

## Living On Purpose

“The man without purpose is like a ship without a rudder—a waif, a nothing, a no man.”  
Thomas Carlyle

The Purpose Driven Life, What on Earth Am I Here For? by Rick Warren, has been on the best seller lists for several months now. Many people are asking the question “What am I here for? What is my unique contribution to the world? The aftermath of 911 made many people reevaluate their purpose in life. Books abound on the subject.

The popularity of such a book is not surprising. Studies have shown that we all need a purpose because without a purpose, while our lives may be very productive, i.e. accumulating the trappings of success: big house, new car, toys etc, people are learning that things do not buy happiness or even a sense of satisfaction. Far too often people ask, why? Each one of us has a unique role to fulfill during the short time we are on this earth. Discovering what our specific, unique contribution is, will help us to live a more focused, value driven life. Knowledge of our life purpose provides us with ultimate decision tool: “Does this action support or detract from my purpose?”

While everyone has a purpose, and some people have a deep sense of purpose, they may not know how to verbalize it. Once a purpose can be stated, it becomes easier to be intentional about living on purpose. Without knowing purpose it is difficult to set goals that contribute to our journey. It is our purpose that gives relevance to our goals.

One way to look at purpose is PURPOSE=Why; GOAL=What, Action= How. In Dare To Win, by Jack Canfield and Mark Victor Hansen, goals are great, but without supporting a purpose they can be indiscriminate and undirected. Our purpose in life is the intended direction, the journey upon which we are embarked. Our life purpose is overarching and is applicable to all life areas, such as: career, family, spiritual development, relationships etc.

While many books have been written on living on purpose, I find the Canfield and Hanson simple formula to be most useful. First, Align your purpose with your natural abilities. We have all been gifted with specific talents. When we capitalize on them life is more at ease and simpler. Recognize those gifts and talents and use them. Secondly, be determined; develop a resolve to do what it takes. Train yourself to be focused on what you want to achieve and stay the course. Disregard those who tell you it cannot be done. Last, but not least, maintain a humble attitude

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