

COGNITIVE BEHAVIOURAL THERAPY PRACTITIONER COURSE



HOW TO UNCOVER YOUR
PASSIONS & PURPOSES

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“The purpose of life is not to be happy. It is to be useful, to be honorable, to be compassionate, to have it make some difference that you have lived and lived well.” - Ralph Waldo Emerson

Is there a sense of purpose in your life? Psychologists have been studying how long-term, meaningful goals develop over the course of our lives for decades. The types of goals that foster a sense of purpose are those that have the potential to impact the lives of other people. Examples of such goals include starting a nonprofit organization, conducting scientific research, or teaching children to read.

Indeed, having a sense of purpose in life seems to have motivated human beings since the dawn of time, which may explain why it is associated with greater physical and mental health within people. Purpose is adaptive in an evolutionary sense. It helps both individuals and the human species to advance, survive and thrive.

Purpose is often viewed as something that arises from your unique abilities and sets you apart from others, but that's only part of the truth. Our sense of purpose is also derived from the connection we have to others, which is why isolation is often associated with a crisis of purpose. After you identify your path, you'll almost certainly find others who are following the same (or a similar) path as you, looking for the same (or a similar) end goal.

Andrew Carnegie was born in a humble weaver's cottage in Dunfermline, Scotland (which is, incidentally, also my hometown). After immigrating to the United States in 1848, Carnegie took a job as a telegraph messenger boy for the Pittsburgh telegraph office. From these humble beginnings, Carnegie built an empire of steel. By the 1880s, he became the richest man in the world, accumulating nearly \$400 million in his lifetime.

Despite his excessive wealth, Carnegie did not forget his humble upbringings. By the time of his death, he had donated over 90 percent of his wealth to foundations, universities, and other philanthropic organizations. His most notable achievement was his funding of an extensive network of libraries across the world, including his homeland of Scotland. He built what is now the oldest library in Washington, D.C., which bears the dedication “to the diffusion of knowledge.” While accumulating great wealth was one of Carnegie's extraordinary accomplishments, his real purpose was to use his means to benefit the lives of others.

For those looking to discover a meaningful purpose in life, it is essential to invest time in asking the kind of questions that will naturally reveal their personal passions and interests.

The following questions are designed to help you explore your passions and bring into focus whatever is meaningful for you. Please answer the following fifty questions as honestly as possible in order to gain greater clarity about the lifestyle and career that is most likely to bring you complete satisfaction in life.

Qu 1. What areas of your life are most satisfying, meaningful, enjoyable, and valuable to you?

Qu 2. In what areas of your life do you feel stressed, anxious, or drained of energy?

Qu 3. How would you invest your time if you were financially secure or financially free?



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Qu 4. Was there anything you were interested in as a child but didn't pursue?

Qu 5. Would pursuing any of these interests today bring more meaning into your life? If so, how?

Qu 6. After you die, how would you like to be remembered?

Qu 7. If you were to die today, would others remember you as you would like to be remembered?

Qu 8. Name three people who genuinely inspire you. Explain why they inspire you.

Qu 9. What talents, or abilities do you have that you are naturally good at and passionate about?

Qu 10. What skills, talents, or abilities do you possess that you are not enthusiastic about using?

Qu 11. What good causes, initiatives, or charities do you firmly believe in (or identify with)?

Qu 12. What roles or activities have you done in the past that you never want to do again?

Qu 13. How much time do you spend every week doing things that are disinteresting to you?

Qu 14. What are your highest values? Which values have the greatest impact on your life (e.g., authenticity, progress, generosity, peace, security, service to others, personal growth, commitment to a good cause)?

Qu 15. In what ways does your everyday way of life reflect your most important values?

Qu 16. How do you reflect these values throughout your work life or professional pursuits?

Qu 17. In what areas of your life do your decisions conflict with your most important core values?

Qu 18. To which of your most important values are you not devoting enough attention or



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time?

Qu 19. When it comes to what you're passionate about and what matters to you, do you tell others lies?

Qu 20. What specifically is preventing you from fully committing to following your life's passions?

Qu 21. What are your beliefs about your ability (or inability) to succeed in achieving your main passion in life?

Qu 22. What beliefs or fears have held you back from pursuing your main passion in life until now?

Qu 23. What factual evidence do you have that those beliefs or fears are legitimate?

Qu 24. How much risk or uncertainty are you willing to accept with regards to pursuing your passion?

Qu 25. Historically, what have you allowed to stand in the way of you pursuing what you are most passionate about in life? (e.g., your income, job, lifestyle, home, fear of what other people might think)?

Qu 26. What is the main concern you have about fully committing to pursuing your main passion in life?

Qu 27. Would the potential benefits of pursuing your passion outweigh the importance of this concern?

Qu 28. What actions are you prepared to take to curb or eliminate this concern?

Qu 29. Is anyone holding you back from pursuing the life you want to live? Another person, or you alone?

Qu 30. In the absence of care about what people think, what would you dedicate your life to?

Qu 31. Could you live your life without needing to create a name for yourself or maintain a reputation?



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Qu 32. Are there any hobbies or interests you enjoy that you might consider pursuing as a career?

Qu 33. What is your willingness to master these interests so that you can become an expert?

Qu 34. In your life so far, what valuable lessons have you learned that others might find useful? What are the ones you could start teaching others today?

Qu 35. Are you able to save enough to support yourself for six months during a job transition or when you decide to pursue your passion? If not, in what ways could you generate this money?

Qu 36. Instead of working harder for more money, how could you get money to work harder for you?

Qu 37. Would you be willing to make any sacrifices in order to pursue your main interests in life?

Qu 38. What is the worst outcome you could suffer if you fully pursue your passion? Would this be okay?

Qu 39. What would your life be like if you loved what you did every day and made money doing it?

Qu 40. What talents or skills have you not fully developed or expressed? If you want to develop and express your unique talents and skills, what changes must you make (or what risks do you need to take)?

Qu 41. In what interesting ways could you begin expressing yourself more creatively today?

Qu 42. In order to become more creative, what steps or risks are you willing to take?

Qu 43. What groups of people could benefit from your assistance? Who are they and where are they?

Qu 44. In the event that you no longer had to earn money, what would you do instead?

