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## Investing Time Through Purpose

You'll get more out of your time when you learn how to get more out of your life. Once you have determined what you want, what you value, what you believe, and where your priorities lie, deciding how to spend a given day or hour is easy. In order to get more out of your time, know *what* you want to get out of it. That might seem too simple, too basic, but many (most) people fail to determine their values, purpose, and goals. They are so immersed in daily activities that they fail to think about what they really like to do... what's important to them... and end up overlooking the real purpose of their life.



What is your purpose in life? Do you have a purpose? You'll be happiest and most fulfilled when you are continually achieving goals that are consistent with your life's purpose. If you knew that you had only a year left in your life, what would you do differently? Why? How is it that you would like to be remembered by your family, friends, and colleagues?

Now imagine that you have many years to live. Visualize yourself and your life in one, three, five, and ten years, and answer these questions for yourself:

- ➔ Where do I see myself?
- ➔ What is my occupation?
- ➔ What are my family responsibilities?
- ➔ What kind of future do I want?
- ➔ Are my current actions and activities aligned with my vision of your future?
- ➔ What could or should I be doing differently today that can make a substantial difference in my tomorrows?

The answers you develop for these questions will help you determine your life's purpose, your vision, your values, and your priorities.

Some additional questions you might want to consider answering for yourself:

- ➔ If I could have anything I wanted in life, what would that be?
- ➔ If I could become anyone, who would that be? What would you be doing?
- ➔ If I could develop one quality that would make me more valuable to the people who look to me for leadership and guidance, what would it be?
- ➔ What would you really like to accomplish in my job? For my company?



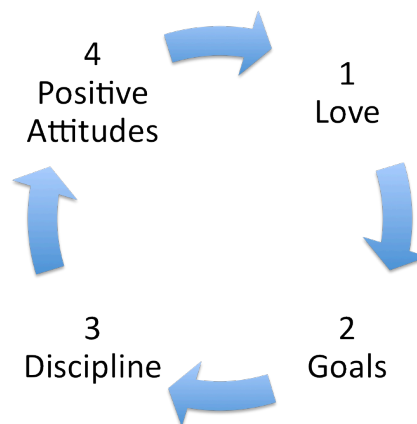
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- ➔ What could I do to improve the quality of my product or service? My work? The work of my people?
  - ➔ What could I change to improve the quality of your life?
  - ➔ What are my strengths, talents, or gifts?
  - ➔ What is my purpose in life?

You may find yourself asking, “Is my future a consequence of what I do now, or is what I do now a consequence of how I view my future?” The answer is **YES!** How you view your future will effect your present decisions, and likewise, your present decisions will deeply affect your future. Everything you are at this moment is a function of the decisions and actions you have, or haven’t, made or taken in the past.

Every life has a purpose. **You** exist for a purpose. Within the boundaries of your purpose you shape your attitudes, skills, and goals. When you take the time to define your purpose and understand your ultimate goals, you build a strong foundation upon which to manage the time of your life. Choices become much easier because you make them in the context of your purpose and your values... everything that is important to you.

Creating a vision of where you are going is critical the successful fulfillment of your life’s purpose. Victor Frankl, in his book ***Man’s Search for Meaning***, shares his experience in a German concentration camp during WWII. He wrote, “All of those who made it through... had something yet to do in their future.” That passage is important. *We need to have something significant yet to do.* A positive and inspiring vision of your future gives meaning to life. Significant vision precedes significant success!

In addition to giving meaning to your life, a clear vision accompanied by specific goals automatically helps you prioritize options and make decisions that are aligned with your purpose. If you know what is important to you and can clearly see the long-term future you desire, the daily decisions about how to get there become easier. Vision and purpose lead to a cycle of success:



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1. **Love:** Successful people love to work and they love what they do. (Not to be confused with passion, which can be faked)
  2. **Goals:** Successful people have predetermined goals and well defined action steps... and they consistently do what is necessary to achieve them.
  3. **Discipline:** Successful people have mastered the art of managing their time and their lives.
  4. **Positive Attitudes:** Successful people expect to be successful!

