

5 Steps To Finding Your Purpose In Life



Introduction

Discovering your life's purpose and finding your calling is becoming more prevalent in today's society. As the idea of personal development becomes more popular, the idea of maintaining the status quo continues to decline. This seems to coincide with the increasing number of people who are experiencing burn out and are in search of a life that inspires growth, feels better and has a positive impact on the world.

Unfortunately, too many people get caught up in the belief that their true calling is going to result in widespread recognition and a sizeable fortune. While this may end up proving true for some people, for the majority of us it isn't required or guaranteed. Don't be fooled into thinking that widespread recognition and fame are needed to fulfill your true calling.

The Japanese call finding your true calling, *Ikigai* and it is derived from the intersection of what you love, what you are good at, what you can get paid for, and what the world needs. When you are able to find this *ikigai*, you will gain significant benefits both for yourself and the world in general. Just imagine what the world would look like if we were all living at the intersection of passion, vocation, profession, and mission.

As sophisticated and intelligent beings, we have many desires and needs that drive our behavior. One of the most powerful of these that often gets ignored is the desire to find deep fulfillment in our lives. To know that what we are doing matters and has a positive impact on those around us and on society.

Today's challenge is that most of us haven't had the chance to hear, let alone listen and respond to our true purpose because our lives don't give us the context for that to happen. We tend focus on what we should do rather than taking the time to discover what we were born to do. Fortunately, there are things that anyone can do to help them find their true calling.

1. Look Within

If you want to find your true calling, then you have to start by looking within yourself. Too many of us are afraid of spending time alone without distractions. This is usually because we have an underlying feeling of fear that lingers beneath the surface of our everyday lives. Deep down we understand that if we shut out the world and focus on ourselves that we will have to face our demons and confront the traumas, issues, and emotions that we've locked up inside for so long.

We tend to lock pain away as a means of survival when we don't have the proper tools and support available to us. It is an adaptive reaction and is nothing that you should be ashamed of or feel guilty about. However, there will come a time when you will have to journey within yourself. When we look inwards, we have to begin to wade through the mess of our internal world. However, with enough time, self-love, and perseverance, we will emerge stronger and more empowered.

2. Start Journaling

An easy way to get started in finding your life's purpose is to start journaling. When you place your thoughts on paper, you allow yourself to process everything that has been backlogged, empty your mind, and bring clarity to how you are experiencing your life.

The great thing about a regular journaling practice is that you don't have to worry about what you write, you just have to let your words flow. If you get stuck, you can start to think about those things in your life that make you angry, sad or any other emotion or experience that you are dealing with at the moment.

We all lead busy lives, and finding time to journal can be a bit of a challenge. You can try to spend time writing in your journal first thing in the morning, right before you go to bed, or really anytime that makes sense and can fit into your daily routine. Journaling is most effective when you can dedicate at least 20 minutes a day to the practice.

As you journal, take some time to go back and read old entries. Often, those old entries can be incredibly insightful for understanding your current circumstances and for seeing how far you've truly come along your journey.

Along with helping you find your real purpose in life, journaling also has other unexpected benefits according to recent scientific evidence. Journaling can help you to clarify your thoughts and feelings, get to know yourself better, reduce stress, help you solve problems more effectively, and help you learn to resolve disagreements with others.

3. Become an Observer

Another way you can start to look within to find your true purpose is through the regular practice of mindfulness meditation and time spent alone in nature. In today's modern, hyper-sensitive non-stop society, quiet time and solitude are rare and necessary experiences that many of us are deficient in.

Finding the time to make this kind of priority will allow you to learn how to tune out the external distractions in your life and cultivate awareness within yourself. Mindfulness meditation will also let you learn how to listen and bear witness to how you are feeling and thinking. It will enable you to carefully examine the choices that you are making on a daily basis. This pure awareness of choice is a seed that, when properly nurtured and protected it will help you in allowing your Ikigai to bloom fully.

When you can begin to realize that you can shift your focus, you start to reclaim your power and can begin to fully imagine how things in your life could be different. With this power, you are better equipped to find the harmony within yourself, as well as all of your relationships, both professional and personal.

Increasing your realization isn't a one-time event. When it comes to finding correct understanding and the integration of that realization into your life, can be a lengthy process. The transitory nature of our experiences and our innate tendency to forget things, even those things that at the time were so clear and paradigm shifting, only works to set us up to re-discover and re-learn the same lesson over again.

One way to help you with remembering is to capture an audio or video or quickly write down the realization at the moment and then to revisit it on a regular basis.

Getting started with mindfulness meditation is easy. Start by setting aside some time and find a quiet space to practice. The aim of mindfulness is not to quiet the mind or attempt to achieve a state of calm, but instead, you are aiming to pay attention to the present moment, without judgment. When you are in the midst of your practice, if you start to notice judgments arising in your mind, merely make a mental note of them and let them pass and return to observing the present moment.

Often, our minds tend to get carried away in thought. That's why in mindfulness meditation the goal is to practice returning, again and again to the present moment. It is important that during your practice, you don't judge yourself for whatever thought comes to mind, just practice recognizing when your mind has wandered off and gently bring it back to the present.

4. Expand Your Knowledge Base

To expand your knowledge base, you can read new books that you wouldn't usually read. Books will give you a window into the world of someone else. They are full of wisdom, knowledge, and valuable insights. If you are always on the go or are more of an auditory learner, then you can try listening to audiobooks or podcasts on subjects that you are curious about and want to learn more about. Long form podcasts have a wide range of themes and topics to discuss.

Podcasts can have a considerable impact on the way you think about your life and how you will live it. The various conversations can introduce you to new concepts and possibilities that you may never have known existed. The power of podcasts is that it lets you spend time with people that you would never be able to otherwise. The traditional alternative is to read their books and blogs which can be extremely valuable. The only drawback to this is that these are not necessarily as accessible to most of us, because it is much easier to download an MP3 and listening to it as you go about your day. To be present to the thoughts, stories, and insights of other people who are more experienced in life than you are a true gift.

Another area worth checking out are the types of careers that others have chosen and created for themselves to see what, if any, might resonate with you. Try to avoid idealizing those that stand out, to believe that your life will be perfect if you could just be like that person, instead, accept that

anything that you find worth doing requires hard work and sacrifice. Your mission is to try to become the best version of yourself, not be exactly like someone else.

5. Don't Rush

Finding your true calling doesn't always happen in a straight line. In fact, it can be argued that for the majority of us it will come about through a seemingly random set of challenges or circumstances. Many of us have come to know these seemingly random alignments of places, people, and events as synchronicities. We believe that the more we live our true calling, the more synchronistic life ends up being.

Some people have been lucky enough to have life-changing experiences that have helped them find and live their true purpose. Others are still searching for the one sign that they are on the path to finding and living their true purpose in life. If you are struggling to determine what it is that you should be doing in your life, just remember that it takes patience.

You can't and shouldn't expect your true calling to be delivered to your front door via express mail. Discovering and continually honing your path in life will be a regular part of your journey. You need to be compassionate to yourself and know that where ever you are in your life right now, is the best place for you to be. Learn to treat yourself, your practices, and the world with patience and don't rush your journey to finding your true life's purpose.

You need to remember to take your time and learn to discern what feels right in your heart. Try to avoid torturing

yourself when you feel like you are failing. Remember, your successes and failures are all a part of the process, and with enough patience, you will find your true calling.

Conclusion

Everyone in this world has their own purpose that they need to try to discover. They have their own calling to answer and their own Ikigai to embrace. It is the mysterious nature of how you end up finding your calling that helps in making each and every life such a beautiful adventure.

It is also essential to remember as you search for your true purpose, that any journey worth taking is bound to have its own set of challenges and successes, but the key to reaching the end is to keep moving forward and to trust that with enough perseverance, honest, and deep contemplation, you will eventually end up walking the path that is yours and yours alone.

Finding your true calling is a process that is full of tension, doubt, and stress that has to be continuously managed. Everyone has a choice. You can either choose to follow the path in front of you or not. But, whatever you decide to do, you have to put in the work and take action if you want to find your true purpose in life.