
Make Love With Joy

A Path to Purpose, Meaning and Joy



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Purpose, Meaning, Joy

Where to Begin?

Life is both simple and infinitely unexplainable. It is both miraculous and entirely rational. It makes sense one day and completely blows your mind the next. Life is an adventure.

We live for the surprises that make us smile and die for the moments that bring us to tears.

Through it all, we will doubt our worth and find reasons to quit yet despite all that we will never know, we overcome to find meaning, purpose and joy.

Purpose, Meaning, and Joy

Meaning is the result of living out your purpose.

Joy is the relationship that marries the two.

We humans are meaning makers.

Unfortunately for us, we happened to be really bad at it.

We attach meaning to everything. “That person’s off glance must mean I did something wrong.” My poor grade on that test must mean I’m a failure. Forgetting my son’s lunch must mean I’m a terrible mother.

These examples all seem ridiculous and over-the-top. Here’s the only problem.

We still believe them.

So how do we stop this meaningless nonsense?

Simple

You stop believing in meaning and start believing in you.

Chapter 1

Belief

Where it all begins

What? Stop believing in meaning and start “believing in me?” But I thought you said I need meaning? and purpose? and joy? What is all this “believing in me” about?

Believe in Me

Whether you believe it or not, a purpose has already been created for you. By the universe, by a creator, by a divine presence, by random chance. Someway, somehow your purpose has been created. It doesn't matter what you believe in or how you believe it was created, it simply matters that you do.

“Beliefs and thoughts alter cells in your body.”

“When we truly recognize that our beliefs are that powerful- we hold the key to freedom”

— Bruce H. Lipton —

Beliefs are our most powerful assets. They can lead to unbelievable happiness and at the same time to unimaginable suffering.

Without unwavering beliefs, we would surely protect ourselves from the damages of crushed faith, but we will also resign ourselves to a life devoid of meaning, far from our purpose, a life estranged from joy.

The key to belief is to harness its power, and it starts by deciding what the first one will be.

You.

You must believe in you. That you exist. That you are alive. That you have been given this life to discover your purpose, to lead others in a similar journey of growth and fulfillment so they can ultimately find their purpose too.

Here's the most amazing part of it all. By believing in you. Really believing in you. You are believing in me. For in truth, I am you, you are me. We are collectively an awareness of belief.

An awareness of belief that anything is possible.

Chapter 2

The Discovery of Purpose

Okay, I believe in me, now what?

Believe in Your Purpose

By starting with a belief in ourselves, we see that we can move to step two, belief in our purpose. We must make a key distinction now to say that you are not your purpose. We will say it again. You are not your purpose.

You in fact, as we said before, are the AWARENESS of BELIEF which in turn can lead to the AWARENESS of YOUR PURPOSE. You exist whether you discover and live out your purpose or not. It is simply your job to be willing to find it.

We Discover Purpose, We Construct Meaning

When you first start looking for your purpose, you will likely meet many of its close relatives. It's distorted, derailing and disturbing relatives.

Wealth, Recognition, Status, Success, Acclaim, Distinction are just a few in the family.

It's okay to meet them, it's even okay to have them over for dinner, it's just not okay to let them see you brought belief as your bride.

We must tend to our belief, like a newborn child, seeing its need for nothing but love.

How do we tend to this belief you ask?

We meet it in the stillness.

“When you lose touch with inner stillness, you lose touch with yourself. When you lose touch with yourself, you lose yourself in the world. Your innermost sense of self, of who you are, is inseparable from stillness. This is the I Am that is deeper than name and form.”

— Eckhart Tolle —

To discover your purpose requires a belief in you, a belief in you requires an awareness of you, and an awareness of you requires a dance with stillness, a dance you must be willing to never ever stop.

Chapter 3

The Construction of Meaning

In stillness comes self and in self comes purpose

The True Self

Now when we say “in self comes purpose”, we are not talking about the small self, wealthy self or half present self. We are talking about the self that arises from stillness. The self that is distilled from the nurturing of belief. The self that is indistinguishable from its only creator.

This is the True Self, the Essential Self, the Self-realized Self.

We will stop there with the abstract language simply to make one last point.

Discovering your purpose is actually nothing other than discovering your true self.

Okay, this is getting ridiculous, you just finished telling me that I am not my purpose, and now you are saying that discovering my purpose is actually nothing other than discovering my true self?

Yes, that is exactly what I am saying.

For you see the YOU that we were referring to when we said YOU were not YOUR PURPOSE is actually not your TRUE SELF at all.

That YOU is the YOU still lost trying to find the stillness, the YOU that still sees the world as us and them, as we and they.

The YOU still struggling with belief, the YOU still struggling with the doubts that you have or will ever find your purpose. The YOU that wants nothing more than to be anything but YOU.

But it's okay. We are all meant to be YOU's. We are all meant to walk as YOU's, seeing and connecting with other YOU's. We must start as YOU's. It's a process. It's called growth.

But when will I know, when will I know I have moved on from being a YOU to a TRUE SELF. When will I know and discover my purpose?

When you stop relying on thinking and knowing and start relying on feeling and being.

Where Meaning Comes to Life

“Man’s main concern is not to gain pleasure or avoid pain, but rather to see a meaning in his life .”

“In some way, suffering ceases to be suffering at the moment it finds a meaning”

— Viktor Frankl—

As we said before, we are meaning making machines. The problem is, we leave the meaning making to the YOU instead of the TRUE SELF.

Constructing meaning requires faithfully carrying out your True Self’s purpose.

Not doing it, but being it. Being it in all things.

Being the compassionate caregiving nurse on only 4 hours of sleep.

Being the loving father that wants to come home and just play.

Being the honest friend who knows nothing but acceptance.

Doing you see, has never been in our name.

Where There Is Gratitude There Is Meaning

Nobody else can making meaning for you, but guaranteed many will try.

Gratitude in reality is just a disguised way of showing others meaning.

Showering them with appreciation for their presence and their heart.

Maybe our biggest problem today is that we don’t show enough gratitude, show enough people that we deeply and truly care, show enough people that they indeed, have found their purpose.

Society is designed to hide all of the necessary ingredients so that you wander around for a while wondering how exactly you will make meaning from your purpose.

It’s not of malicious design or purposeful intent, it’s just the nature of our world. All the things you need to bake a cake aren’t found on the same aisle, so why should you think you can walk one path and discover all it is you need to create meaning from your purpose?

Meaning, as Viktor Frankl tells us, is not made from looking back or looking where the signs tell us to go. Meaning is made by simply standing still, seeing the present moment for what you thought it couldn't be, for believing for a second that your heart has met Joy.

Chapter 4

The Relationship of Joy

The interface between purpose and meaning

When Purpose Found Meaning

Joy is a little different than our friends purpose and meaning. Despite their perceived abstract nature, purpose and meaning are actually quite concrete. Your purpose, for instance may be something like, to educate youth so that they can be empowered and curious scientists and you create meaning when you watch one of your students walk across the stage with a diploma in hand, ready to take on a world of unexplainable truths.

Joy on the other hand is more difficult to describe. Some consider joy a particular feeling, something akin to that feeling when you open up the most amazing Christmas present on a wintry wondrous morning

Joy, however, cannot simply be singular feeling, joy is much more pervasive and present than any fleeting feeling. Happy is a feeling. Joy is a state of being. Happiness will leave you. Joy will stay around as long as you want it to be.

Joy, as I see it, is the interface between purpose and meaning, a relationship between what you do and why you do it. Joy is the confirmation that you've made meaning from your purpose.

To make this more practical let's give you an example where purpose and meaning are not intertwined in the relationship we call joy. Take for example that Monday morning, when you've just come to work, you are with your tribe, you are pursuing the work you were always meant to do, except one thing is different, one thing is drastically off center, you've forgotten why you are doing it. The practice of medicine today is rife with what we've affectionately called "burnout.," and while burnout manifests from a many number of things, at its core burnout is discarded joy, where purpose lost its meaning and started to hang out once more with its troubling kin, something we all know as hurt and resentment.

Resenting your purpose is actually worse than not knowing it at all. Resenting your purpose will most assuredly prevent you from creating true meaning. And guess what happens when purpose and meaning don't find each other, there can be no relationship, there can be no joy.

The Power of Relationships

Relationships you see, are the key to everything. In some abstract since they are everything. Relationships are about union, unity, the creation of inseparable bonds. Relationships, however, are not free from human distortion, and one of our most common distortions is thinking relationships are about relating TO something. How many times have you heard someone say “oh I can relate to that.”

Well I am here to tell you something, relating TO something is not really relating at all. By relating to something, you are still distancing yourself from that object, that person, that place of real connection. Choosing to relate TO something is safe, it gives you a false sense of control; you are able to discern what is still ME and what is the other.

What we were created for was not to relate TO something but to relate WITH it.

Relationships are about losing yourself and finding something more beautiful from the dissolution. Relationship with others implies connections far deeper than superficial similarities. I am WITH HIM. I am WITH YOU. I am WITH THEM. We are WITH each other. Being with someone is acknowledging that there will sometimes be moments where you really wish you weren't actually WITH that person, place or set of circumstances. But relationships such as joy require one thing and one thing only: COMMITMENT.

Sometimes joy won't feel like butterflies floating in the summer breeze, sometimes joy will be that moment of discovery as your grandmother prepares to pass on that the reason you are there is to catch her last breath, your opportunity to give thanks for finding air. In a relationship such a joy, whether we feel joyful or joyless, we must commit to being with it, commit to living out our purpose and to find meaning in the moments where we never thought it would be.

We are relational beings. We are mosaics and we have an innate desire to relate with the world around us.

Not TO the world, but WITH it.

The sooner you lose yourself in the world, the sooner you will discover that you weren't actually losing anything at all. You were actually just now seeing yourself, this miraculous contraction of the universe, present in all the places you previously thought were something different all together.

Chapter 5

So What?

The end to what couldn't have a beginning.

In some iteration of this universe, this book would continue on for another 200 and some odd pages seeking to share with you a collection of distillations that could lead to greater enlightenment and wisdom.

This is not that iteration.

When I was in high school, one of the most influential teachers and coaches I would ever have shared this simple piece of advice when it came to writing.

Anything worth reading, and hence, worth originally writing must answer one question.

So what?

The second piece to this word of advice was that the really really good writers are able to answer this question without you really knowing they were doing it in the first place.

Show don't tell they say.

The truth is, I, or any author can't really "tell" or even "show" you the answer to that question as you ultimately have to decide what in the world you are extracting from any piece of writing.

Reading back over this collection of words, this pattern of sentences I can come up with a number of potential answers to the question, “So What?” Some of them could resonate with you while some could make no sense whatsoever. That’s okay. That’s just the nature of trying to answer this question.

To be honest, we covered a lot of ground in a short period of time. We sought to define meaning and purpose and in the tangle discover their interface joy. We sought to explore the “True Self: and some of the hiccups that convince us we are something smaller. We explored relationships and how relating “to” something is just another way of seeking separation and confinement. We danced in the solemn of stillness to see what beautiful truths could emerge.

In reality, there is absolutely nothing in this short book that hasn’t been said more eloquently by another iteration of the mysterious creation.

Writing, poetry, art, music, etc, you see, is simply the manifestation of one or more humans resonating with an original vibration, an original utterance of God.

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made.””

— John 1:1-3 NIV—

Just as I am resonating with an expanding vibration in order to produce this collection of words, others before me have been resonating to this same vibration, producing unique but universal messages all born from the original creation.

People choose to take this verse from John in the New Testament and interpret it in any number of ways, further proof to the truth mentioned in the very beginning about humans and our extravagant meaning making.

I am not here to tell you the essential truth of this verse. I can’t. I am simply here to share what arises in me when my eyes dance across these words.

Your purpose was uttered at the same time you were uttered into existence. Your essential purpose was uttered prior to the materialization of your human form and through the gift of grace you are able to find it.

Through the gift of free will you are able to make meaning from this purpose and through the gift of Joy you are able to share it with God.

You can go on telling yourself that you have no purpose or that you need to keep looking harder to find it, but I would suggest you try something else.

In order to find your purpose, you will need to resonate with its vibration. To resonate with its vibration, you have to stop moving all together.

Resonance cannot occur when you are running around at 300 different frequencies.

Resonance requires stillness. Our good old friend stillness.

I ran around at 300 different frequencies for 23 years until the destruction of my body required me to finally become still.

And from the stillness of the body I found stillness with my mind.

And from the stillness in my mind, I found stillness with my Creator.

And from Stillness with my creator, I found what could only be my purpose.

And from my purpose I found meaning, And from meaning, I could now make love with joy.