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*Know Your Purpose*<sup>™</sup>

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## What is a purpose?

Many people ask themselves the question, “does my life have a purpose?” In early adulthood, I often felt a strong sense that my own life had some specific meaning to it, but I had no idea what that meaning was. Some people seem to move through life with a strong sense of purpose, and I was always jealous of them. I set many goals for myself, and this usually gave me a sense of purpose, at least for a while. Ultimately, achieving the goal never met this deep need in me.

Some people offer answers that they claim will work for everyone, but this never satisfied me. How could my life’s purpose be the same as everyone else’s? I believe we are all just too different to have a single, homogeneous purpose.

There are many flavors and connotations of meaning to the word “purpose.” Webster’s defines it as “an intention; something set up as an object or end to be attained.” When I say “life’s purpose”, I do not mean a goal or end to be attained in the usual sense. I mean it in the deepest sense of the word “purpose”, as an answer to questions like:

- ✧ Why am I here?
- ✧ Who or what am I?
- ✧ What am I meant to do?

The good news is that everyone has a purpose. The even better news is that it doesn’t have to take very long to learn what it is! You don’t

need to go searching for your purpose; it is already inside you. It has been guiding you your whole life, whether you are aware of it or not. In this e-book, I will offer you a method for learning about your purpose, and give you ways to use that newfound knowledge.

## Why would I want to know my purpose?

Knowing your purpose can dramatically enhance your experience of life. Purpose-driven people experience more fulfillment, more success, and often greater financial rewards than other people. Paradoxically, people who set out to live their purpose often make more money than people who set out to make money! This is because we are better at doing our purpose than we are at doing anything else. We have been training our whole lives to perform our purpose, whether we know it or not.

My biggest incentive for knowing my purpose lies in the future. I sometimes think about the end of my life, lying on my deathbed. What do I want to remember? What do I want to feel? My greatest wish is that I will look back with a sense of satisfaction, knowing that I gave it my all, and that my life made a difference. From this point of view, what could be more important than fulfilling my life's purpose? Friends of mine who have worked with dying people tell me that they rarely regret the things they did; they are much more likely to regret the things they did not do.

## Will this work for me?

Learning your life's purpose isn't for everyone. Just having this knowledge has consequences, and requires you to make choices. The two most important choices are these: Do I want to learn what my life's purpose is? And, having discovered my purpose, do I want to live my life in a way that is consistent with that purpose? These are very important questions, not to be taken lightly.

My complete program includes eight different methods for finding your life's purpose. My second e-book, "Purpose Hunting", offers a simple method you can use to gather information about your purpose. I recommend this method first because it works for people in a variety of life situations, ages, and levels of self-awareness.

## Where can I find my purpose?

In order to describe the means of finding your purpose, I will have to introduce some terms first. For some of you, these concepts may be familiar and simple to grasp. For others of you, these concepts may challenge how you view the world. Either way is fine.

The first concept is that of the ego. "Ego" is Latin for "I", and that is exactly what I mean by it. The ego is the part of us that we know, the part that we mean when we say "I". "I want more money," "I didn't like that movie," or "I want to know my life's purpose." All of

these are the ego. Our thoughts, our feelings, our ability to make choices, are all contained within the ego. The ego is also sometimes called the “conscious” or the “persona” in some psychological systems. It contains everything we know about ourselves and the world around us.

### *Ego Values*

The ego functions according to a set of values, which are intended make us feel good and be safe. It is the ego’s job to protect us and get us what we need to survive and to thrive. The ego generally values these sorts of things and experiences:

- ✧ It wants you to be healthy.
- ✧ It wants money, the more the better.
- ✧ It wants you to be happy at all times.
- ✧ Egos usually avoid fear, pain, and struggle; they want everything to be easy.
- ✧ Egos crave particular life circumstances, like owning a home, a fast car, living in a specific place, and having a great relationship.
- ✧ Egos want acceptance, approval, admiration, and respect from others. They are concerned with how others perceive us and feel about us.
- ✧ Egos divide experiences into good and bad, like and don’t like.

All of our experiences and all of our reality are divided up into categories by the ego. The ego has definite opinions about which things and categories of things it prefers!

Hopefully this is all familiar to you. I am speaking here of our ordinary, day-to-day existence and patterns of thought and feeling. We are like this almost all the time.

“What else is there,” you ask? Well, psychologists have known for over 100 years that there are also parts of us about which we know nothing. Within each of us, there are the things we know about ourselves, and the things we don’t know about ourselves. The things we do not know are collectively called the “unconscious” or the “shadow”. (These terms come from Jungian psychology. Freudians call the unknown material the “subconscious”.) People often assume that there is something bad or evil about this side of our nature, but that is not necessarily true. All that is true is that it contains things we don’t know, whether they are good or bad. (Remember, “good” and “bad” are the opinions of the ego.)

Contained within the unconscious is the part that already knows what your purpose is. I use the term “soul” to refer to this part. I do not intend to carry this conversation into the realm of religion by using this term; it is simply the most commonly used word for the part of us that guides us along our life’s path. Others may define “soul” differently, or attach more meaning to it. Here I mean only this one thing: your soul is that part of you that already knows your purpose.

## *Soul Values*

The soul, too, operates according to specific values which are very different from the ego's:

- ✧ It is concerned with being, not doing.
- ✧ It has a long-term view, sometimes beyond a single lifetime. (I am not espousing a belief system here; this is what people's souls often say when I talk to them.)
- ✧ It has no attachment to the form in which we manifest our purpose ("it's all good"). We can fulfill our purpose in many ways; all are fine with the soul.
- ✧ It has no preference for what experience the ego is having; it doesn't divide experiences into good and bad. In fact, it doesn't do any of the dividing things up into categories that egos do so frequently.
- ✧ It sees a person's life as a "work of art" or journey. There is no specific success or failure in life, no destination or "there" to get to.
- ✧ It sees all our experiences as teachings along a path, no matter how the ego experiences them. It is concerned with how we learn and grow from our experiences, not with whether or not we like them.

It is not necessary to believe in life after death or reincarnation in order to use this method; I am not making any claims about what happens after we die. You don't even have to believe that you have a soul; all that is necessary is that you accept for the sake of argument that some part of you already knows what your purpose is.



## How this works

Okay, now that we have a couple of terms defined, let me describe how this method works. The soul's main function is to guide the development of the ego. In order for us to manifest our purpose, we must be properly trained. The soul develops and executes our training plan, and we call this training "life". It does this by influencing our decisions and helping us to choose things that will develop us in ways that serve our purpose.

I can remember at some critical junctions in my life hearing a quiet voice whispering in my ear, telling me which way to go. I wasn't sure where the voice was coming from, but I trusted it implicitly. This process is represented in a very explicit way in the film Field of Dreams, in which Kevin Costner is coached at different points to make choices that seem outrageous to his family and neighbors (and to his ego). In the end, of course, it all makes sense.

The soul also "arranges" experiences for us that will cause us to grow and develop. These experiences can often be unpleasant, such as car accidents, being fired or laid off, and losing loved ones. But it is most often our worst experiences that teach us the most. The soul doesn't "cause" these things to happen in the normal sense, but often steers us toward learning opportunities that our ego would naturally avoid.

Along the way, as we try out different things, we act in ways that are in alignment with our fundamental purpose, and also in ways that are not. While we are usually unaware of the purpose itself, these two ways of behaving feel very different to us when we reflect on our actions and behaviors.

## Purpose Hunting™

The method in my second e-book makes use of our experiences of being on- and off-purpose. By looking back over our lives, we can see the times when we were on purpose. By looking for similarities in those times or events, we can draw conclusions about our purpose. I call this process “purpose hunting”.

When we are doing things in our life that support our purpose, our soul gives us positive feedback. We often feel fulfilled, passionate, that we are making a difference. Things happen easily. Chance coincidences seem to support our goals and projects (this is called “serendipity”). Our efforts produce results. Many people refer to this state as one of “flow”.

When we are out of alignment with our purpose, it feels very different. We find obstacles at every turn. We have to muster up energy and will to complete things. We are not satisfied by our accomplishments, or the satisfaction is fleeting. We wonder why we’re doing what we’re doing, and imagine greener pastures. I call this experience “slogging”.

The e-book on Purpose Hunting explains a specific way of finding these experiences, and using them to learn about your purpose.

## I'm Ready! What do I do now?

Subscribe to my e-zine, [Know Your Purpose](#). Every week you will receive helpful tips and methods for finding your life's purpose, and for living a successful and fulfilling life. I make e-books, audio programs, and teleseminars available to subscribers of my e-zine only! You can subscribe at [www.KnowYourPurpose.com/subscribe](http://www.KnowYourPurpose.com/subscribe)

## About Tim: Who is he?

Tim Kelley is an acclaimed speaker and author. He is coauthor of the best-selling book Wake Up and Live the Life You Love: Living on Purpose. Tim has helped many leaders find their life's purpose, and he has trained dozens of coaches and consultants. He has transformed entire organizations by working with their executive teams to bring passion and inspiration throughout the work force. Before beginning his career as a speaker, author, and consultant, he was a development director at Oracle Corporation, where he worked for eight years. His clients include Hewlett Packard, American Airlines, Deloitte & Touche, Charles Schwab, Bayer, and numerous smaller companies and startups. Tim is certified by Helen Palmer to teach the Enneagram, a Certified Dream Coach<sup>®</sup>, and also a trained Voice Dialogue facilitator.

Additionally, Tim is Commanding Officer of a 120-person submarine repair unit in the Naval Reserve. He holds a bachelor's degree in theoretical mathematics from MIT.