



MEANING IN LIFE QUESTIONNAIRE

The Meaning in Life Questionnaire is a brief scale that assesses two dimensions of meaning in life: the presence of meaning in life and the search for meaning. Presence is the degree to which a person considers his or her life to be meaningful and search indicates how strongly a person desires to discover new meaning in one's life.

Instructions: Think about what makes your life and existence feel important and significant to you. Write a number 1–7 for how true or untrue each statement is for you, where **1=Absolutely Untrue** and **7=Absolutely True**.

- | | |
|---|--------------------------|
| 1. I understand my life's meaning. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. I am looking for something that makes my life feel meaningful. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. I am always looking to find my life's purpose. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. My life has a clear sense of purpose. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. I have a good sense of what makes my life meaningful. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. I have discovered a satisfying life purpose. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7. I am always searching for something that makes my life feel significant. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8. I am seeking a purpose or mission for my life. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 9. My life has no clear purpose. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 10. I am searching for meaning in my life. | <input type="checkbox"/> |

TOTAL OF ALL GRAY BOXES

TOTAL OF ALL WHITE BOXES

Scoring: Add your gray boxes and white boxes separately.

Transfer the two numbers to the corresponding boxes on the next page to interpret your results.



MEANING IN LIFE QUESTIONNAIRE

TOTAL OF ALL GRAY BOXES IS
YOUR PRESENCE SCORE

TOTAL OF ALL WHITE BOXES IS
YOUR SEARCH SCORE

Based on a number of studies, we can make some probabilistic guesses about other areas of your life based on your scores on the Meaning in Life Questionnaire. Please keep in mind that these are really only guesses and should not in any way be considered diagnostic.

If you scored above 24 on Presence and also above 24 on Search, you feel your life has a valued meaning and purpose, yet you are still openly exploring that meaning or purpose. You are likely satisfied with your life, somewhat optimistic, experience feelings of love frequently, and rarely feel depressed.

If you scored above 24 on Presence and below 24 on Search, you feel your life has a valued meaning and purpose, and are not actively exploring that meaning or seeking meaning in your life. One might say that you are satisfied that you've grasped what makes your life meaningful, why you're here, and what you want to do with your life. You are probably satisfied with your life, optimistic, and have a healthy self-esteem. You frequently experience feelings of love and joy, and rarely feel afraid, angry, ashamed or sad.

If you scored below 24 on Presence and also above 24 on Search, you probably do not feel your life has a valued meaning and purpose, and you are actively searching for something or someone that will give your life meaning or purpose. You are probably not always satisfied with your life. You may not experience emotions like love and joy that often. You may occasionally, or even often, feel anxious, nervous, or sad and depressed.

If you scored below 24 on Presence and also below 24 on Search, you probably do not feel your life has a valued meaning and purpose and are not actively exploring that meaning or seeking meaning in your life. You may not always be satisfied with your life, or yourself, and you might not be particularly optimistic about the future.



YOUR SEARCH FOR MEANING

The meaning of life consists of three dimensions: coherence, purpose, and significance. This exercise will help you determine to what extent you have found meaning in your life and to what extent you are still searching.

First, contemplate these questions to identify your deficits in each dimension.

1. **Do you feel out of control—tossed about in life without rhyme or reason? If so, you need a better grasp on coherence.**
2. **Do you lack big plans, dreams, or ideas for your future that excite you? This is a purpose issue.**
3. **Do you feel like it wouldn't matter if you disappeared, like the world would be no worse—or maybe even better—if you did? This is a problem of significance.**

Now, ask yourself if you are engaged in sufficient search for meaning.

Each day for 10 minutes, consider your specific deficit and think of ways to improve it. You should have positive answers to each question and a plan to get there. This will bring more meaning and happiness into your life.



CITATIONS & SOURCES

Pages 1 and 2: Steger, Frazier, P., Oishi, S., & Kaler, M. (2006). The meaning in life questionnaire. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 53(1), 80–93., Schulenberg, Strack, K.M., & Buchanan, E. M. (2011). The meaning in life questionnaire: psychometric properties with individuals with serious mental illness in an inpatient setting. *Journal of Clinical Psychology*, 4(4), 1210–1219., Rose, Zask, A., & Burton, L. J. (2017). Psychometric properties of the meaning in life questionnaire (MLQ) in a sample of Australian adolescents. *International Journal of Adolescence and Youth*, 22(1), 68–77.