

# **Your Mission: Designing a Purposeful Life**

When individuals set goals that are especially meaningful to them, they experience a sense of mission. They feel enthusiasm for the tasks that lie ahead and for what they intend to accomplish. At every stage of life, having a mission gives them a reason to get up in the morning, a reason to bounce back from setbacks, and a reason to explore their potential.

As you take steps to design your life in a purposeful way, you will discover that your thoughts will turn to deeper issues. For you this may mean “finding and expressing my uniqueness,” “making a difference,” or “leaving a legacy.” Whatever you define as your mission, this desire to live a purposeful life will likely be fulfilled in one or more of the following ways: creativity, contribution, generativity, and spirituality.

## **—Creativity**

Many individuals have a creative spirit and they long to demonstrate that in some way. They want to express their unique set of interests, skills, and values in a way that defines who they are as a person. In the classic sense, creativity refers to artistic pursuits like painting, dancing, writing, and so on. But, creativity can also be expressed in the way they solve problems, design a new product or service, or bring out the very best in those whom they associate with on a regular basis.

## **—Contribution**

Others have a strong desire to be of service. They feel blessed in many ways and want to “pass it forward,” “repay their debt of gratitude,” or “make a difference” in some meaningful way. Whatever way they choose to communicate this inner urging, these individuals see strong needs in the world and want to respond in some way. Some fulfill their desire to contribute through giving their time and others through their financial support.

## **—Generativity**

Generativity is the desire to make the world a better place for younger generations. The scope of these activities can be narrow or broad, and can include time mentoring youth as well as efforts to protect and preserve the natural world. Generativity also means passing down your values and stories to the next generation, the knowledge of who you are as a person, and your special contributions. In addition, the concept of generativity includes being a role model for finding satisfaction and fulfillment in life.

## **—Spirituality**

Spirituality is the practice of nurturing your inner growth and seeking wisdom. Some express their spirituality through worship, prayer, and studying the tenants of their chosen faith. Others feel a spiritual connection when they mediate or commune with

nature. For many, their spiritual journey brings them peace of mind as well as a feeling of balance and life satisfaction.

**—In Conclusion**

A sense of mission adds depth and a special essence to life—the value of which is beyond measure. In *Mastering the Art of Self-Renewal*, Frederic M. Hudson wrote:

*When you have a dream and a plan working together in the construction of a life chapter, you have a “mission,” a circumscribed purpose that defines your use of time and space for the duration of this particular life chapter. People with a mission know where they want to go.*

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