

The Quest4Life Podcast Show Notes:

Season #3, Episode #14: Being on Purpose

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One of the greatest gifts in life is the ability for each of us to choose how we live our life. This is not to suggest that we pick our starting point. For example, some people are born into abject poverty while others are born into wealth and privilege. Some people are victims of abusive parents while others grow up free from abuse. Some people are born in underdeveloped countries where natural resources are scarce while others grow up in countries and societies where natural resources are plentiful.

Despite the differences, and there are many, each of us, as human beings, possess the ability, whether we know it or not, believe it or not, to design our own future. I'll admit, I'm speaking broadly, as the dictates of certain cultures makes this extraordinarily difficult in addition to other limitations, such as stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination of groups that seem to inhibit a person's ability to chart the course of their life. Objectively speaking, however, we can choose how we live our life or, at least, how we think about living our life. Doing so levels-up our mindset and allows us to be on purpose.

Do you want to live a healthy life?

Do you want to make a positive difference in the lives of others?

Do you want to pursue your passion and purpose?

Conversely, do you want to live a life fraught with disease?

Do you want to avoid developing meaningful relationships?

Do you want to flail about in life directionless? My guess is that you answered with an unequivocal "Yes!" to each of the first three and an unequivocal "No!" to the latter three. This makes sense because, for most of us, generally want this life to be a good one. Ironically, there are many people who willingly or unwillingly live their lives based on the dictates of others – their parents, their spouses, their society. These are people who live outside their purpose and end of living or, more to the point, existing in a perpetual state of discontentment, disappointment, or depression.

How can this be?

Perhaps it's because we, as human beings, long for belonging and acceptance from others, which supersedes our own pursuits. Perhaps it's because we've been told we'll never amount to anything, and we bought what was being sold to us. Perhaps it's because we simply don't know what it means to live healthy or to make a positive difference in the lives of others or to identify our passion or purpose in life.

What follows are 7 ways that explain what “Being on Purpose” in life means and why living “On Purpose” brings a more joyful and fulfilling life.

7 Ways of Being on Purpose

#1 – Seek a calling bigger than yourself. One of the interesting things about middle age is that you look back on the first half of your life with the recognition that fancy things, like houses, cars, and clothes, are nice, but generally unfulfilling. Thus, the pursuit of a calling, which you might think of as faith or legacy helps you anchor your life to knowing that you are on this earth for a specific reason and that reason serves as your North Star. Simply the act of seeking this calling exemplifies what “Being on Purpose” means.

#2 – Help others be on purpose. When you are intentional about seeking out your calling, you can help empower others to seek out theirs. Unfortunately, living an unintentional life disallows you from doing this, as you are unable to translate the insights and skills you may, in fact, possess to helping others. But “Being on Purpose” in your own life allows you to discover or uncover your strengths that you can translate to others. And seeing others flourish, no doubt, provides greater meaning and value to your own life.

#3 – Care for yourself physically, psychologically, emotionally, and spiritually. Interestingly, I placed this third and a credible argument can be made that it should be #1. And if you’ve spent any time listening to The Quest4Life Podcast, you know how much emphasis I place on each area. Despite that, I’m going spend a few minutes on each. First, what “Being on Purpose” means physically is engaging in regular physical activity. Additionally, “Being on Purpose” also means consuming food and beverages that elevate your energy and vibration.

Next, “Being on Purpose” psychologically means that you spend time reflecting on your motivations and intentions, how you go about making decisions, the subsequent actions related to those decisions, and the consequences generated from all of it. This may also require you to have fierce conversations with yourself and with others to work through challenges and set down the baggage from your past. Simply pushing things under the rug is unhelpful to living your best life.

Further, “Being on Purpose” emotionally means unmemorizing the past version of yourself to evolve into a more loving, caring person. In the bestselling book, *The Body Keeps Score*, author, Bessel van der Kolk states that, “Neuroscience research shows that the only way we can change the way we feel is by becoming aware of our inner experiences and learning to befriend what is going on inside ourselves.” What I am not suggesting is that we forget our past but rather we don’t remain a prisoner of our past, we don’t relive the same emotional reality day after day. “Being on purpose” emotionally means that we cut new neurochemical grooves from new, more favorable experiences rather than simply remembering past experiences (Season #2, Episode #19 – “The Stories We Tell Ourselves”).

Finally, “Being on Purpose” spiritually means that we connect with a higher power. This could be the God of a major religion or exploring topics such as the Law of Magnetism, Quantum

Physics, or the Universe. The point here is to connect our inner selves with the thing that created us in the first place. Now that I've addressed each area of health, let's move on.

#4 – Finding peace with yourself and others through forgiveness and letting go (Season #2, Episode #14 – “Forgiveness and Letting Go”). Life becomes extraordinarily peaceful when you no longer hold onto anger, bitterness, and resentment toward others or yourselves. This is not to suggest that you should forget wrongdoing, injustice, or deliberate disrespect but rather choosing to be on purpose by choosing peace over tension. Doing so is a gradual process of acknowledging that whatever lingering anger, bitterness, or resentment you feel is YOURS and no one else's along with the acceptance that what is done is done.

Releasing the hurt and pain that was caused is truly the only order of things to “Being on Purpose.” Otherwise, you risk infecting every next relationship you enter into, which makes exactly zero sense for, at minimum, 2 reasons: 1) It's not fair to the person with whom you are entering a relationship; and 2) It's not fair for you to risk creating new pain that adds to your existing pain.

#5 – Expand your worldview. We all know it's incredibly easy to create habitual patterns of thought and behavior in our lives. In previous podcasts episodes, I've discussed that we spend 90-95% of our lives on autopilot, which is to say that we think the same thoughts and do the same things most every day. In effect, we make our lives binary in the sense that something is either black or white, on or off, this or that. But when you expand your worldview, you start seeing and becoming sensitive to the nuances in life. You begin to appreciate and understand the subtleties and undertones in situations and with people. After all, no situation or person is entirely this or entirely that. When we make cardboard cutouts of situations and, more importantly, people, we will absolutely fail ourselves and others.

Thus, “Being on Purpose” in terms of expanding your worldview means taking nothing for granted. Now, I'm not saying that you should analyze situations and people to death or at the exclusion of making meaningful connections. I am saying that you should look for the nuances, subtleties, and under- tones to gain a greater appreciation of differences and contrast. If nothing else, doing so will show you that your worldview is just that: Yours.

#6 – Pursue a values-based life. Discussions of core values happens all the time in business, and it is certainly evident based on how people choose to live. Another way of stating this is that human motivation isn't overly complicated when you connect back to the actions people take, which is illustrative of what people value. With respect to “Being on Purpose,” pursuing and living a values-based life means clearly defining for yourself what it is that you value.

If you value developing meaningful relationships with others, pursue whatever you need to do to create those relationships. If you value making contributions to businesses or causes bigger than yourself, go do that. If you value living with integrity and honor commitments to yourself and to others, go do that. If you value living in accordance with a specific ethical standard or spiritual teaching, go do that. Become a student of each of those areas. Identify others that excel in those areas and see how you can emulate them. The goal here is to level-up your mindset in an intentional way.

And lastly - #7 – Gain clarity about your future despite uncertainties. The majority of people DO NOT live on autopilot. This ties back to the knowledge that 90-95% of our lives are on autopilot. You see, living on autopilot allows for an unbelievable amount of certainty. You know what time to wake up every day. You know what you'll have for breakfast. You know the route you'll take to work. Etc. The inconvenient truth to all this is that uncertainty is a part of life and “Being on Purpose” allows you to recognize the uncertainty for what it is...as a path to achieving something greater or better or, at least, more interesting. And when you recognize this as such a path, you can move from a place of complacency or stagnation to one of curiosity and wonder.

Final Thoughts...

I encourage you to make a decision as to which of the 7 most resonates with you and how you can incorporate it into your life starting today.

Perhaps it's seeking a calling bigger than yourself.

Maybe it's helping others be on purpose.

Or you may be ready to look in the mirror and decide to engage in more physical activity or clean up your nutrition.

Still further, you might strive to find peace with yourself and others by letting go of lingering anger, bitterness, and resentment.

Or maybe you genuinely want to expand your worldview or live a values-based life despite the many uncertainties doing so brings.

Take the first step by making a decision to level-up your mindset to take new and different actions to bring about better, to pull our ideal future into the present.

I wish each of you nothing but the best in this pursuit.

It's food for thought, Fellow Questers.