

NorthQuest – Joke Book

A Spark & Anvil joke book. Groan-worthy puns, tricky riddles, silly nonsense, and real fun facts from the world of NorthQuest – read them out loud and make someone laugh.

Why is knowing your OWN values the first step in any big decision?

Because you can't choose a good direction until you know what "good" means to YOU.

How to use this book

Read a joke, pause at the question, and try to guess the answer before you read on. Best of all: read them out loud to a friend, a grown-up, or your class. A good laugh makes the tricky stuff easier – that's real science.

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Why is knowing your OWN values the first step in any big decision?

💡 Because you can't choose a good direction until you know what "good" means to YOU.

Why is "self-authorship" more than a fancy word?

💡 Because it means writing your own answers about what matters, instead of just following the script handed to you.

Why does every path have trade-offs?

💡 Because choosing one direction means setting others aside -- and pretending a choice is all upside is how people get surprised later.

Why is "explore before you commit" good advice?

💡 Because you can't weigh options you've never actually looked at.

Why is a goal without a next step just a wish?

💡 Because "I want to..." becomes real only when it turns into "so this week I'll..."

Why is "what will people think?"

💡 " a shaky compass? Because building your life around others' approval points you toward THEIR values, not yours.

Why is it okay not to have it all figured out at 17?

💡 Because a direction can start as a rough heading and get clearer as you walk.

Why does trying something and disliking it still count as progress?

💡 Because ruling out a path is real, useful information about where you're headed.

Why is a "backup plan" not a lack of faith?

💡 Because having a fallback frees you to take a real shot at what you want.

Why is comparing your path to someone else's a trap?

💡 Because their choices reflect THEIR values, resources, and timeline -- not a scoreboard for yours.

Why do interests and strengths both matter in a decision?

💡 Because loving something you're terrible at, or being great at something you hate, each pulls in only one direction.

Why is a decision easier once you name your "non-negotiables"?

💡 Because knowing what you WON'T give up quickly narrows the field.

Why is talking to people already on a path so useful?

💡 Because their real experience beats your imagined version of it.

Why is "future you" worth consulting?

💡 Because imagining who you want to become helps you choose what to do now.

Why is a reversible decision less scary than it feels?

💡 Because many choices can be adjusted later -- few doors lock permanently behind you.

Why is "follow your passion" incomplete advice?

💡 Because passion matters, but so do skills, opportunities, and how you want to actually LIVE -- a fuller picture beats a slogan.

Why does a small experiment beat a giant leap?

💡 Because you can TEST a direction -- a class, a volunteer gig, a side project -- before betting everything on it.

Why is it fine for your goals to change?

💡 Because you're allowed to grow -- the "you" of five years from now gets a vote too.

Why is decision paralysis its own choice?

💡 Because refusing to decide is quietly deciding to let time or others choose for you.

Why is the "right" path ultimately yours to define?

💡 Because a life built on someone else's definition of success can succeed by their scoreboard and feel empty on yours.

Riddles

What does "self-authorship" mean?

💡 Developing your OWN internal answers to "what do I believe, value, and want?" -- rather than just following what others expect. It's the shift from living someone else's script to writing your own.

Why is clarifying your VALUES the foundation of a big life decision?

💡 Because a "good" choice is only good relative to what YOU care about. Without knowing your own values, you're navigating without a compass.

On a genuine question like "which path should I choose?"

💡 ", is there one objectively correct answer for everyone? No! It depends on YOUR values, strengths, circumstances, and what kind of life you want. The skill is reasoning honestly about the trade-offs -- not finding a universal "right" answer.

Why does every meaningful choice involve a "trade-off"?

💡 Because committing to one direction means setting others aside. Recognizing what you're giving up -- not just what you're gaining -- leads to fewer regrets later.

You try an activity and discover you dislike it. Was that a waste?

💡 No! Ruling out a path is valuable information. Self-authoring your future is partly a process of ELIMINATION, and every "not this" narrows the search.

What turns a "goal" into something more than a wish?

💡 A concrete NEXT STEP! "I want to be a musician" becomes real when it turns into "this week I'll practice 20 minutes a day and find one person to play with."

Why is making a decision mainly to satisfy "what other people will think" risky?

💡 Because it optimizes for OTHERS' values instead of your own -- and you're the one who has to live inside the choice every day.

Why is it genuinely OK not to have your whole future figured out as a teenager?

💡 Because directions clarify as you explore, learn, and grow. A rough heading now, refined over time, is far more realistic than a locked-in master plan at 16.

Why is talking to someone who actually DOES a job (an "informational interview") so valuable?

💡 Because their real, day-to-day experience corrects the imagined, glamorized, or scary version in your head. Reality is a better data source than assumption.

What are your "non-negotiables"?

💡 The things you're NOT willing to give up in a decision -- like time with family, or work that helps others. Naming them quickly filters out options that clash with what matters most to you.

Why can a small "experiment" beat a huge leap when exploring a path?

💡 Because a class, a volunteer role, or a side project lets you TEST a direction cheaply before committing fully. You gather real evidence before betting big.

Is "follow your passion" complete advice?

💡 Not quite! Passion matters, but so do your skills, real opportunities, and how you want to LIVE day to day. A good decision weighs several factors, not just one appealing slogan.

Why does knowing whether a decision is REVERSIBLE reduce fear?

💡 Because many choices can be adjusted or undone later -- so they don't deserve the same weight as the rare truly permanent ones. Match the worry to the actual stakes.

Why is comparing your path to a peer's usually unhelpful?

💡 Because their choices fit THEIR values, resources, and timeline -- not a universal ranking. Someone else's "success" isn't a scoreboard for your life.

How do "interests" and "strengths" both factor into a good direction?

💡 Loving something you struggle with, or excelling at something you dislike, each pulls only one way. Directions that align both interest AND strength tend to be more sustainable.

Is refusing to make a decision the same as making no decision?

💡 No -- it IS a decision! Delaying often means letting time, circumstance, or other people choose for you. Sometimes that's fine; the key is doing it consciously, not by avoidance.

Why is it healthy to expect your goals to CHANGE over time?

💡 Because you keep learning and growing, and "future you" has new information. Revising a goal isn't failure -- it's responding wisely to who you're becoming.

A structured way to weigh options is to list each one's pros, cons, and how well it fits your values. Why does writing it down help?

💡 Because it moves a swirling, anxious decision out of your head and into a clear comparison you can actually reason about.

Why is a "backup plan" a sign of strength, not doubt?

💡 Because knowing you have a fallback reduces fear, which frees you to take a genuine shot at what you most want. Security and ambition can work together.

Ultimately, who gets to define what a "successful" or "right" life looks like for you?

💡 YOU do! A life that meets someone else's definition of success can still feel empty if it ignores your own values. Self-authorship means owning that definition.

Silly Stuff

Someone chose an entire life path purely to impress people who, it turned out, were barely paying attention. Building your future around others' approval is aiming very carefully at a target that keeps looking at its own phone.

A teenager was told to "have your whole future figured out NOW," panicked, and then realized most adults are still figuring it out too. A direction is a heading you adjust as you walk, not a contract signed in permanent ink at sixteen.

A goal sat around for years as a lovely "someday I'll..." until someone finally turned it into "this week I'll...", and it immediately started happening. Goals are wishes until they grow a next step. Then they get legs.

Someone tried a path, hated it, and called the whole thing a "failure" -- until they realized they'd just gained rock-solid evidence about what they DON'T want. Ruling something out is a win wearing a disappointed face.

A person spent months comparing their timeline to a peer's, keeping careful score, in a game the peer didn't know existed and wasn't playing. Comparison is a competition with rules only you enforce, against an opponent who isn't there.

"Follow your passion!" boomed the poster, offering exactly zero guidance on skills, money, or daily life. Passion is a great ingredient and a terrible entire recipe. A real decision needs the other ingredients too.

Someone agonized for weeks over a totally reversible choice as if it were carved in stone, then rushed a genuinely permanent one. Matching your worry to the actual stakes would have saved everyone, including future them, a lot of stress.

A person avoided making a decision for so long that time quietly made it for them, and they were annoyed at the outcome they'd technically chosen by not choosing. Not deciding is still a decision -- just one you don't get to steer.

Someone imagined a career as pure glamour, then talked to a person who actually did it, and discovered the real day-to-day was different -- and, in some ways, better. Reality is a much more useful advisor than a daydream. Go ask it questions.

A big scary decision swirled anxiously in someone's head for weeks until they simply wrote out the options, pros, cons, and values on paper -- and it suddenly looked manageable. The head is a terrible place to store a decision. Paper is better.

Someone insisted on making a giant, all-or-nothing leap when a small experiment -- one class, one weekend project -- would have told them the same thing at a fraction of the risk. Test the water before diving off the cliff.

A person chose a path they were brilliant at and completely disliked, then wondered why success felt hollow. Strength without interest is a well-paid room you don't want to sit in. Both factors get a vote.

Someone treated changing their mind about their future as a shameful betrayal of their 15-year-old self, who -- let's be honest -- also thought a lot of other questionable things. Growing is allowed. Your goals get to grow up too.

A person achieved every marker of "success" on someone else's list and felt strangely empty, because none of it matched what THEY actually valued. Winning a game you never wanted to play is a very expensive way to feel nothing.

Someone finally named their three non-negotiables, and half their overwhelming list of options instantly disqualified itself, leaving a decision that was suddenly almost easy. Knowing what you WON'T accept is a shockingly fast way to see what's left.

Fun Facts

Did you know? Psychologists describe "self-authorship" as developing your OWN internal answers about what you value and believe, rather than just following others' expectations. It's a key part of growing into an independent adult!

Did you know? On genuine questions about your future, there usually ISN'T one universally "correct" answer -- it depends on your own values, strengths, and circumstances. The real skill is reasoning honestly about the trade-offs!

Did you know? Most people do NOT have their whole future figured out as teenagers -- and that's completely normal. Careers and paths clarify through exploring, trying things, and learning what fits you over time!

Did you know? Trying something and DISLIKING it is genuinely useful -- it rules out a path and sharpens your sense of direction. Self-discovery is partly a process of elimination, and every "not this" is progress!

Did you know? A goal becomes real when it gets a concrete NEXT STEP. Research on goal-setting shows that breaking a big aim into small, specific actions makes you far more likely to actually achieve it!

Did you know? "Informational interviews" -- simply talking to someone who does a job you're curious about -- are one of the most valuable and underused exploration tools. Real experience beats an imagined version every time!

Did you know? Naming your "non-negotiables" -- the things you won't give up -- dramatically speeds up decisions. Once you know what you WON'T accept, a huge, overwhelming list of options quickly narrows to a manageable few!

Did you know? Small "experiments" -- a class, a volunteer role, a side project -- let you test a direction cheaply before committing. Gathering real evidence beats agonizing in your head or betting everything on a guess!

Did you know? Distinguishing REVERSIBLE decisions from truly PERMANENT ones helps you match your worry to the real stakes. Most choices can be adjusted later -- so they deserve less agonizing than we tend to give them!

Did you know? Comparing your path to a peer's is usually misleading, because their choices reflect their unique values, resources, and timeline. Someone else's journey is not a scoreboard for yours!

Did you know? "Follow your passion" is popular but incomplete advice. Career researchers note that satisfying paths usually combine interest with skill, real opportunity, and a lifestyle that fits you -- not passion alone!

Did you know? Writing a decision down -- listing options, pros, cons, and how each fits your values -- genuinely helps. It moves a swirling, anxious choice out of your head and into a clear comparison you can reason about calmly!

Did you know? It's healthy and normal for your goals to CHANGE as you grow. Revising a goal isn't failure -- it's responding intelligently to new experiences and to who you're becoming!

Did you know? Refusing to decide is itself a decision -- it usually lets time or other people choose for you. Making choices consciously, even imperfectly, keeps you in the author's seat of your own life!

Did you know? Ultimately, YOU get to define what a "successful" life means for you. A path that meets someone else's definition of success can still feel empty if it ignores your own values -- which is why clarifying those values comes first!

Keep laughing

That's **70 jokes** from NorthQuest. Made someone laugh? Try making up your own – the best jokes are the ones you tell.

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