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By: Jack Canfield

BE CLEAR WHY YOU’RE HERE

Decide upon your major definite purpose in life and then organize all your activities around it.

BRIAN TRACY

One of America’s leading authorities on the development of human potential and personal effectiveness.

I believe each of us is born with a life purpose. Identifying, acknowledging, and honoring this purpose is perhaps the most important action that successful people take. They take the time to understand what they’re here to do-and then they pursue that with passion and enthusiasm.

WHAT WERE YOU PUT ON THIS EARTH TO DO?

I discovered long ago what I was put on this earth to do. I determined my true purpose in life, my “right livelihood.” I discovered how to inject passion and determination into every activity I undertake. And I learned how purpose can bring an aspect of fun and virtually everything I do.

Now I’d like to help uncover the same secret for you.

You see, without a purpose in life, it’s easy to get sidetracked on your life’s journey. It’s easy to wander and drift, accomplishing little.

But with a purpose, everything in life seems to fall into place. To be “on purpose” means you’re doing what you love to do, doing what you’re good at, and accomplishing what’s important to you. When you’re truly and passionately on purpose, the people, the resources, and the opportunities you need naturally gravitate toward you. The world benefits, too, because when you act in alignment with your true life purpose, which may at first glance seem selfish, all your actions automatically serve others.

SOME PERSONAL LIFE PURPOSE STATEMENTS

My life purpose is to inspire and empower people to live their highest vision in a context of love and joy in harmony with the highest good of all concerned. I inspire people to live their highest vision by collecting and disseminating inspiring stories through the Chicken Soup for the Soul R series and in my inspirational keynote speeches. I empower people to live their dreams by writing practical self-help books like this one, Tapping Into Ultimate Success, and The Power of Focus; by designing courses for high school and college students; and by conducting seminars for individuals and corporations that teach powerful tools for creating one’s ideal life both at work and at home.

Here are the life purpose statements of some of my friends. It is important to note that they have all become self-made millionaires though the fulfillment of their life purpose.

* To inspire and empower people to achieve their destiny.
* To uplift humanity’s consciousness through business.
* To humbly serve the Lord by being a loving , playful, powerful, and passionate example of the absolute joy that is available to us the moment we rejoice in God’s gift and sincerely love and serve all of His creations.
* To leave the world a better place than I found it, for horses and for people, too.

Once you know what your life purpose is, you can organize all your activities around it. Everything you do should be an expression of your purpose. If an activity didn’t align with your purpose, you wouldn’t work on it. Period.

WHAT’S THE “WHY” BEHIND EVERYTHING YOU DO?

Without purpose as the compass to guide you, your goals and action plans may not ultimately fulfill you. You don’t want to get to the top of the ladder only to find you had it leaning against the wrong wall.

When Julie Marie Carrier as a child, she was a very big fan of animals. As a result, all she ever heard growing up was “Julie, you should be a vet. You’re going to be a great vet. That’s what you should do.” So when she got to Ohio States University, she took biology, anatomy, and chemistry, and started studying to be a vet. A Rotary Ambassadorial Scholarship allowed her to spend her senior year studying abroad in Manchester, England. Away from the family and faculty pressures back home, she found herself one dreary day sitting at her desk, surrounded by biology books and staring out the window, when it suddenly hit her: You know what? I’m totally miserable. What am I doing? I don’t want to be a vet!

Julie then asked herself, what is a job I should love so much that I’d do it for free but that I could actually get paid for? It’s not being a vet. That’s not the right job. Julie thought back over all the things she’d done in her life and what had made her the most happy. Suddenly, it hit her-it was all of youth leadership conferences that she had volunteered at, and the communications and leadership courses she had taken as elective courses back at Ohio State.

How could I have been so ignorant? She thought. Here I am in my fourth year at school and just finally realizing I’m in the wrong path. But it’s been right here in front of me the whole time. I just never took the time to acknowledge it until now.

Buoyed by her new insight, Julie spent the rest of her year in England taking courses in communications and media performance. When she returned to Ohio State, she was eventually able to convince the administration to let her create her own program in “leadership studies.” And while it took her 2 years longer to finally graduate, she went on to become a senior management consultant in leadership training and development for the Pentagon. She also won the Miss Virginia USA contest, which allowed her to spend much of the year speaking to kids all over Virginia plus launch a national speaking career to empower youth with messages of leadership and character. By the way, Julie was able to do this at only 26 years old-a testament to the power that clarity of purpose can create in your life.

Today Julie has reached over a million young people as one of the top national youth leadership speakers for student conferences, high schools, colleges, and youth programs worldwide. You may have seen her on NBC’s Today show or Fox News, in the New York Times, or as a success coach for teens and young women featured on a goal-setting TV show on MTV (Julie even received an Emmy nomination!).\*