



1 SMALL ACT



RESOURCES

SENSE OF PURPOSE

Refreshing Your SENSE OF PURPOSE

It's no secret that we're all searching for different types of meaning in life—whether it's through our relationships, our career, our goals or even just our day-to-day routines, we're often asking the “why” behind certain experiences and how they all come together in a bigger way. Meaning is often discussed in tandem with finding a sense of purpose. A sense of purpose can be thought of as the things that energize you and connect you to your values.

What gives you meaning or a sense of purpose will likely change over time due to emerging experiences. Ask yourself (or a loved one) these questions to help determine your current sense of purpose, and revisit them every so often to see if the answers change:

- What energizes you?
- What types of tasks do you feel most internally motivated to accomplish? When do you benefit from external motivation (e.g., deadlines, support from a friend, words of affirmation, praise, acknowledgment)?
- How can you make more time for projects or hobbies where you feel completely at ease or in the zone?
- What habits are you currently good at and which ones would you like to expand on?
- How can your goals or intentions be updated? What types of goals are both achievable but also will contribute to your personal growth?
- Who are your role models? How can you take inspiration from them to bettering yourself?



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“ Feeling connected to others and having a sense of purpose are fundamental to our emotional and mental well-being. We find joy and satisfaction in having a heart-to-heart talk with a loved one, going on a picnic with friends, participating in a community volunteer event, achieving a long-sought goal, and other activities that bring us closer to others. ”

– U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs



SENSE OF PURPOSE

Challenge yourself to do one of these small ACTs to give your life more meaning in times of hardship:

SUPPORT SOMEONE IN A SMALL WAY

Help a friend edit their resume, drop off a warm meal to an older neighbor or offer to virtually mentor someone on a skill they'd like to develop. Volunteering your time doesn't have to equate to a large, timebound commitment—it can also look like finding small moments of your day to provide help.

FIND “NEW” EXPERIENCES AND CREATE MEMORIES

From the pandemic, we learned that there are still ways you can have new experiences from the comfort of your home. Try setting up a virtual movie marathon with a friend or attending a virtual event, like a book club session, concert or panel discussion. Switch up small parts of your week, like driving through a new neighborhood or taking a different hiking trail when you visit a local park.

CULTIVATE GRATITUDE

Whether you prefer writing down what you're thankful for or if you'd rather share it with a shipmate, take a moment to recognize the good things that are happening to you (or around you) to feel more present. Maybe you squeezed in a workout between commitments, drank your favorite type of coffee or got a positive update from a family member—whatever it is, sit with the positive feeling of thankfulness.

Finding and maintaining a sense of purpose or meaning in life is a key protective factor against suicide.

WHERE TO GET HELP:

- Your local Navy chaplain, Fleet and Family Support Center (FFSC) or medical
- **988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline:**
Call: 988, press 1
Text: 838255
- **Chat online:** <https://988lifeline.org/chat/>
- Military OneSource: call (800) 342 9647 or visit www.militaryonesource.mil
- Sailor Assistance and Intercept for Life (**SAIL**)
- Crisis Text Line: text 741741

For access to more resources:



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