“It’s not enough to have lived. We should be determined to live for something.” -Winston Churchill. I don't know when I first heard this quote, but whenever I get the feeling of purposelessness I think of it. I’m not sure why, maybe it’s because I think it's true, what's the point of life if I just go through the motions. Or maybe it's because I don't want it to be true. I don't want the pressure of having to live for something for my life to be “worth” it. There have only been a few times when I really thought about purpose in my life.

I started to think about purpose in 7th grade when we had an assignment on the first day of English to make a drawing that included our hobbies, personality, and anything identity related. First I drew myself, then I drew a couple dogs, a basketball, and a laptop. Then I sat there, trying to think of something else to draw. I saw the people around me who’s papers looked filled or at least had more than three things. I kept thinking, I knew there had to be at least something else that interested me that could count as part of my identity, but for the rest of the class I just sat there adding random detail to the things I already drew. That night I thought I have to find something else that interests me, even if it was something as simple as doodling. Throughout the rest of the school year and the summer I developed a couple other interests. I started playing lacrosse and did a little coding. But neither of those, at least at that point, felt like purpose. Even with my two new hobbies I felt like there was still something missing, that sense of purpose still wasn't there.

By 8th grade I hadn't thought a whole lot about my purpose until as our final english project we had to make a biography about ourselves, but as if we were 30 years into the future. We had to write about what our career was, how we reached that point, and other achievements. When my teacher first announced this project that sense of purposelessness came back. I had no idea what I wanted my future to be, what job I wanted, let alone how I would get there. I thought through everything I enjoyed, but for each one I couldn't see myself doing it for the rest of my life. I eventually settled on being a comedian because I thought It would be easy to come up with a life story about that, but no part of me actually wanted that to be my future. While I was writing the biography I couldn't help but feel disappointed in myself. I had been alive and doing things for 14 years, by that point there should be something that interested me enough to be my career, but instead I just had a few hobbies that only seemed like place holders for what would eventually be my purpose.

These two experiences have made me think a lot about purpose, but I still don't have a clear idea of what it is but I do have some thoughts. I’m not religious at all so I don't believe in any grand set in stone purpose for everyone. I do believe that everyone has to find their own purpose, and that has always scared me. In my mind, purpose is finding the thing in life that makes you happy and fulfilled, and when you are about to die you can feel satisfied with the life you lived. As comforting as that idea seems at first, the idea that maybe that won't happen for me is what scares me. What if I never find that thing, that hobby, that career, and end up spending my whole life just looking. What if I think I’ve found that thing but in 30 years I realize it doesn't make me happy and I have wasted half my life for nothing. As depressing as that sounds, there is one thing that gives me hope, this quote from The Catcher in the Rye, “But what I mean is, lots of time you don't know what interests you most till you start talking about something that doesn't interest you most.” When Holden says this he is talking about a classmate’s speech in his oral expression class. When the classmate starts his speech he seems bored and uninterested. It isn't until he gets asked a couple questions and starts talking about something completely different that he perks up and becomes interested and excited. I think that may be how you find purpose. Maybe you have to just try things and you might just stumble onto your purpose.