

Discovering Your Life Purpose

“Resolve to be thyself; and know that he who finds himself, loses his misery.” Matthew Arnold

What is a Life Purpose?

“The purpose of life is a life of purpose.” Robert Byrne

When you hear the term “life purpose,” you probably envision people who are following a higher calling, like priests, nuns, missionaries, doctors and scientists. In other words, people who are doing important work in the world.

People like this are certainly living a purpose, but you may be surprised to learn that a life purpose doesn't have to be so magnanimous either. In fact, throughout the pages of this e-book, I'm going to demonstrate that purposeful living can take virtually limitless forms – most of which you've probably never considered before.

The dictionary defines purpose as:

- 1) an object or result aimed at : INTENTION
- 2) RESOLUTION, DETERMINATION

What does this tell us? A “purpose” can be as simple as an intention or a resolution. So, a “life purpose” is really nothing more than a commitment or resolve to live in a certain way and achieve specific objectives. If that sounds a bit confusing, don't worry. We're going to clear it up in a hurry.

For now, just know that you DON'T have to have a deep inner “calling” in order to have a life purpose. You don't have to give away your worldly possessions and become a missionary in order to make a positive difference in the world.

In fact, you may be surprised to discover that realizing and living your life purpose will be a comfortable and enjoyable process. Bit by bit, you'll create life circumstances that are totally suited to who you are, your likes and dislikes, natural talents, and much more.

It's the kind of inner journey that changes everything – from emptiness to satisfaction, from boredom to passion, from aimlessness to unbridled joy and beyond!

Do you have trouble believing that's possible for you? Do you see your current circumstances as brick walls that you can't break through? Do you worry that you're stuck forever exactly where you are?

If so, I ask you to set aside any feelings of doubt and skepticism for now. Be willing to believe that your life DOES have meaning, and be open to the insights that are about to follow.

Where Does a Life Purpose Come From?

One of the reasons people often doubt that they have a life purpose is because they've been led to believe that a life purpose is akin to those "spiritual callings" mentioned earlier. If they don't feel an inner calling, they decide that there probably isn't a specific purpose for their life – or worse, that their life has no meaning at all.

If you ask enough people, you'll probably find that there are two basic schools of thought regarding life purpose:

- 1) Those who believe that a life purpose is something we are born with, that it is planted into our souls before we are born and we **MUST** achieve it. It's our destiny, so to speak, and we have no choice in the matter.

- 2) Those who believe that fate and destiny don't exist and we have the power (or "free will") to choose our life purpose and do anything we want with our lives.

Which group do you belong to? Fate and destiny, or free will? There are no right or wrong answers to this question; only what you feel in your heart is the right answer for you.

If you're still not sure, I'd like to propose a workable compromise for you. What if a life purpose is something you are born with, but you also have full control over how and when you achieve it? What if, with a little introspection and planning, you could move naturally and easily toward your life purpose without feeling like you "have" to do specific things?

Personally, I do believe that each of us has a pre-destined life purpose – **BUT** it is something that comes very naturally to us. It's not something that's difficult, unpleasant or burdensome. A life purpose, in my opinion, is realized by getting to know your authentic self, exploring your natural talents and interests, and choosing the best possible medium to share them with the world.

We'll be covering those concepts further shortly, but first, take a moment to decide how you feel about your own life. Do you believe you have a purpose, or that you can choose one?

How Do You Know If You Have a Life Purpose?

When it comes to life purpose, people usually find themselves in one of three places:

- 1) They don't worry about whether they have an official purpose or not; they simply live their lives doing the things they feel drawn to.
- 2) They know exactly what their purpose is, and they joyfully work at it each day.
- 3) They believe they have a purpose but have no idea what it may be or how to find out.

Which group do you fall into? Members of the first group probably would not be reading this book, and members of the second group would probably be too busy living their purpose to read about it.

The majority of people who read this book probably fall into group #3. If you're not sure if you do, consider the questions below:

- Have you ever felt like you were supposed to be doing more with your life?
- Have you ever yearned to use your natural talents to contribute to the world?
- Have you ever felt like your current or previous jobs didn't use your talents fully?
- Do you ever feel like you are wasting time on things that aren't important to you?
- Do you desire to serve others in a bigger way but don't know how?
- Has your daily routine become predictable and boring?
- Do you ever wonder if "this is it"?
- Do you yearn for greater meaning in your work and other activities?

If you answered yes to most of those questions, you're probably ready to discover greater meaning and purpose in your own life – whether you see it as awakening a pre-destined purpose or choosing one you want.

Life Purpose vs. Living Purposefully

“It is never too late to be what you might have been.” George Eliot

There are many people who feel intimidated by or resistant to the concept of a life calling. Maybe you do too. Do you worry that having a life purpose means surrendering to a higher power and giving up control of how you spend your time? Do you worry that your life purpose will end up being something unpleasant or taxing? What if your life purpose turns out to be draining or boring? What if it demands more than you are willing or able to give in time, energy and commitment?

These types of fears are completely groundless. If you could poll everyone on the planet who believes they are living their true life purpose, I bet they would all say the same thing: “I’m so HAPPY!”

Everyone who dares to live their life purpose describes it along the lines of “coming home” or “doing what I was born to do.” They do what matters most to them, they enjoy it fully, and it fits perfectly with the rest of their lives.

That’s not to say that a few sacrifices won’t be necessary at times, but I think you’ll find that they are not overly painful or difficult. In fact, they may be downright freeing once you let go of your fear and doubt.

Please don’t worry that living your purpose means you have to give up control of your life. You are **always** in control of your own life, purpose or no purpose!

In fact, I want to encourage you to adopt a new outlook for your life – that of “living with purpose” rather than “having a purpose”.

Living purposefully means CHOOSING your purpose. Choosing how you spend your time. Choosing how you will use your natural talents to create more joy and meaning for yourself and others.

Even if you believe that your life purpose is pre-destined, this new outlook can still work for you because you’ll **automatically** choose the path that has already been laid out before you.

Do You Really Need a Purpose?

If you are one of those people mentioned earlier who doesn’t worry about having a life purpose, you may wonder what all the fuss is about. Is a life purpose even necessary?

Some people would say that everyone has a purpose whether they know it or not. But is it a bad thing to be unaware of a higher calling in life? What if you feel content with your life as it is right now? Do you have to conceive some lofty purpose in order to feel content and make a positive difference in the world?

No. You don't need to have a specific purpose in life – unless you feel like something is missing. If you are content with your life as it is, you are doing something right. Either you're already living your purpose or you simply don't feel the need for one. And there's not a thing wrong with that.

However, since you are reading this book it is possible that you are seeking something – even if you wouldn't classify it as an actual “calling”. Maybe you simply crave more passion, meaning, fun, direction or any number of other qualities. And a life purpose (or living purposefully) can definitely provide those things and more.

Benefits of Living Purposefully

In fact, you may be surprised to discover just how rewarding a purposeful life can be!

Here are just a few of the benefits:

- Greater focus in your daily activities – rather than feeling adrift.
- Increased discipline when it comes to productivity and achievement.
- Passion and motivation! When was the last time you felt excited about your day?
- Personal empowerment – being in control of your own life.
- Meaning and fulfillment. Knowing that your life (and everything you do) matters.
- Energy and vitality! Purposeful living energizes your mind, body and spirit.
- Peace and contentment. Knowing you are exactly where you need to be.

I could go on and on, but these are probably the most notable benefits of living purposefully. If you've never felt strengthened, empowered or fulfilled by your activities before, you have definitely not discovered your purpose yet (or chosen one that resonates with you). Once you do, every moment of your life takes on greater meaning and passion – rather than seeming pointless and boring.