

2 Purpose in Retirement

KNOWING YOUR PURPOSE CAN EXTEND YOUR LIFE

Science shows that having a life purpose not only increases the quality of life, but it can also increase the length of your life. People without a strong life purpose were more than twice as likely to die compared to those with a clear direction.



Additional Benefits Include:

- Purpose provides clarity and guides decisions on how you spend your time, money, and energy.
- Alignment of resources to a purpose results in contentment and peace.
- Purpose minimizes the discontent of comparison.
- Purpose increases willpower to do hard things.

7 Steps to Finding Your Purpose

If you're unsure how to identify your life purpose, or if you want to update it, this exercise may help. You're going to look ahead at where you want to be and then go backwards to see what you need to do to get there.



1. IMAGINE

Step One: Imagine Your Life Celebration

Imagine you've turned 85 years old and there is a grand celebration with your friends and family. You're sharing the story of who you've become and what has been most important to you.

You could replace it with, "I spent quality time with my kids and my grandkids" or "I gave my children opportunities to learn." This is an important rule because our purpose and goals must focus on what we can control or influence, not the choices of others.



2. WRITE

Step Two: Write Your Purpose Statement

List on a piece of paper at least five points you want to be able to share about your life. Your list can include the personal qualities you've developed, the accomplishments you're most proud of, or the contributions you've made to your family and community. There is one rule to follow as you make your list: Only include those things you have control over, not what others do. For example, if you wrote, "My kids and grandkids are happy and healthy", cross it off because this is not within your control.

3. REFLECT

Step Three: Reflect on This Exercise

Reflect now on what you experienced doing the exercise. Consider these questions:

- **When was the last time you pondered what you really want out of your life?**
- **What would an observer say is most important to you? Would they be right?**



- What gives you peace and joy? Is it part of your purpose?
- As you consider what you really want, are you on track to achieve it?
- What next steps would get you back on track?
- Where do you have regrets and how can they be avoided going forward?

Whatever your experience, pat yourself on the back because you've taken time to reflect on the most important question of your life: What is my life purpose?

4. REFINE

Step Four: Refine Your List to the Present

Refining your purpose statement is a continual process. It can change as life changes or as you learn more about yourself. There is no pressure to have it all figured out by a certain day. Start with what you do know and let it develop and grow. Apply the wisdom and knowledge of your past years to discern what is authentically right for you in this next chapter of your life.

5. SET GOALS

Step Five: Set Goals

Once you identify your purpose, set goals that align with it. For example, if being independent is important to you, goals may focus on being physically fit or financially secure. When goals connect with your life purpose, you are more likely to succeed doing them, especially when fulfilling them becomes hard.

MEETING YOUR GOALS



6. POST IT

Step Six: Post It

Once you have your purpose and goals written, post it, but not on social media. Place the document where you can see it regularly. Write it on your bathroom mirror, put it in a frame on your desk or use it as a screensaver. Seeing it often is how your purpose stays front and center in your daily life when confronted with countless choices and distractions.



7. REVIEW

Step Seven: Review Regularly

Set a time to review your purpose and goals regularly. Find a place that is quiet and where you won't be interrupted. Look at both your life purpose and your goals and assess how you're doing. This is a time to celebrate progress. It's also time to learn from your experiences and adjust.

Summary

Taking time to know your purpose, set goals connected to your purpose, and continually review the path you're on, results in a life well-lived.

Want to Learn More

[Start with Why](#), Simon Sinek
[Essentialism](#), Greg McKeown
[Life on Purpose](#), Victor J. Stretcher





**You are never too old
to set another goal or
dream a new dream.**

- C.S. Lewis





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