

# NEWSLETTER



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## LIFE'S PURPOSE

MANY THINGS IN LIFE CAN GIVE US PURPOSE AND THAT PURPOSE CHANGES AS WE AGE AND CHANGE. IDENTIFYING A LIFE PURPOSE MAY SEEM DIFFICULT. MANY SENIORS GO THROUGH A PERIOD OF TRIAL AND ERROR AFTER RETIREMENT, IN SEARCH OF NEW MEANING AND PURPOSE. THIS IS A NORMAL PROCESS THAT IS CRUCIAL FOR HAPPINESS .

- Purpose can drive life decisions, influence behaviour, offer a sense of direction, and even help create meaning
- Given healthier life spans and better experiences by many seniors, retirement is an opportunity to pursue a business opportunity, volunteer, master a new skill or pursue other long-planned dreams
- Purpose is unique for everyone

### KEY INFORMATION

- Meaning vs Purpose: Meaning - feeling based on sense of significance of our lives; purpose - sense of calling, potential for our lives
- A sense of meaning and purpose can impact our health in a positive way, protecting against Alzheimer's, disabilities, cardiovascular problems, and impairment
- A new study found that elders with a sense of purpose tend to have better physical function (ex: stronger grips, faster walking speeds) which indicate how fast someone is aging



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### TOPICS COVERED IN THIS CHALENJ

- How to find purpose
- Importance of purpose
- Longevity with purpose
- Purpose in life can change
- Housing built with purpose



# UNLOCKING PURPOSE

You may already have a sense of purpose and see it as one of the following:

- complete their education
- get married
- start a family, have children, form a family
- join a faith community
- find a respectable job or career
- make money
- buy things
- travel
- retire
- enjoy life as they age



When searching for purpose, there are many ways to explore possibilities:

- Try new activities to see which ones you enjoy
  - different work experiences
  - musical experiences
  - health filled activities
  - volunteer activities
  - creative experiences
  - travel to unfamiliar places (even within your own community)
  - talk to people and ask them about their interests and experiences
  - join learning groups
  - take courses online or at a learning center/college
  - learn a new language
- Surround yourself with positive people
- Start conversations
- Volunteer and share your skills and knowledge with others in your community

## IMPORTANCE OF PURPOSE

Having a sense of purpose is important.

- It can identify a pattern of activity or thought for the day
- It may make you feel that what you are doing is worth while
- It may give you a feeling of control over your daily life
- It may make you feel more confident

Having a sense of purpose may also provide positive health outcomes: such as better sleep, more cognitive activity, and more social contacts and friends.

Your purpose may also create a sense of meaning in your life and may help you decide what things are important for you to do, see, and experience. Your purpose may also allow you an opportunity to give back to your community.



<https://kffhealthnews.org/news/soul-purpose-seniors-with-strong-reasons-to-live-often-live-stronger/>

**Viktor Frankl**, in his book *Man's Search for Meaning* explains life as primarily a quest for meaning. He believed that the ultimate test for all of us is to find meaning in our lives.

“ It is within the power of everyone to find meaning, regardless of your health, wealth or circumstances – no matter how miserable or dire. ”

It's not enough  
to have lived  
We should  
be determined to  
**LIVE for  
SOMETHING.**

- Winston S. Churchill

Prime Minister of Great Britain from 1940 to 1945

Research has indicated that those with higher levels of purpose have higher levels of personal growth. They also have less cognitive impairment, better responses to stress, fewer heart attacks and strokes, and live longer.

<https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/wellness-and-prevention/the-power-of-positive-thinking>

## THOUGHTS TO CONSIDER

Do you know people with a strong sense of purpose? What can you learn from their sense of purpose?

What are some of the things you have identified as important to your purpose?

What knowledge or skill are you comfortable sharing with others? How might you share it with others?

## LONGEVITY WITH PURPOSE

Aging itself brings significant life changes. This is the time of life when it is even more critical to have daily purpose.

Paul Irving points to research that suggests purpose, connection and lifelong learning are all determining factors of longevity.

The focus of aging should not be only to survive every day but to do something positive that is of benefit to yourself and others. Purpose may assist with keeping hope thriving because it points us towards the future.

As you age you can draw your purpose from what you have learned, understood and from the knowledge gained. Sharing your knowledge and skills with others can support you with resiliency. As you move forward in life, purpose can point you towards self-awareness, and self-control while also providing the potential impact of your purpose in doing good.

<https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/how-thinking-about-the-future-makes-life-more-meaningful>



# PURPOSE IN LIFE CAN CHANGE

Circumstances may change as we age, and we may begin to wonder what will become of our purpose.

**A variety of life events can have an impact on our sense of purpose:**

- job loss
- children growing older
- relationship challenges
- financial changes
- declining health
- accidents

Change can be challenging for many people, but the challenge can become a positive.

During times of change, it is best to go back to the fundamental concept of why having a purpose is important and how to develop a fresh purpose during these difficult times.

When you combine what makes you happy with what you naturally excel at, and what provides you with more than just personal pleasure, you may find your next purpose.

## HOUSING BUILT WITH PURPOSE

Purpose frequently points to the future, and housing designed for the ageing population can help people find meaning in their daily lives through actions.

Purpose can be found in the home when the home environment encourages the practice of purpose through community opportunities supporting the ageing process.

Purpose-built housing frequently provides affordable housing without sacrificing comfort, convenience, or living quality. The more common apartment buildings strive to give residents easy access to local businesses and culture.

**Click on the picture below to read about a Housing Solution Lab project - example of the research and plans occurring in Canada.**



“  
Having some sense of challenge, having a reason to wake up in the morning — best defined as purpose  
”

Paul Irving, author of “The Upside of Aging”.



**The following amenities may be integrated into purpose-built properties:**

- co-working space
- community gardens (natural spaces)
- fitness centers
- hobby rooms
- indoor-outdoor social spaces
- contemplation and meditation spaces
- multi-purpose areas

**The above amenities may encourage residents:**

- to learn and share information about purpose, knowledge, and skills
- to learn about physical and mental activities that can improve individual and community purpose
- to embrace "social enterprise" through learning, doing, and giving to the community