



Applying Research to Help Youth Discover their Purpose in Life

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Purpose in life

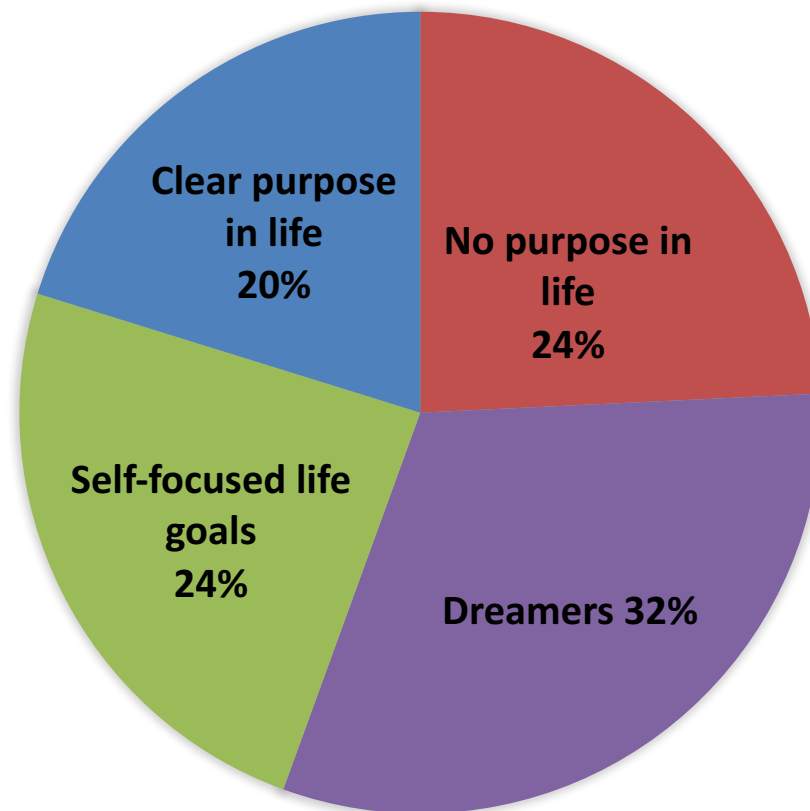
A stable and generalized intention
to accomplish something
that is at once personally meaningful
and at the same time
leads to productive engagement
with some aspect of the world beyond the self

(Damon, Menon, & Bronk, 2003)

Purpose is beneficial

- Associated with psychological health, including
 - Hope (Bronk, Hill, Lapsley, Talib, & Finch, 2009)
 - Happiness, (French & Joseph, 1999)
 - Life satisfaction (Bronk, et al, 2009)
- Associated with improved physical health, including
 - Improved cardiovascular and metabolic markers (Ryff, Singer, & Love, 2004)
 - Less chronic pain (Kass, Friedman, Leserman, Caudill, Suttermeister, & Benson, 1991)
 - A regression in cancers and other autoimmune diseases (Melnechuk, 1988)
 - Longevity (Boyle, Barnes, Buchman, & Bennett, 2009; Krause, 2009)
- Associated with indicators of academic success, including
 - Grit (Hill, Burrow, & Bronk, 2014)
 - Resiliency (Benard, 1991)
 - An internal locus of control (Pizzolato, Brown, & Kanny, 2011)
 - Academic efficacy (Solberg, O'Brien, Villarreal, Kennel, & Davis, 1993)

Purpose is rare



(Bronk, Finch, & Talib, 2010; Damon, 2008; Francis, 2000; 2010 Moran, 2009)

Efforts to foster purpose



Pathways to purpose



Guidelines for fostering purpose

Consider language

Offer time and guidance for reflection

Share examples

Challenge youth to think about:

- Personal strengths
- Deeply held values
- Gratitude

Offer feedback and prompts to deepen thinking

Listen to youth

Help youth get involved

Provide support to help them remain engaged

Thank you!!

Fostering Purpose Project

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Youth Gratitude & Purpose Project

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