

FOUNDATION #2: PURPOSE

Definition of Purpose

A line from *Alice in Wonderland* says, "If you don't know where you're going, any old road will get you there." That line characterizes the losers in life. They just get by, but they're not sure where they're going or why they're going there.

Most people live that way. Most people never think of having a purpose. They just think about going to work, paying the bills, and raising their families. They don't even know what a purpose is or how to find one.

By contrast, the winners in every generation and every culture have learned that the way to a life of happiness, meaning, and achievement is through a keen sense of purpose. In fact, winners base all their decisions on their purpose, decisions concerning their families, friends, careers, leisure time, spiritual life, and physical needs. And winners make sure their purpose goes beyond satisfying themselves to making a difference with others.

1. **Ingredients of purpose**

a. *Meaning*

- 1) Purpose provides meaning for your life.
- 2) Look at your key loyalties, your non-negotiable principles that you would defend if challenged. Examples might include your beliefs, your values, world view, and family. What are your key loyalties?

- 3) Imagine that you are 100 years old. What would you like to be able to say about your achievements? What would you want other people to say about you and your achievements?

- 4) Suppose you were famous. What way of achieving fame would mean the most to you?

b. *Organization*

- 1) Purpose serves as a principle around which you organize your life.
- 2) Look at your responsibilities and rightful obligations. What are your most important responsibilities?

- 3) How and where you spend your time is a strong indicator of your purpose and values or lack thereof. If time and money were not a barrier, how and where would you like to spend your time?

c. *Difference*

1) Purpose means taking risks to make a difference in the world. Purpose is about caring and not necessarily curing.

2) What have you always wanted to do but have been afraid to attempt?

3) It has been said that you should leave the world a little bit better than you found it. How do you feel about this? In what ways could you do this?

d. *Clarity*

1) Purpose provides clarity as to what is most important.

2) What five things do you value most in life?

3) What are your three most important goals in life?

4) What would you do if you won ten million dollars, tax-free in a lottery?

- 5) If you found out you had only six months left to live, what changes would you make?

- 6) If you were granted one wish, if you were able to accomplish any one dream with complete assurance that you could not fail, what would you do?

e. *Integrity*

- 1) Purpose means walking you talk on a daily basis. You take actions consistent with your values.
- 2) It is not affected by change due to cutbacks, budget shortfalls, or layoffs. It is not affected by weather, attitudes or whims.
- 3) How well are you doing in this area of your life? How often do you say one thing and do another?

f. *Satisfaction*

- 1) Purpose means spending your precious and limited time on those things that deeply satisfy you.
- 2) Looking back over all the things you've done, what activities provided the greatest feelings of satisfaction?

2. How to find your purpose

a. *Look at your gifts.*

- 1) You were born with a purpose that naturally fits you.
- 2) What talents do you possess? Are you musical or artistic? Do you have the ability to relate well with others?

- 3) What are some of your personal interests? Look at those particular interests that bring inner satisfaction when you participate actively or vicariously. They may include sports, hobbies, professional activities, whatever.

- 4) Search your personality for your positive traits. They may include gregariousness, generosity, organization, directness, confidence, encouragement, etc. What are some of your more positive personality characteristics?

- 5) Your education is also a gift and is composed of your formal and informal experiences. What part of your education could be of help to others?

- 6) Look at your resources as "bank accounts," financial and emotional assets from which you can draw when needed. They may include many friends, spiritual strengths, emotional health, etc. What are yours?

b. *Look at your emotions.*

1) What moves you?

2) Look at the passion or "fire in your belly." Your passions might include a burden for the oppressed, spiritual involvement, a cleaner environment, or personal excellence. What are some of your passions?

FOUNDATION #2: PURPOSE

Characteristics of Your Purpose Statement

1. Focus

- a. Just as organizations need to define what "business" they're in, you should define your own life's purpose. A purpose is like a guiding light that sets you on a course and keeps you fixed on it.
- b. Without a purpose, your achievements seem hollow, your future uncertain, and your present chaotic. Your mind needs a purpose, or you will wander and drift, accomplishing very little.
- c. With a purpose, however, everything falls into place. You suddenly have a basis for making life decisions.

2. Brevity

- a. The Gettysburg Address, The Lord's Prayer, Winston Churchill's "Never give up" speech are examples of words spoken in a concise manner conveying a timeless message.
- b. Try to state your purpose in 25 words or less.

3. Legacy

- a. What is the message you want people to receive from your life?
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- b. What is the legacy you want to leave behind?
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4. Service

a. One way to state your purpose is to fill in these blanks:
"My purpose in life is to _____ people to _____."

b. You might choose one of these verbs to fill in the first blank:

- | | | |
|------------|------------|-----------|
| assist | guide | validate |
| facilitate | prepare | enable |
| support | enhance | liberate |
| serve | organize | empower |
| stimulate | strengthen | influence |
| expand | cause | |
| discover | inspire | |

c. After you decide the action you wish to take for others, describe the type of people you want to serve and the goal you want to achieve with those people. Write that in the second blank.

d. For example, "My purpose in life is to help my children to use their full potential."

Exercise: Write out your purpose using the guidelines stated above. It doesn't have to be perfect. You can always rewrite it.

FOUNDATION #6: BALANCE

A Grid on Life Balance

Directions: On a scale from 10 to 100, 100 being the highest or best score, how well are you doing in each of the various dimensions of life? Circle the appropriate number.

- | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----|--|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|-----|
| 1. | Make friends easily, have many close friends, and stay in contact with them. | 10 | 20 | 30 | 40 | 50 | 60 | 70 | 80 | 90 | 100 |
| 2. | Spend time alone praying or connecting with God (as I understand Him) in various ways. | 10 | 20 | 30 | 40 | 50 | 60 | 70 | 80 | 90 | 100 |
| 3. | Have a financial plan that is working now and will work in the future. | 10 | 20 | 30 | 40 | 50 | 60 | 70 | 80 | 90 | 100 |
| 4. | Exercise vigorously each day. | 10 | 20 | 30 | 40 | 50 | 60 | 70 | 80 | 90 | 100 |
| 5. | Have adequate quality and quantity time with family. | 10 | 20 | 30 | 40 | 50 | 60 | 70 | 80 | 90 | 100 |
| 6. | Enjoy plan, make time for it, and having enough fun in life. | 10 | 20 | 30 | 40 | 50 | 60 | 70 | 80 | 90 | 100 |
| 7. | Am already engaged in the career I want. | 10 | 20 | 30 | 40 | 50 | 60 | 70 | 80 | 90 | 100 |
| 8. | Practicing a healthy lifestyle, living where I want to live. | 10 | 20 | 30 | 40 | 50 | 60 | 70 | 80 | 90 | 100 |

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|-----|---|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|-----|
| 9. | Am involved in community or association activities where I serve others. | 10 | 20 | 30 | 40 | 50 | 60 | 70 | 80 | 90 | 100 |
| 10. | Am open to change, taking risks, allowing myself the freedom to fail. | 10 | 20 | 30 | 40 | 50 | 60 | 70 | 80 | 90 | 100 |
| 11. | Live by my values, "walk my talk." | 10 | 20 | 30 | 40 | 50 | 60 | 70 | 80 | 90 | 100 |
| 12. | Study or read spiritual materials. | 10 | 20 | 30 | 40 | 50 | 60 | 70 | 80 | 90 | 100 |
| 13. | Eat nutritious, well-balanced meals. | 10 | 20 | 30 | 40 | 50 | 60 | 70 | 80 | 90 | 100 |
| 14. | Live below my means, free of debt. | 10 | 20 | 30 | 40 | 50 | 60 | 70 | 80 | 90 | 100 |
| 15. | Take initiative to write, call, go see, stay in contact with close and extended family members. | 10 | 20 | 30 | 40 | 50 | 60 | 70 | 80 | 90 | 100 |
| 16. | Pursue new adventures; try new activities for the fun of it. | 10 | 20 | 30 | 40 | 50 | 60 | 70 | 80 | 90 | 100 |
| 17. | See great opportunities for advancement in my career. | 10 | 20 | 30 | 40 | 50 | 60 | 70 | 80 | 90 | 100 |
| 18. | Have thought about and written goals for the various aspects of my life. | 10 | 20 | 30 | 40 | 50 | 60 | 70 | 80 | 90 | 100 |
| 19. | Open and honest in expressing my feelings. | 10 | 20 | 30 | 40 | 50 | 60 | 70 | 80 | 90 | 100 |
| 20. | Enjoy meeting new people and going to parties or group events. | 10 | 20 | 30 | 40 | 50 | 60 | 70 | 80 | 90 | 100 |

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|-----|--|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|-----|
| 21. | Would be leaving the memories I want to leave if I were to die today. | 10 | 20 | 30 | 40 | 50 | 60 | 70 | 80 | 90 | 100 |
| 22. | Attend church, synagogue, or religious services. | 10 | 20 | 30 | 40 | 50 | 60 | 70 | 80 | 90 | 100 |
| 23. | Get enough sleep. | 10 | 20 | 30 | 40 | 50 | 60 | 70 | 80 | 90 | 100 |
| 24. | Sense of humor; laugh easily and often, not taking a situation or myself too seriously. | 10 | 20 | 30 | 40 | 50 | 60 | 70 | 80 | 90 | 100 |
| 25. | Have relatively positive, harmonious relationships with family members. | 10 | 20 | 30 | 40 | 50 | 60 | 70 | 80 | 90 | 100 |
| 26. | Use my time well. | 10 | 20 | 30 | 40 | 50 | 60 | 70 | 80 | 90 | 100 |
| 27. | Am really good at and enjoy my work. | 10 | 20 | 30 | 40 | 50 | 60 | 70 | 80 | 90 | 100 |
| 28. | Healthy balance between saving enough for the future yet spending enough to enjoy the present. | 10 | 20 | 30 | 40 | 50 | 60 | 70 | 80 | 90 | 100 |
| 29. | Actively pursue continuing education through seminars, books, tapes, etc. | 10 | 20 | 30 | 40 | 50 | 60 | 70 | 80 | 90 | 100 |
| 30. | Relatively free of worry, life full of joy. | 10 | 20 | 30 | 40 | 50 | 60 | 70 | 80 | 90 | 100 |
| 31. | Am making a difference in the work I do. | 10 | 20 | 30 | 40 | 50 | 60 | 70 | 80 | 90 | 100 |
| 32. | Make thoughtful rather than impulsive spending decisions. | 10 | 20 | 30 | 40 | 50 | 60 | 70 | 80 | 90 | 100 |

Now look at the headings and columns below. In the grid you just completed, you were asked to rate yourself in many areas of your life. For example, numbers 4, 8, 13, and 23 relate to your Physical life. Numbers 6, 16, 20, and 24 cover the Recreational area of your life, and so on. Transfer your scores for each of the 32 items from the grid to the appropriate columns and add them up. Get a total for each column.

Physical	Recreational	Financial
4. _____	6. _____	3. _____
8. _____	16. _____	14. _____
13. _____	20. _____	28. _____
23. _____	24. _____	32. _____
_____	_____	_____
Total	Total	Total

Occupational	Relational	Mental
7. _____	1. _____	18. _____
17. _____	5. _____	21. _____
27. _____	15. _____	26. _____
31. _____	25. _____	29. _____
_____	_____	_____
Total	Total	Total

Emotional	Spiritual
10. _____	2. _____
11. _____	9. _____
19. _____	12. _____
30. _____	22. _____
_____	_____
Total	Total

Think of each dimension as a point on a graph. Plot the total from each of the eight points on the graph. Then connect the eight points to gain a perspective on the balance of your life.

Are you pleased with what you see? Do you see big peaks and valleys? Is there a need to give more emphasis to one dimension in your life and ease back on some others? If so, what changes could bring your life into balance? Use this to set goals and to develop the eight dimensions of your life.

The Balance Grid

