

Dream Ingredient #5: Finding Your Purpose

I am a firm believer that we all have greatness within us. I believe that we each have within ourselves unwritten books, un-started businesses, brilliant ideas, great inventions, charitable ideas, and untapped energies. But sometimes we have a hard time knowing exactly what our purpose is. We may fill many roles—husband or wife, father or mother, school board member, coach, employee, or community advocate. How do we know which roles will give us the greatest joy and satisfaction? First and foremost, most of us would agree that investing in loving and fulfilling relationships with family and friends is most important. It is a critical part of emotional health and well-being. Beyond this fundamental basis, however, what is it that you live for? What is your purpose and passion in life? Where do your interests and gifts and talents lie? What is your mission in life?

Dare to dream big. Have a purpose that will make getting up in the morning a pleasant task. Know that you are going to become what you want and get what you dream. Don't create a lifeless or unexciting purpose. Many people already know exactly what their purpose is. If you don't know, now is the time to find out. Great persuaders have tapped into and are using their purpose. Understand that for many, the self-discovery process is like sculpting. All you see at first is a big rock and you're not sure what masterpiece lies inside. You know something is there, but you don't yet know how you'll get it out.

To help channel your thoughts on this topic, I've created some questions and exercises. They are intended to be thought-provoking and to stimulate new ideas toward finding out exactly what your purpose is. Give these questions serious thought and meditation. The answers might come right away or they might take days, weeks, or even months to reveal themselves. Stick to it, however, and the answers will eventually come:

(1) You are ninety-five years old and have lived a great life. You have accomplished everything you wanted, more than you ever expected. How will you be remembered?

Purpose Question #1: What is your eulogy going to say? Take the time to write your eulogy.

(2) Imagine finding a lamp on a deserted beach. You rub it, and a genie magically appears, offering you a single wish. There is one condition, however: your wish must improve the world. How can you make the world a better place?

Purpose Question #2: What is your one wish? How are you going to make the world a better place?

(3) There are many things you have wanted to try in your life. Fears of failure and criticism, however, always seem to have prevented you from following through. The nagging questions, "What if I fail?" and "What will others think?" have always stopped you in your tracks.

Purpose Question #3: If you knew you would succeed—if you knew you could not fail—what would you do if you were guaranteed success?

(4) You get a phone call from an attorney informing you that a long-lost uncle has left you ten million dollars. You will never have to work another day in your life. What will you do with your time? What will you do with your life?

Purpose Question #4: What would you do with your newfound financial resources and free time?