

# Let's Talk: You can make a difference

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Recently, I read a study from Northwestern University<sup>1</sup> and this study was asking people if they had a purpose in life and the people who answered that they did have a purpose in life, they had some very unique benefits that came back with answering that. The benefits were, they slept better at night, they had better mental health, they had better physical health and they had longevity of life. So these are very significant findings and those are great benefits to have just from having a purpose in life. And then I also started to look at other age groups and I found that teens benefited from having a purpose in life too. And the teens who did believe that they had a purpose, they had more positive self image. They had less issues and they were more successful transitioning into adulthood. So does all this sound too good to be true? Or maybe you're wondering what is my purpose and how do I discover my purpose? And these are great questions, and this is what I want to talk about today.

## Discovering your purpose

So recently, I came across a quote that I thought was very fitting and that might really help you understand this. And it's from Mahatma Gandhi. And it says, "The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in service of others." So let's talk about making a difference.

## Getting started

So in the past, when I think about things I wanted to do in life and things I wanted to change in the world, I always felt kind of overwhelmed. I didn't know where to begin. I mean, just look at everything that's happening around us today. I'm sure each of you can, you know, agree that it seems overwhelming at times. And there's so many things that we would like to do to help make things better, but we don't know where to begin.

So one thing I found to get past this mental block or this mental obstacle is to stop thinking about everything and just start right where you are. One of the best ways to do this is just step outside your front door and start noticing needs around you today. For instance, what if a neighbor next door needs help carrying the groceries? Help them with that. Or what if a friend's telling you that she's going through a very busy season of life. And so you provide dinner for her and her family one night. It's about listening to the needs of others, or being willing to see the needs of others and taking that first step to help meet those needs. And that will start getting you going on your journey.

## Use your skills to help others

And I've also found that our purpose is awakened when we are bold enough to take those first steps and do something that we are uniquely drawn towards to do. For instance, you have maybe always been interested in cooking or you're good at carpentry, or you're talented with math and science or you like to exercise. So these are unique things that you prefer and that you like. Those are the things that you were drawn towards. And this is a great place to start. Then think about something you do well naturally. For some of us, it might be that we like to organize spaces. For instance, you could walk over to a friend's house, look at their pantry, organize it and just make it user-friendly for everyone. So you have that talent, or it could just be something as simple as you have a friendly personality and others feel at ease when they talk to you. So each of us has something that sets us apart and something that is innately a part of us. So once you start to see your own unique qualities and know what you're drawn towards, put those two things together and then see what is out there in your community that fits you.

## Helping others can help you

Once you start doing this, the benefits are far reaching and it's almost like you just have to take the first step and then you keep on going and you build your self-confidence while you're doing this and you get the experience doing it. And you might just discover that by sharing your talents, you discover your great life purpose.

<sup>1</sup>Walton, Alice G. (2017). [The Science Of Giving Back: How Having a Purpose Is Good For Your Body And Brain. Forbes.](#) Accessed September 2021.

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