

Meaning

a purposeful existence

“he who has a why to live for can bear almost any how” Friedrich Nietzsche



Meaning is a personal sense that what we do is valuable and worthwhile and that our actions serve an important purpose for others or society.

1. Meaning is deeply personal and can only be defined by the individual
2. Finding meaning involves moving beyond tending to your own needs and desires and finding something larger and fulfilling to connect with
3. Meaning drives purpose in life – the ‘why’ we do what we do

For most people, their sense of meaning is strongly related to their personal values

Types of meaning

Some of us have a crystal-clear purpose, whilst others are still in search of finding their meaning. And that’s ok. For some meaning involves one large and obvious thing that guides us. For others, our purpose can involve a more subtle cluster of things to meaningfully pursue. This is sometimes referred to as the laser beam v. the firework experience. There are some useful articles you can read on meaning [here](#).

It’s different for everybody

Working towards a larger purpose is a deeply personal experience. There are [many examples of life activity](#) that are commonly pursued to find meaning:

- Social or environmental causes
- Getting involved with a community club
- Political causes
- Religious or spiritual beliefs
- Volunteering or charity work
- Creative expression
- Getting involved in a kids sporting team or program



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How can we pursue and build meaning?

Try asking yourself a few questions to begin with, to think about how you could pursue greater meaning and life purpose:

What is important to you?	How could you capitalise?
What do you really want in life?	Spend your time wisely, with those you really care about
What interests you?	Become involved with a cause or an organisation that matters to you
What are your strengths?	Review your character strengths – what are you really good at or passionate about? How could you apply these to your life?
Who are you at your best?	Be authentic – embrace the ‘real you’

Achieving meaning in your life is an ongoing process rather than a ‘tick in the box’ exercise

The Benefit Mindset

You may be familiar with the concept of fixed and growth mindsets. A fixed mindset focuses only on what you have, reproducing what you know and avoiding failure. Alternatively a growth mindset seeks learning and development, improvement of how you do things and belief that higher levels of ability and achievement are possible. The **benefit mindset** extends to channeling your strengths and abilities to meaningfully contribute to something greater than just yourself. Its focus is on both **being well** and **doing good**. You can read more about the benefit mindset [here](#).

Have we caught your attention?

You may enjoy listening to this [Ted Talk](#) by Itai Ivtzan on the awareness of freedom.

More of a reader? Viktor Frankl is a world-renowned leader in the exploration of meaning. Try his book [Man’s Search for Meaning](#).

