

## Purpose *FULL* Living Discovery

Why do you get up in the morning?” A simple, yet complicated question that many of us struggle to answer, as we try to understand our life’s purpose – and its impact on our work and careers.

Trust me, purpose is a VERB, let’s discover why...

***“The two most important days in your life are the day you are born and ...the day you find out why” — Mark Twain***

Imagine walking along a bustling street, surrounded by a sea of people on their way to work. The faces around you reflect a mix of boredom, resignation, stress, and a sense of being checked out. They’re caught in a rhythm of routine, just going through the motions. But then, a sudden realization hits—you’re not just a spectator. You are one of them. Are you living, or merely surviving?

How many people do you know who are truly living full lives? If you’re like me, that number is likely small—just a handful.

You may have started your life and career with high hopes and an eagerness for what the future would hold. But now, it's painfully clear that boredom has set in, fulfillment feels out of reach, and the spark, the excitement that once motivated you has waned.

Here’s the truth: you don’t have to settle for being a passenger in your own life. I challenge you to be an intentional participant, a pilot of your journey toward greater awareness and fulfillment. This guide is your compass, designed to help you break free from feeling stuck and step confidently into the life and career of your dreams.

The key to this transformation? Understanding yourself and embracing the process. By doing so, you'll move from merely surviving to living with purpose, leading a life where every action aligns with your true potential. This is your journey, and it's time to take the wheel.

***The Glory of God is Man (Persons) Fully Alive***

I made the mistake of leaving education after serving for over 25 years without working with a coach/counselor. This mistake propelled me to gain the needed skills to guide people through the process. I felt called out of education and “thought” I wanted to work in corporate America. After a long, arduous process of applying to jobs I quickly learned the process had drastically changed from the 1990’s. I didn’t know about keywords,

algorithms, applicant tracking systems, or the importance of an updated resume customized to the employer.

After working in “corporate” America for four years I quickly realized that my real “calling” had always been in education, counseling, coaching, and the personal development space. I felt unfulfilled, lacked motivation, and even struggled with depression. It was hard to get out of bed in the morning. While corporate America can be a great place for many it just didn’t fit my personality and values. It didn’t meet my strong desire to connect, contribute, and grow to help other people grow.

***“Work is a rubber ball. If you drop it, it will bounce back. The other four balls-- family, health, friends, integrity-- are made of glass. If you drop one of these, it will be irrevocably scuffed, nicked, perhaps even shattered” – Gary Keller***

I hope my story and work on purpose will resonate with you and offer valuable lessons from my experiences. After all, our greatest growth often comes from our failures — **Fail Forward. Failure is Fertilizer.** It nourishes growth in unexpected ways.

Through my journey, I've gained profound insights and now view the world through a fresh lens. My mission is to inspire and empower others not just to survive, but to thrive — with passion, resilience, compassion, and humor. Together, we can become the best versions of ourselves.

***“Working hard for something we don’t care about is called stress; working hard for something we love is called passion” – Simon Sinek***

Reflecting on why we do what we do can sometimes feel intimidating or uncomfortable. We might think, *“I’m no Mother Teresa or Martin Luther King with a grand sense of purpose.”* And that's okay. You're not expected to have a world-changing mission. What matters is understanding your own purpose — whether big or small — and embracing it. **Own it. Embody it. Live it.**

Purpose doesn't need to be an existential crisis. Instead, it can serve as a steady source of guidance and motivation, helping you navigate life's challenges and find meaning in your everyday experiences.

Purpose is a very **personal** thing – it’s why you do the things you do, whether at work, home or in your community. It’s the ultimate driving motivator for you. Purpose provides clarity, meaning, and direction and is your constant around everything you have done and will do. This doesn’t mean that your Purpose is the same throughout life; a common

misconception about Purpose is that it is just one definitive thing. It isn't. Purpose can take many different forms – some people may be finding their Purpose for the first time while others may be re-Purposing.

One of the most sacred things that we can offer another human being besides love is our work. It is an offering of our energy, our time, our inspiration, our strengths, and ultimately our desire to take ACTION. It is through our labor — which is really our LOVE in ACTION — that we share our greatest gifts with one another and to God.

I've lived my entire life desiring to be in SERVICE of something bigger. The most life-changing lesson I have learned (and relearned) is that my most impactful contributions happen when I'm IN PURPOSE. Purpose is the unique GIFT that you bring to the world.

Knowing your purpose in life brings greater focus, confidence, contentment and meaning to life. Becoming a more authentic you improve your performance and well-being. You're well positioned to make a very positive difference for others when you start with yourself.

***"Purpose is the ultimate source of momentum - it's about feeling that you're adding value. Purpose is the most powerful way we can prevent languishing, unlock our potential, and maintain peak performance" —Adam Grant, Wharton***

Simon Sinek is one of my favorite authors and speakers. Obviously, it is hard to stop with one quote because he speaks with such passion and wisdom. He became a sensation after he presented a [TedTalk](#) on knowing your why. In fact, it is the third most watched TED Talk of all time. His book is entitled, *Start with Why – How Great Leaders Inspire Everyone to Take Action*. His work resonates with me because it gets to the heart of why we do the things we do.

He teaches that starting with why is the foundation to discovering your life's best work. This is the purpose or call that drives you – it's a calling and mission. I love his analogy about changing everything in your home – paint color, doors, windows, siding, etc. but you cannot change your foundation. Why is your "foundation" and leads you to your life's mission, your purpose, and your gift to the world. We build upon and grow from our foundation – it strengthens you.

***"When we help ourselves, we find moments of happiness. When we help others, we find lasting fulfillment" —Simon Sinek***

Simon has written a new book entitled, *Find your Why – a Practical Guide for Discovering Purpose for You and Your team*. It picks up where *Start With Why* left off. Read Simon in his own words:

“The concept of WHY is a deeply personal journey born out of pain. I discovered the idea at a time when I had lost any passion for my work. The advice people gave me wasn’t helpful either: “Do what you love,” “Find your bliss,” “Be passionate.” All accurate—but totally un-actionable. I agreed with all the advice in theory, but I didn’t know what to change. I didn’t know what to do differently on Monday. And that’s the reason the WHY has been and continues to be such a profound force in my life.

Not only did discovering my WHY renew my passion, it gave me a filter to make better decisions. It offered me a new lens through which I would see the world differently. And it was through this lens—to inspire people to do what inspires them so that together each of us can change our world—that I started preaching the concept of WHY and the Golden Circle. And people listened. In fact, people did more than listen, they joined me in preaching this message, sharing the vision. And our movement was born.” (Sinek, September, 2017).

Sinek says we may know our what and our how but knowing our why gives our life meaning and purpose. For example, Zappos mission statement is “to live and deliver wow.” They just don’t sell shoes – their purpose is creating the very best customer service through a company culture that leaves you *wowed*.

Too many of us define our lives by what we do for a living rather than accepting what we do for a living as just a part of an overall purpose that guides our lives — or, as Simon Sinek would call it, a *why*.

All businesses, organizations, and careers operate on three levels: (1) what we do, (2) how we do it, and (3) why we do it. We’re all acquainted with what we do—the products we sell, the services we offer, the jobs we do. A few of us know how we do it—the things we think differentiate us or make us unique compared to the rest of the crowd, or our competition. But only a handful of us can clearly articulate why we do what we do.

Your *why* is what makes you unique — it’s your purpose, the driving force that inspires you to take action. It’s also what motivates others to support your ideas, follow your lead, or invest in your products. A clear *why statement* is the most powerful way to express your purpose — not only to others but also as a reminder to yourself of what truly drives you.

### **Opposite of Depression = Purpose**

35% of waking hours are spent at work yet we spend so little time considering work that is energizing. Search for daily meaning as well as daily bread, believing we MATTER can make

a meaningful impact. PURPOSE(FULL) life rather than a Monday through Friday sort of dying!

***“Death is not the greatest loss in life. The greatest loss is what dies inside us while we live” —Norman Cousins***

In a discussion of purpose and after living in unimaginable conditions, Viktor Frankl, author of *Man’s Search for Meaning*, wrote, “Life is never made unbearable by circumstances, but only by lack of meaning and purpose.” People need their lives and effort – and their work – to matter.

Frankl was a Jewish psychiatrist and neurologist who was arrested and sent to a series of concentration camps during World War II, including Auschwitz and Dachau. During his time in the camps, he witnessed and experienced unimaginable suffering and brutality, including the loss of his pregnant wife, parents, and brother.

Despite these traumatic experiences, Frankl was able to find meaning and purpose in his life, which he later wrote about in his influential book. He believed that even in the most difficult and challenging circumstances, we still have the power to choose our attitudes and responses, and that this ability to choose is what gives our lives meaning.

Frankl believed that the DESIRE for meaning is a fundamental human need and that it’s possible to find purpose even amidst suffering and adversity. He poignantly wrote,

***“Everything can be taken from a man but one thing: the last of the human freedoms — to choose one’s attitude in any given set of circumstances, to choose one’s own way.” —Victor Frankl***

**Frankl proposed a powerful formula: DESPAIR = SUFFERING – MEANING. (Take a moment to reflect on this.)**

His harrowing experiences in the Holocaust, coupled with his insights on the search for meaning, have left a lasting impact on both psychology and philosophy. Frankl's work continues to inspire people globally, encouraging them to discover meaning and purpose in their lives, even in the face of tremendous challenges.

Despite enduring unimaginable conditions, Frankl observed that those who survived were often those who could find meaning in their suffering. As he famously articulated, “Everything can be taken from a man but one thing: the last of the human freedoms—to choose one's attitude in any given set of circumstances, to choose one's own way.”

***“I cannot believe that the purpose of life is to be happy. I think the purpose of life is to be useful, to be responsible, to be compassionate. It is, above all, to matter, to count, to stand for something, to have made some difference that you lived at all.” – Gary Keller***

One of my favorite stories about purpose comes from when John F. Kennedy visited the NASA space center. He saw a janitor carrying a broom and walked over to ask him what he was doing. The janitor replied, ‘Mr. President, I’m helping my team put a man on the moon.’”

Purpose is that deep sense that we are part of something bigger than ourselves. It’s the belief that we are needed, that we have something valuable to contribute to the world.

You can almost feel the pride in the janitor’s response. On paper, he may have been at the bottom of the organizational chart for America’s space program. Yet, in that moment, he wasn’t just a janitor—he was an essential part of a mission to reach the stars,

In another parable, three bricklayers were working on the same construction site, and a passerby asked each of them what they were doing.

The first bricklayer responded, "I’m laying bricks." The second bricklayer said, "I’m building a wall." The third bricklayer smiled and replied, "I’m building a cathedral, a place where people can come to worship."

While the first two were focused on the task at hand—exchanging their time for money—the third saw their work through the lens of purpose. They understood that the bricks, while seemingly small and insignificant on their own, were part of something grander: a sanctuary that would inspire and serve countless others for generations to come.

***“A rock pile ceases to be a rock pile the moment a single man contemplates it, bearing within him the image of a cathedral.”  
– Antoine de Saint-Exupery, [The Little Prince](#)***

## **Ikigai**

Ikigai is a Japanese concept that combines the words "iki" (life) and "gai" (value or worth). It loosely translates to "reason for being" or “waking up to joy.” The idea is that your Ikigai is the convergence of the following elements, a central point that provides a sense of fulfillment, happiness, and balance in life.

- What you love (your passion)
- What you are good at (your vocation)

- What the world needs (your mission)
- What you can be paid for (your profession)

It is no coincidence that in the Okinawa culture, which belongs to the cultures where people live the longest, everyone knows their Ikigai. National Geographic reporter Dan Buettner (TEDX talk, How to Live to be 100+) identified five communities across the world where people live longer and are healthier than the average. These Blue Zones® have common factors, one of them being that the inhabitants have a strong sense of purpose!

Okinawa was a place of extreme suffering and death during World War II. Yet, many decades later there are more people over the age of 100 than any other place on earth. They are replete with joy, serenity, community, and activity. They understand the value of kindness and living in the moment even after devastation!

### “Know Thyself”

The two words spoken by Socrates that have been immortalized are "*Know thyself*." This phrase encapsulates Socrates' emphasis on self-awareness and introspection as essential for personal growth and understanding. It begins with being *curious* about yourself and your desires.

| ***“We are what we repeatedly do.” —Aristotle***

When you know who you inherently are, what you like and don't like, and your strengths and weaknesses, you start to understand where it is you want to go in life and how best to get there. You learn how to grow and the way you want to grow.

### Discover your Purpose

**Vita: Latin for “Life” | Vital** - Absolutely needed; crucial for success or survival.

The discovery of how you can live a **“PURPOSE\_FULL”** life you love is hidden in the **stories** you tell about your experiences. It's who you naturally become when you are at your best—**fully engaged and energized. Clues to your purpose often emerge from moments of joy, energy, and fulfillment; the things that get you out of bed in the morning.**

- ◆ **Values** – Guiding principles and beliefs that are central to who you are. Act as a compass (GPS), guiding you to make decisions and prioritize actions that align with what matters most.
- ◆ **Interests** - Subjects, activities, and causes that naturally draw your attention, spark curiosity and drive engagement.
- ◆ **Talents** (Strengths)– Inherent GIFTS—skills you perform with ease. Investment x Time = transforms them into strengths, empowering you to live with greater clarity and intention Signs of talents: yearnings, rapid learning, fulfillment, flow, excellence (comes naturally).

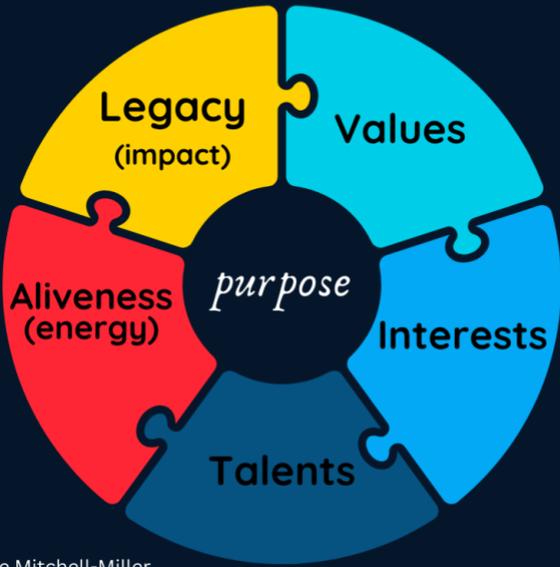
- ◆ **Aliveness (Energy)**– **driving force** found in the people, activities, and environments that energize and sustain your passion. When fueled by purpose, this energy ignites enthusiasm and motivation, propelling you toward fulfillment.
- ◆ **LEGACY (Impact)** - The contribution you strive to make in others’ lives and the world—how you want to be remembered. When your actions are aligned with your purpose, you contribute to causes and projects that create lasting change.

**Habits : Rituals – the daily habits and intentions that ground you.** It's estimated that nearly half (around 45%) of our daily actions are performed instinctively, driven by ingrained habits. When aligned with our purpose, these consistent actions can drive significant progress towards purpose. Simply stated, we are what we repeatedly do. Plato said it best: *“Character is simply a habit, long continued.”*

**Place** – Purpose can also be discovered or cultivated more fully in specific environments or locations. In two words, **GROW + GIVE.**

## VITAL Purpose Discovery

**Vita-“life” (latin):** Driving force that infuses life with meaning, guides decisions, and motivates you to impact the world.



- **VALUES**  
 Deeply held beliefs that are central to who you are. Act as a compass (GPS), guiding you to make decisions and prioritize actions that align with what matters most.
- **INTERESTS**  
 Subjects, activities, and causes that naturally draw your attention; spark curiosity and drive engagement.
- **TALENTS**  
 Inherent GIFTS—skills you perform with ease. Investment x Time transforms them into strengths, empowering you to live with greater clarity and intention.
- **ALIVENESS (ENERGY)**  
 Enduring driving force found in activities, people, and environments that energize and sustain your passion. What you love.
- **LEGACY (IMPACT)**  
 The contribution you strive to make in others’ lives and the world—how you want to be remembered.

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### Developing your WHY Statement

Your why statement should be:

- Simple and clear
- Actionable
- Focused on how you’ll contribute to others, and
- Expressed in affirmative language that resonates with you

Your why statement should be able to encapsulate all the qualities we just mentioned—and it should be able to do so in one sentence.

### Examples of Why Statements:

Example #1. Simon Sinek's why statement "To inspire people to do the things that inspire them so that, together, we can change our world."

The *contribution* portion—to inspire people—is what ties it all together, bringing focus and direction to the *impact* he wants to make on the world. Simon's *contribution* is essentially what he does (to make his why a reality).

**Example #2:** "To empower and educate people everywhere so that they can improve their lives and achieve their goals."

**My WHY:** Awaken persons to greater clarity, purpose, and wellbeing inspiring a meaningful contribution to this one wild and precious life.

## Connecting the Dots Through the Story of Your Life

Discovering your purpose involves recognizing patterns and meaning in your life's experiences, essentially "connecting the dots" of your story to reveal a larger narrative and understanding of to reveal a deeper meaning.

"Connecting the dots" means recognizing recurring themes, values, and strengths that emerge from your experiences.

**The discovery of how you can live a purposeful life you love is found hidden in the STORIES you tell about your life.** It's who you cannot help bringing when you are at your best – in your flow.

*"Words may inspire, but only ACTION creates change.*

*Most of us live our lives by accident - we live life as it happens.*

### Stories of Joy

- What activities bring you **the most joy, meaning, and energy (deeply alive)?**

### Alignment with Your Authentic Self

- When do you feel most aligned with your true self?

### Influences and Role Models

- Who is your **personal hero**, and what values or traits of theirs inspire you?

## Relationships & Connection

- What kind of relationships or connections **nurture your soul** and inspire you?

## Core Values

- List **five values** you hold most dear.

## Natural Talents & Passions

- Reflect on your **childhood passions and natural talents**.
- What do you consider your **greatest strength** or superpower? Kryptonite?

## Curiosities, Interests & Flow

- What topics or activities make you feel **deeply curious and excited**?
- When do you feel most in **flow**, where time passes effortlessly?

## Legacy & Impact

- What is one thing you feel **called to create, share, or contribute** to the world?
- What do you want to be remembered for?

## Reflection from Others

- In what areas do others **seek your advice or guidance**?
- Consider asking close friends or coworkers: **“What do you think I was born to do?”**

## The Role of Place in Purpose

- Is there an **organization, environment, or community** that you feel drawn to?
- Think about a time when you felt a **sense of belonging**. What made it feel right for you?

## 7 days of Free Journaling on Purpose

**VALUES:** When did I feel most aligned with my core values?

**TALENTS:** What was I good at (strengths/skills)?

**ENERGIZERS:** What did I love doing (what energized you)? What depleted me?

**IMPACT:** What is my unique contribution or legacy (fingerprint)?

**RITUALS:** How are my habits helping or hindering a more intentional life?

***“Words may inspire, but only ACTION creates change. Most of us live our lives by accident—we live life as it happens. Fulfillment comes when we live our lives on purpose.” —Simon Sinek***

## The Why Statement Format

Reflect on your answers for a few days bringing intentional attention to the answers/themes. You will probably have several first drafts of living aspirations. As you grow, mature, and have new life experiences, your sense of purpose will change.

### Simple format to use as we draft our why statement:

To \_\_\_\_\_ so that \_\_\_\_\_.

The first blank represents your **contribution** — the contribution you make to others through your why. And the second blank represents the **impact** of your contribution.

**Contribution:** action/verb , storyteller's superpowers!

**Impact:** What your storyteller believes all people deserve to feel or experience. It's not an action – it's something they hope will happen.

### | **How do you improve the moment?**

## The Life-Changing Impact of Purpose on Health and Well-Being

Purpose is more than a motivating force—it is the cornerstone of mental fitness. Individuals with a strong sense of purpose not only experience emotional and cognitive resilience but also enjoy significant health benefits. For instance, those with a high sense of purpose have a 15% increased likelihood of engaging in frequent physical activity and a 13% reduced risk of sleep problems. Moreover, purpose-driven individuals report higher positive affect and optimism, along with a 43% reduced risk of depression. These statistics underscore how purpose can shape a healthier, more fulfilling life.

Mental fitness—the ability to cope with life's challenges—relies heavily on purpose. It boosts resilience, emotional regulation, and cognitive flexibility by giving individuals a "why" that keeps them grounded in the face of adversity. Research from the *Journal of Positive Psychology* shows that people with purpose experience greater life satisfaction and are more engaged in their relationships and communities.

Purpose shifts focus away from fleeting distractions, aligning actions with core values. This alignment not only enhances decision-making but also prioritizes well-being, reducing uncertainty and promoting a balanced, healthier life.

**Shield Against Depression:** Depression often leaves individuals feeling stuck and hopeless, but purpose offers a powerful shift in perspective. By reframing setbacks as growth opportunities, purpose cultivates hope and perseverance. Studies reveal that individuals who live with a sense of purpose experience significantly fewer depressive symptoms and greater psychological well-being.

Loneliness is a growing epidemic, but purpose creates meaningful social connections. When people pursue causes or work aligned with their values, they develop deeper relationships and a stronger sense of belonging. Purpose-driven individuals often seek out supportive communities where shared goals foster connection and mutual support. These relationships are not just social—they are transformative.

In a world increasingly marked by disconnection, purpose is more than a concept; it's a life-changing force that improves mental health, builds resilience, and leads to a richer, more fulfilling existence.

## Other Great Videos and Resources on Purpose and Self-Awareness

### Assessments

[Stand Out](#) – shows your greatest sources of strength and contribution. (Marcus Buckingham).

[SparkType](#) - essential nature of work that fills you with meaning and lets you feel fully expressed and alive with purpose by Jonathan Fields.

[16 personalities](#) – in order to know yourself better and articulate your value.

[Via Character Strengths Survey](#) – helps individuals identify the traits that they naturally excel in, such as kindness, creativity, perseverance, and gratitude, which are linked to leading fulfilling and meaningful lives. It is based on positive psychology and aims to help people recognize and develop their strengths to boost their well-being, resilience, and overall happiness.

[What is your Driving Force](#) - created by Tony Robbins, this quick quiz helps you discover your top human need—the invisible force that influences every thought, behavior, and action. While everyone shares the same six fundamental human needs, each person prioritizes them differently and has unique beliefs about how to fulfill those needs

### Videos

[The Origin of the Why](#) – in 5 minutes

[Trombone Player Needed](#) by Marcus Buckingham

[Netflix – I Am Not Your Guru](#) with Tony Robbins

[Steve Jobs Commencement Speech](#)

[Simon Sinek](#) – Start with Why. Third most listened to podcast of all time.

*"We imagine a world in which the vast majority of people wake up every day inspired, feel safe wherever they are and end the day fulfilled by the work they do." –Simon Sinek*

**This is your superpower! This is you experiencing BEING ... *fully alive*.**