



Your Personal Mission Statement

Use these 5 tips to find your life purpose.

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BY CHRISTOPHER FRIESEN

Are you unsure of your life's purpose? Are you afraid you're living below your true potential? Do you have trouble staying motivated and focused on your goals?

Often without even knowing, we end up choosing goals, pursuits and careers based on other people's dreams,

expectations and agendas. If this is you, then you need to rethink what your next steps should be. When we focus our energies on the wrong things, we end up miserable and we often don't even know why. Don't let this happen to you.

There's a reason we keep hearing the idea that the key to success is to know your why—your purpose or mission. It's because it's true. There's nothing worse than going through years of blood, sweat and tears pursuing the wrong goals.

So what's the solution?

I've developed five steps that will give you greater clarity about the goals you should really be pursuing in your life. I arrived at these through my own trial and error, reading hundreds of personal development books, my training

as a psychologist, and working with people at their worst—those in prison, depressed or brain injured—and with those at their best—people who are ultra-successful.

1. Know your personality.

Without a solid understanding of your basic personality traits, you'll be frustrated and ineffective in your attempt to live up to your potential. Personality is a complex concept, but a well-researched and practical path to comprehending it is by understanding what I call the "5 Basic Personality Tendencies," each a continuum from high to low:

Negative Emotions: Are you more prone to worry, self-doubt, and feeling tense and moody? Or are you more patient, content and rarely affected by stress?

Extraversion: Are you social, energetic, attracted to excitement and stimulation? Or do you tend to be more reserved, comfortable and interested in working alone—less turned-on by thrills?

Openness: Where do you stand on the continuum between creativity, imagination and curiosity, and being down-to-earth, practical and focused on a narrower range of interests?

Agreeableness: Are you trusting, helpful, modest and sympathetic, or more skeptical, guarded, self-protective, competitive and tough-minded?

Motivation/Self-Control: Are you sure of your abilities, organized, disciplined, goal-oriented and ambitious? Or are you unsure of your abilities, inefficient, disorganized, undisciplined, and lacking ambition and drive?

We all fall somewhere along a continuum of each of these personality tendencies. To be truly effective in finding your clarity and purpose, you need congruence between your tendencies and your purpose. If not, you'll be constantly moving against your own grain.

2. Know your values.

The next step is to find clarity on what's truly important to you—your values. Chasing goals and dreams that are incongruent with your own deeper values is a recipe for failure. One of the best ways to find clarity on your values is to take a values survey. It's often helpful to see a comprehensive list of values and then prioritize those most important to you. (You can find one of these lists in my new book, *ACHIEVE: Find Out Who You Are, What You Really Want, And How To Make It Happen.*)

3. Know your interests and passions.

Once you get in touch with what's truly important to you, it's time to get back in touch with your interests and passions. Many people try to pursue their interests and passions through work. One of the best ways to make sure our pursuits are congruent with our interests and passions is to take a reliable and well-validated career or vocational interest measure. These are psychological tests that help you gain more clarity in terms of careers or activities you're likely to find

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interesting and rewarding. There are numerous vocational interest measures on the market. (It can be hard to decide which measure is good—I recommend Jackson Vocational Interest Survey.)

4. Know your strengths, talents and skills.

The next step in this journey is to get in touch with your strengths, to figure out what you're good at. Keep in mind that being good at something doesn't mean you value the activity or that you're interested in doing it. If you engage these strengths, talents and skills into pursuits that are not in line with your personality, values or passions, you're not going to be happy or effective. One way to figure out your strengths, talents and skills is simply to take the time to brainstorm and write down what you discover. You can also ask trusted family, friends or colleagues what they see in you.

5. Write out your purpose or mission.

By taking the above steps, you'll develop clarity about your life's purpose or mission. The key is having an intimate knowledge of your Basic Personality Tendencies, values, interests, passions, strengths, skills and talents. Taking everything you've learned about yourself, do your best to answer the following questions:

- What do I really want out of life?
- What do I want my life to stand for?
- What am I uniquely put on earth to achieve?

- What do I believe my purpose or mission is in life? Put your answers into a paragraph and fine-tune it. You now have your personal mission statement.

You might discover you have more than one purpose or mission, or that they change over time. That's natural. The key is to make sure you're focusing on the right purpose or mission for you. Each person's is unique to them. Nobody can tell you what yours is, and once you figure it out, you'll be unstoppable.

Now go out there and be who you were meant to be! ✨

Dr. Chris Friesen, Ph.D., C.Psych. is a psychologist who has always been fascinated by what makes people successful. He is a psychologist who now primarily helps professional, national/Olympic and up-and-coming elite athletes, as well as other high achievers such as professionals, entrepreneurs, executives, academics, and writers, achieve their personal and professional potential. He works with high achievers all across North America one-on-one, in groups, or through workshops and seminars. He is currently director of Friesen Sport & Performance Psychology, a contributor to Success Magazine, and is the author of ACHIEVE: Find Out Who You Are, What You Really Want, and How To Make It Happen. To follow him or to find out more, visit FriesenPerformance.com.