors and peers while they explore ways to connect their passions to their learning and seek opportunities to test their passions. Whether it's through designing passion projects, engaging in internships, or seeking extra-curricular opportunities in their community, learners engage their passions in real-world and relevant learning experiences. And they gain a deeper understanding of themselves and the aspects of their passions that give them a greater sense of purpose and fulfillment.



Stage Two: Discovery

Engagement in real-world experiences empowers learners to prototype and test their curiosities and passions and to make key discoveries and insights about themselves.



In the Discovery stage, learners find themes within their passions and form key insights about themselves and what fulfills them. As they reflect, dig deep, and ask challenging questions of themselves, they discover the driving force of their passions while learning what motivates them most in life. Along the way, they discover their values and what is most important for them in life. Some will discover “imposter passions”—passions that are not theirs but are the manifestation of pressures and expectations that influence their choices. As they make new discoveries, they find additional opportunities to connect their passions to real-world experiences so that they can test those passions and learn more about themselves. ▶

[Employability and the High School Experience](#) To facilitate this phase,

One Stone partners with local organizations that enable the following experiences:

- **Student-Driven and Experience-Based Discovery:** Students drive their learning in the Discovery stage by designing personal and relevant experiences. They become designers of their own learning, working alongside their coaches and advisors to create personalized goals for learning and growth. Through meaningful and intentional opportunities like internships, job shadows, paid jobs, professional training and certifications, and personal passion projects, students practice finding, engaging, and reflecting on their experiences. Along the way, they explore their passions and find their purpose.
- **Putting Passion into Practice:** When you think about job opportunities for high schoolers, what comes to mind? Lifeguarding, nannying, maybe food service? But what about *research assistant*? *Laboratory technician*? *Virtual reality guide*? We all have to start somewhere. But young people deserve opportunities to grow their skills in emerging careers and fields that interest them, in ways that set them up for future success.

Stage Three: Purpose

Through Exploration and Discovery, learners identify their values and uncover their purpose, bringing clarity, meaning, and direction to their choices and next steps in life.

As learners enter the Purpose stage of the Living in Beta program, they have had ample opportunity to explore their passions through meaningful and relevant experiences. They have reflected deeply and have formed key insights regarding the themes they found across their many passions, interests, and



curiosities. In addition, they have learned ways to actively design and engage in learning and growth opportunities that are both meaningful and purposeful to them. With these experiences in hand, learners are now able to articulate their Purpose in a powerful “why” statement and connect their “why” with their personal and professional values. While both their Purpose and values will evolve with time, they have taken the first step in developing the tools and mindset to live a life of purpose and intention.

Stage Four: Self-Actualization

The moment when a learner realizes their full potential, capacities, and talents to become everything they are capable of becoming.



During the Self-Actualization phase, students ponder the question, “How might we pursue our passions and live and learn with purpose and intention?” Self-Actualization is a state in which full personal potential is achieved. Abraham Maslow (1943) described this level as the desire to accomplish everything that one can, to become the most that one can be. As learners enter this stage of Living in Beta, they have fervently explored their passions and realized their potential. They have made discoveries that

empowered them to better understand themselves as well as the ways in which they can pursue their passions and live and learn with both purpose and intention. They have created a toolkit for life, filled with the skills, mindset, and experiences that will empower them to continually iterate upon who they are and who they want to be.

- **The Curation of Me:** The Curation of Me is the result of a process of deep reflection and introspection. While embarking on this culminating project, students consider the question: “How might we express who we are with confidence?” The Curation of Me presentation is the student’s opportunity to tell their story of growth— through the challenges, successes, and revelations they experienced along the way. It is the manifestation of the student’s fulfillment of their talents and potentialities. Through the Curation of Me, students take ownership and pride in who they have become and where they are going, sharing the tools and experiences they have collected to guide them through the next stages of their life. ▶



[Curation of Me](#)

Supporting Structures

The model can be integrated into a school's existing overall model but will require some shifts to the daily schedule, approach to community partnerships, and school culture as well as adult training.



CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION, & ASSESSMENT

Living in Beta offers core and supplementary modules to enable flexibility, but modules must be intentionally sequenced in order to build on prior knowledge.

One Stone has created a series of learning modules designed to foster growth in each of the four “Stages of Beta.” These modules enable students to iterate on who they are and engage in opportunities that empower them to explore their passions, discover self, find purpose, and achieve self-actualization. [📖 Guidebook](#) As students develop new and more refined versions of themselves, their experiences manifest themselves tangibly and intentionally through various different artifacts of learning.

To support adults in their mentorship of students in the Living in Beta program, One Stone offers a sequence that outlines the recommended progression of foundational Living in Beta learning modules. The intentional sequencing builds on prior knowledge and enables reflection. In addition to foundational learning modules, a variety of supplementary modules and Beta Tools have been designed to help support learning and growth in each stage of beta. Many of the supplementary modules and beta tools are relevant to more than one stage of beta and can be completed more than once.

All Living in Beta mentors and facilitators must participate in the Wayfinding Mentorship Training.

A mentor is fundamental to students’ learning and growth throughout the Living in Beta process—as well as their long-term potential to thrive. Adults must receive training via One Stone’s Wayfinding Mentorship Certification program, which prepares



ADULT ROLES, HIRING, & LEARNING

them to teach the content and gives access to all Living in Beta materials. As a result of training, mentors bring knowledge and experience to the relationship, enable positive social interactions with young people, and empower students to observe and practice the



skills and dispositions they are developing. As co-designers and creators of their learning experience, students find expanded relevance and meaning in their learning and enjoy greater opportunities to employ their passions

and talents in the process. Further, mentors provide emotional support that impacts student growth and attitudes toward learning, as well as their social-emotional well-being, decision-making, and ultimately their sense of hope about their future and themselves. As a result, when learners have the opportunity to build strong relationships with caring adult mentors, they are more likely to be engaged, motivated, and find greater success in what they do. [Wayfinding Mentorship Certification Program](#)



SCHEDULE & USE OF TIME

While Living in Beta does not have a prescribed timeline, it must be implemented as a regular and consistent part of the student schedule.

While there is not a prescribed or suggested timeframe in which each stage of Beta takes place, each stage should be supported and informed by the development of relevant, passion-driven experiences.

Living in Beta fits well into any regularly scheduled advisory program, though it may be embedded into existing courses (e.g., a human development course or life skills curriculum) or as a stand-alone course. Students should experience the Living in Beta program consistently as part of their daily or weekly schedule.



FAMILY & COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

In order to offer real-world experiences, Living in Beta requires partnerships with local community organizations.

Passion-driven experiences such as passion projects, internships, job shadows, deep dive learning experiences, and more are integral to the Living in Beta program. It is through experience, trial and error, prototyping and testing, and “trying on” new experiences that students will learn more about themselves, their passions, and their purpose. To facilitate these experiences, One Stone partners with over 66 local community partners where young people can spend time engaging in real-world experiences.



IMPLEMENTATION

Supports Offered

One Stone offers the following supports to help you implement [Living in Beta](#).

Living in Beta & Wayfinding Mentorship

Cost Associated



One Stone's Wayfinding Mentorship Certification program is for teachers, student advisors, community leaders, and career and professional development program leaders interested in bringing Living in Beta in their school or organization. Leaders who complete the training earn certification and gain access to the full suite of Living in Beta materials. Only certified mentors can lead Living in Beta activities with students. Level I and Level II certification options are available.

Reach out directly to Jesse Ross at the contact email below to learn more about enrollment and financial support.

[Learn More](#)

Student-Driven Learning

Cost Associated



One Stone's programs and offerings fold together student passion, purpose, and ownership. Learn how to inspire, support, and assess the process of empowering each individual student to drive why, how, and what they learn.

[Learn More](#)

Human-Centered Design

Cost Associated



One Stone's design thinking courses and programs offer ways for learners, educators, schools, and organizations to learn how to design with real people to solve real problems.

[Learn More](#)

Experiential Service

Cost Associated



One Stone's model of student-driven experiential service helps students forge a direct connection with the community and foster life-changing experiences for the learner.

[Learn More](#)



One Stone Powered Microschool

Cost Associated



One Stone offers partnerships to microschool to design a school from scratch or redesign one. They take partners through a four stage process - envision, cultivation, integration, consultation - to implement community-led microschools powered by the One Stone model.

[Express Interest](#)



Reach

25

Organizations

16

States

5

Countries

1,200+

Students

Impact

One Stone has completed a phase of pilots with promising results. Living in Beta activities have a significant impact on student engagement in and beyond the classroom. Students who engage with Living in Beta report feeling more prepared for life after high school than when they began the program. [Pilot Results](#)

Data collected over just six months of the 2021 pilot presents some very promising findings:

- Pilot students reported **14% higher connectedness** to classmates, teachers, and communities.
- According to research conducted by William Damon at the Stanford Center on Adolescence, a staggering 80% of the general high school population lacks a sense of purpose. **Only**

9.3% of Living in Beta students reported they were lacking a sense of purpose upon completing the pilot.

- Pilot students displayed an **increase in classroom engagement by 9.6%**, an **increase in passion for learning by 9.7%**, and an **increase in their sense of their learning's relevance by 11.6%**.
- Pilot students' experienced a **7% decrease in anxiety** surrounding their sense of preparedness for life after high school, and students felt **8.7% more prepared for the "adult" world**.

Contact

Chad Carlson

Director of Research & Design

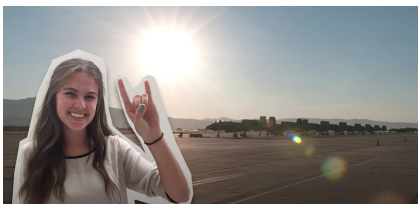
chad@onestone.org

Mat Erpelding

Director of Business Development

mat@onestone.org

RESOURCES



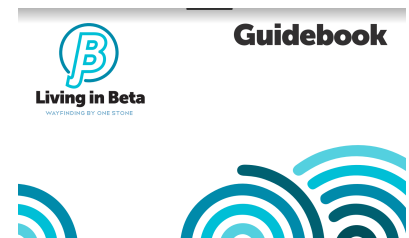
[Employability and the High School Experience](#)

One Stone student Tessa Simmonds walks us through her on-the-job experience at the Idaho Dept. of Commerce.



[Curation of Me Video](#)

This is an example of a student Curation of Me (credit to One Stone student Chloe French!)



[Living in Beta Guidebook](#)

This guidebook gives an overview of each part of the Living in Beta program.



[Wayfinding Mentorship Program](#)

This website provides more information on Living in Beta certification for staff—including how to sign up.



[Living in Beta — One Stone](#)

This is the Living in Beta website where you can learn more about the program.



[Living in Beta: One Stone's Pilot Results Are In](#)

This article from Getting Smart provides an in-depth look at One Stone's 2021 Living in Beta pilot.