

# Top 5 Insights from 25 Books on Purpose

Without a clear purpose, life will pull you in a hundred different directions. You'll feel aimless, lost at sea, and void of meaning. But when you define and live with purpose, the feeling of overwhelm fades away as your mental energy concentrates like a laser in one direction, generating enormous levels of self-discipline and grit. Your purpose-fueled grit produces creative insights and new skills. Therefore, living with a clear purpose brings forth your best self, your best work, and your greatest impact.

Here are five powerful ways to cultivate a sense of purpose from more than 25 books on purpose. Think of these five big purpose insights as a "choose your own adventure." Decide which of these five approaches to purpose resonates with you most and then use it immediately.

## Purpose Insight #1: Face the Resistance

You can instantly find your purpose by asking: **"What work am I most resisting right now?"**

In *The War of Art*, author Steven Pressfield says: **"If you're feeling massive resistance, the good news is it means there's tremendous love there. If you don't love the project that is terrifying you, you wouldn't feel anything. The opposite of love isn't hate, it's indifference. The more resistance you experience, the more important your unmanifested art project or enterprise is to you, and the more gratification you will feel when you finally do it."**

When you feel lost and overwhelmed, your resistance is your guiding compass, your true north. If you're unsure which project you should commit to for the next 12 weeks, write down five possible projects and pick the project that scares you the most. Facing the Resistance that sits between you and work you know is important is your gateway to personal growth and a great way to discover your calling in life.



## Purpose Insight #2: Pursue Your Uniqueness

You came into this world with DNA that has never been seen before and will never be seen again. You have a brain that is not quite like anyone else's. And you lived experiences no one else will ever replicate. This combination means you have the potential to contribute something unique. **Your purpose is to define and refine that thing.**

In *Mastery*, Robert Greene insists you must take two steps: reconnect with your primal curiosities and relentlessly learn skills linked to those curiosities. Your primal curiosity is what you gravitated to between the ages of 5 and 12 (before experiencing intense social pressure). Greene observed that all masters maintain a connection to their primal curiosity throughout their careers. You must return to your origins and rediscover what fascinated you before social pressure urged you to conform. Once you reconnect with your primal curiosity, you must commit to learning skills related to it and value learning above all else. You must make deliberate sacrifices to excel at a handful of skills, that when combined, will make you one of a kind.



## Purpose Insight #3: Choose a Worthwhile Struggle

**Choice + Struggle = Purpose**

In *Man's Search for Meaning*, Viktor Frankl chose to see his struggle in the Nazi concentration camp as a worthwhile struggle—one that would help him understand the human condition and guide others out of suffering. His willful struggle led to one of the greatest books ever written and a new field of psychology called Logotherapy (Meaning Therapy), which has improved millions of lives. Frankl says, **"What man actually needs is not a tensionless state but rather the striving and struggling for a worthwhile goal, a freely chosen task."**

Friedrich Nietzsche said, **"He who has a why to live can bear almost any how."** It's a powerful truth. But reverse the order, and it becomes even more profound: *Determine how much pain you're willing to bear for something, and you'll uncover your why.*



## Purpose Insight #4: Carry on the Impact

Create a list of people who have helped you become the person you are today. *Was there a relative (maybe a grandma or a grandpa) who gave you the confidence to be yourself when everyone else thought you were weird? Was there a sports coach who helped you set a higher standard for yourself?*

When you come up with a list of people who have played a pivotal role in helping you become the person you are today, share stories about the people who have impacted you with a partner. Your partner's role is to ask you specific questions about how those people impacted you and notice when you come alive. The goal is to discover an impact that was so profound and so life-changing that you feel it is your mission to have that impact on others.



## Purpose Insight #5: Love

In *Man's Search for Meaning*, Viktor Frankl defines love as seeing the potential in others, which is not yet actualized, and helping them actualize it. Love is creating opportunities for your child. Love is mentoring a junior member of your team. Love is introducing your friend to someone who can help them find a new and more rewarding job. As an entrepreneur, you can love your customers by developing a product that will free up their time and help them realize their potential.

When you lack meaning, decide who you can elevate. Aim to make someone's life a little bit better. Get so busy helping others you forget yourself in the process. Frankl says, **"The more one forgets himself—by giving himself to another person to love—the more human he is and the more he actualizes himself."**

