

# WHAT IS PURPOSE AND DO YOU NEED ONE?



***“The purpose of life is to live it, to taste experience to the utmost, to reach out eagerly and without fear for newer and richer experience.”***

– Eleanor Roosevelt

Have you ever asked yourself why you're here or what you're meant to do? It's the age-old question: "What is my purpose in life?"

Imagine you are so sure about your purpose that you spring out of bed every morning, excited to start your day. Envision feeling satisfied and grateful every night for today's opportunities and the lessons you learned.

Most of us don't suddenly realize we've discovered our reason for being. Many of us go through life spending countless hours searching, dreaming, and wondering what our purpose is. Some will never find it. Some will search their entire life for their purpose. And some people will do the work and take powerful action to discover their talents, passions, and purpose.

Some people search for their purpose, throughout their whole lives. We spend a big part of our lives working. In fact, most people spend over 90,000 hours on the job throughout their life. With all that time working, it makes sense to want to be doing something that fulfills your purpose.

Look at these facts about the importance of having a purposeful work-life is:

- 9 out of 10 workers would take a pay cut if they had the opportunity to do purposeful work.
- Employees want their work to be meaningful.
- Those who have meaningful work emerge as leaders and top contributors.
- Turnover rates are lower when work is meaningful.
- Employees with meaningful work are happier, more productive, and harder workers, according to [BetterUp.com](http://BetterUp.com).

Finding your purpose is a lifelong pursuit. There are a few lucky ones who discover their purpose early on, but most people struggle over and over again trying to figure out what exactly you were meant to do on earth.

Knowing your purpose is the first step in creating a fulfilling career and life that fills you with passion and allows you to use your talents. But first you need to know what purpose is and why it's important. This guide will dig deeper into the topic and help you better understand why you need to have a purpose.

## What is Purpose

“Everyone has a purpose in life...a unique gift or special talent to give to others. And when we blend this unique talent with service to others, we experience the ecstasy and exultation of our own spirit, which is the ultimate goal of goals.” – Deepak Chopra

According to Dictionary.com, Purpose (noun) is the reason something is done, created, or exists. When you think of your purpose, most of the time you think of “Why” – why someone is working on something, why a task matters to a job, or why a job matters to someone. We want to know that the outcome is meaningful.

“It’s just built into our DNA,” says Jacinta Jimenez, a psychologist, and the head of coaching at the leadership development platform, BetterUp.com. “As human beings, we’re wired to connect, and part of purpose is serving others or serving the greater good, something outside of us that allows us to feel more connected.”

This need to connect and serve others so you can feel more connected motivates you to fulfill your own purpose. Your life purpose, then is the reason you get up in the morning, the motivating goal of your life so to speak.

Your purpose can be the guide you use when making decisions that influences your behavior, shapes your goals, and gives you a sense of direction or creates meaning in your life.

For some, purpose is connected their career, the meaningful, satisfying work they do. While for others, their purpose comes from their responsibilities to their family and friends. Others still look for meaning through spirituality or religious beliefs. Some people find their purpose in every aspect of their life.

Purpose is unique for each person; what you identify as your path will be different from someone else. It can shift and change throughout your life according to your changing priorities and the variations in your experiences.

When you reflect upon your life purpose you may find certain questions arising. These might include:

- Who am I?
- Where do I belong?
- When do I feel fulfilled?
- What is my purpose in life?

The purpose is our reason why. It’s the driving force behind our actions, our goals, and our fulfillment. Living a life of purpose, either through work, volunteerism, or some other way, helps us become fulfilled and happier.

## Why You Need A Purpose

“If the ladder is not leaning against the right wall, every step we take just gets us to the wrong place faster.” – Stephen Covey

You now know what purpose is. But do you need one? Can't you set goals and be fulfilled when you reach them? Why can't you live life as you are and ignore everything else?

Here are 5 reasons why you need a life purpose.

1. Life purpose is where you start living. It's the first step to living a more conscious life. You can be busy pursuing your goals every day, but when you don't have a clear purpose you might be chasing your current goals for years only to realize it's not what you wanted.

When you have a purpose, you know what you want and why you want it. You can set the right goals and make the plans to take the right steps each day, so you are creating your meaningful life. Remember this formula:

No purpose is usually associated to vague goals, with no plans and random actions, procrastination, or busy doing other's agendas while a Clear Purpose equals clear goals, with clear plans and specific, clear actions.

2. Your purpose gives you clarity on what is important. Knowing your purpose allows you to see what is important and what isn't. Most people get caught up in things that don't make a difference in their lives in the long run. Things like, earn more money, get a house, get a car, get a second car, get a bigger house.

When you have a purpose, you know immediately which goals are important and which aren't as related to their long-term life purpose. This allows you to cut through what's not important and take action on what does matter. When you know your life purpose, you can direct your focus on the things that are important.

3. Your life has meaning when you have a purpose. It becomes filled with direction, as opposed to wasting time in a job you don't find satisfying. When you're in a job you hate, you could feel like your around toxic people that are incompatible with you. When you're in a job that fits your purpose, you work with people who share you values. This lets you live a life that has meaning.

When you find your purpose, you begin transitioning to your ideal life. You identify your long-term plan to pursue that purpose. From there, you train to build your skills. You do what you love and begin fulfilling your goals.

4. When you follow your purpose, you are in a constant drive to keep going with passion. This drive fills you with energy and excitement every day to be doing what you are, creating and moving forward.

When you aren't living your purpose, your days may drag endlessly. Weekdays come and you go to work, only doing what's needed. There's no excitement about the job. You look forward to weekends to get here, only to repeat the cycle over again on Monday. The job is simply a means to an end.

5. You achieve success on your terms when you follow your purpose. Most people look at success as an end itself. But success is actually an effect of doing and completing what you love to do. That means having clear plans, goals, skills, talents that align with your purpose.

Instead of aiming for success as the end, identify what you genuinely care about, what your purpose is, and then put your energy into making it a reality? When you discover your true purpose you naturally devote your life to pursuing it because it fulfills you and you naturally get better at it because you devote time to learning, training, and acting on it.

There you have it. 5 reasons why you need to have a purpose in life. Having one keeps you excited about what you are doing, helps you stay focused on your goals and to take the action needed to achieve your purpose.

## **More Benefits of Discovering Life Purpose**

"The human race is a monotonous affair. Most people spend the greatest part of their time working in order to live, and what little freedom remains so fills them with fear that they seek out any and every means to be rid of it." - Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

Do you wake up each day dreading spending another day at a job you hate? Do you feel dissatisfied with your life? It might be because you haven't determined what your purpose is. It takes work to uncover what that purpose is, but it is within you.

Living a life that in alignment with your purpose allows you to go through your day happy, hopeful, and with an action plan. The trick is to determine your why. If your life is in a rut, it's time to discover your life purpose. The advantages of knowing your life purpose are far reaching.

- You have more fun when you know your purpose and live it every day. You're in a position to enjoy yourself.
- You have a greater passion for life. Since you are spending your day doing things that are important to you, you'll have more enthusiasm.

- Your future looks exciting to you. You have a high level of motivation that makes you unstoppable in reaching your goals when you have a clear purpose.
- You get the chance to be a part of something bigger than you. You can make a meaningful contribution to the world.

Discovering your purpose in life will change how you live forever. It adds meaning and focus to your every decision, action and is the motive behind all choices.

## **Reveal Your Purpose**

It's impossible to know your purpose without some level of self-reflection. To reveal your purpose, asking the right questions will help you get the results you seek. Listen to the answers to hear when you ask yourself these questions. The response might be very subtle and quiet, making it important to keep an open mind.

Answer these useful questions:

1. How would you spend your time if you only had one year to live? When we have a deadline, we are more likely to focus on the important stuff and let everything else go. Be aware of what comes to mind. These are the things worthy of consideration. Could you spend your life engaged in these interests?
2. How do you want to be remembered by others? Your children, friend and other family remember you? Consciously think about how you'd like others to remember you and put a plan together to live your life that way.
3. What did you love doing as a child? What did you spend hours doing as a child that you no longer do? As young children we aren't concerned about what others think and we're clear on what we like and don't like.

We do things because we like them until we become teenagers and social pressure with the need to impress others steers us away from what we love to do. Adulthood finds us concerned with the practicality of our choices.

4. What level of discomfort can you handle? Everything has an uncomfortable, boring, rough, or awful side at some point. Your life purpose will be no different. The creative field must deal with rejection 96% of the time.
5. What topics and activities make you lose track of time? What activity or conversations make you miss meals or forget what time it is? Make a list of the times you've been so focused you forget about everything else. Imagine this as your career or your purpose in life.

6. What have you always dreamed of doing but fear has kept you from doing it? Is it something you've fantasized about for a long time? Maybe you've wanted to write a screenplay, become a veterinarian, hike the Appalachian trail, or speak to others about changes. Why haven't you started working toward it? Is it because you're afraid to try something new or fear you'll fail?
7. How can you best help solve life's challenges or best serve the world? What can you contribute to outside yourself? Make a list of skills, interests, and talents you have that can benefit the world in a meaningful way.
8. What do you regret most in life? The opportunities you missed you regret the most can be a clue to your purpose. Is there a skill you wish you had learned or started learning years ago? What decisions would you change if you had the chance to have a do-over.
9. What career choice would you choose if you could go back in time to your 18-year old self? Is it too late now?
10. Who inspires you now? Think about the people that you respect and admire. What about them inspires you? Could you incorporate them into your own life in some way?
11. List your natural talents? What areas have you excelled at? Are complex ideas easy for you? Do you excel in the social skills? Can you write or tell a great story? Is your talent musical or artistic? Are you compassionate? You can learn to be good at anything but if you have the natural ability already, use it as part of your purpose. After 10 years of effort using your natural abilities instead of starting from a skill you have to learn can change how much progress you make.
12. If you had to teach others something, what would it be? It's more enjoyable to teach subjects you like. Choosing that one is a good candidate that it's your life purpose.
13. What things do you do that make you feel good? Create a list of everything that you do that makes you feel good about yourself.
14. What are people always asking you for help with? People ask advice from those we believe have some form of expertise greater than our own.
15. Imagine yourself at 80-years old. Imagine sitting on your front porch reflecting on your life. What memories do you want to have? What would you like to claim as your past? What do you want to have accomplished? What types of relationships would you have experienced? How can you make that happen now? Imagining yourself in the final years of your life gives you a good idea of how you want to have lived your life.

As you search for your purpose, digging deeper into your talents, skills, wants and desires is key. It's difficult to know what your purpose is if you don't know how you can use what you have.

## Online Resources To Find Your Purpose

If you still need help finding your purpose, there are many resources available online to help you dig deeper. Here are few of our favorites:

[16 Personalities](#) – This online test is based on the Myers-Briggs personality types. IT gives insights related to your type of personality that will help you see who you are and be able to have a happier and more fulfilled life.

[MAPP Career Test](#) – the Motivational Appraisal Personal Potential (MAPP) test has a variety of information to help you find your life's purpose and do what you love.

[Life Purpose Test](#) – this test helps to clarify your soul purpose. Gain insights about your heart's desire and who you are meant to be.

[How to Find Your Passion](#) – a short quiz to help you uncover your purpose in life.

[Who Are You Meant To Be](#) – this self-assessment quiz helps you discover what drives you and find ideas to guide your life in the direction it was meant to go.

## Do This Next

“As the struggle for survival has subsided, the question has emerged: survival for what? Ever more people have the means to live, but no meaning to live for.”- Viktor E. Frankl

Every human wants to live a fulfilling life, but for many knowing what our purpose, our reason why, eludes us. Before you identify your purpose, you need to understand why your purpose is important.

When there is purpose in your life you have a driving need to follow certain goals, to live a specific way and to now be wandering aimlessly each day without a specific direction. Purpose keeps you motivated to continue working on your goals, even when the task is difficult, or you face obstacles. It gives your life meaning, brings more joy into everything you do and gives a brighter outlook for your future.

People who have a purpose in life tend to enjoy life more than those who do not have a clear life-purpose. They know what they want and go after it. They have a clear idea of what they want from life and a definite plan for how to achieve a fulfilling and joyful life.

However, if you don't know what your purpose is, how do you find your life-purpose? There are several ways you can discover what your purpose is. The following suggestions can help you in your search:

- Ask yourself questions that require you to look deep into what you want.
- Meditate and listen to your heart's desires.
- Identify the things that make you lose track of time.
- Look for the patterns that help you discover what makes you genuinely happy.

Self-reflection and knowing your inner self are required in order to find your life purpose. Ask yourself the important, tough questions and listen to the answers.

Take time to find your life-purpose. It takes work and can be eye-opening. However, when you do find your purpose you become focused on living your life solely to meet that purpose.

Once you have a good idea of life purpose, the next step is to determine how to incorporate the knowledge into your life. Wishes and ideas are the easy part; it's the implementation that is challenging.