



THE
PURPOSE
PROCESS

thecos.org

"This is the one true joy in life, the
being used for a purpose, recognized
by yourself as a mighty one..."

– George Bernard Shaw, 1856 -1950

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THERE IS A GROWING LEADERSHIP CRISIS IN ORGANIZATIONS TODAY: MANY LEADERS HAVE FORGOTTEN

WHAT **WHY** THEY'RE DOING THEY'RE DOING.

The impact of this lack of clarity is felt throughout organizations; it is not something you can hide.

According to *Harvard Business Review*, 50% of corporate managers distrust their company's vision. And according to a nationwide Gallup survey, 74% of U.S. workers over the age of 18 are not engaged in their work. The resulting disengaged employees cost their companies lost work days, reduced productivity, higher health care costs, eroded customer loyalty, higher turnover, and ultimately, declining profit. And the numbers are steadily getting worse: In May 2012, Forbes reported that only 14% of employees are satisfied with their job. One-third are seriously considering leaving.

The impact on leaders is at least as severe, though much harder to measure. Many executives drag themselves to the office day after day, dreading the enormous workload and non-stop meetings. Subordinates seem never to live up to their potential, and exciting plans and initiatives don't quite pan out the way they were supposed to. The executive title and paycheck that seemed like a triumph begin to feel like a hollow victory. The lifestyle that has been built around the career dictates a continued flow of money, so there's no escape from the grind.

So what is happening, and what can you do about it?

The Roots of The Problem

A natural shift in consciousness occurs sometime between the ages of 35 and 60, a shift to a different set of values. The younger ego-driven approach to power, goals and achievement begins to fade, and is replaced by a focus on *meaning*.

To the leader unprepared for this shift, it feels like the car is running out of gas. It can lead to confusion, lack of motivation, and even depression. What is required is not a new car, but a new kind of gas.

People in the latter stages of their productive years are not driven by goals and achievement alone. Their activities must have meaning. In order to be motivating, they become concerned about the impact their life will have and the legacy they will leave behind. Their professional activities must feed a larger sense of purpose.

Without this sense of purpose, their efforts never quite take off, and their full potential as a leader is never realized.

What Is a Purpose?

As we use the term, a “purpose” is the “why” of a leader’s life. It is the meaning that underlies all of his or her activities. It answers the most fundamental questions, such as:

Why am I here?

Who am I meant to be?

What am I meant to do?

These questions are usually treated as imponderables, questions that defy answering. In truth, these questions have a unique and specific answer, different for each individual. Knowing the answers to these questions can guide you to a life of vision, meaning, productivity, and success. Leaders who are clear about their purpose are an inspiration to others. They transform organizations and bring out the best in subordinates. They lead people toward a compelling vision, creating extraordinary results along the way.

Is It Time to Find My Purpose?

Finding your purpose is a serious endeavor, one that may impact your life in ways that are difficult to predict. It is a transformational journey. It challenges your sense of who you are. It probes at the reasons for the things you do.

In order for the process to work, you must have a drive, a compulsion to know your purpose. This drive is usually the result of one of two situations:

The first, and most common, is that you may find yourself concerned and even upset about the lack of meaning in your life. You may consider changing jobs or careers, hoping to find something more energizing and significant. You may be concerned that continuing along your current path will leave you wishing your life had had more impact.

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THE EGO, & THE UNCONSCIOUS & THE SOUL

Understanding the process of finding your purpose requires some sense of the human psyche and how it operates. First, let’s divide the psyche into two parts: the ego and the unconscious.

THE EGO

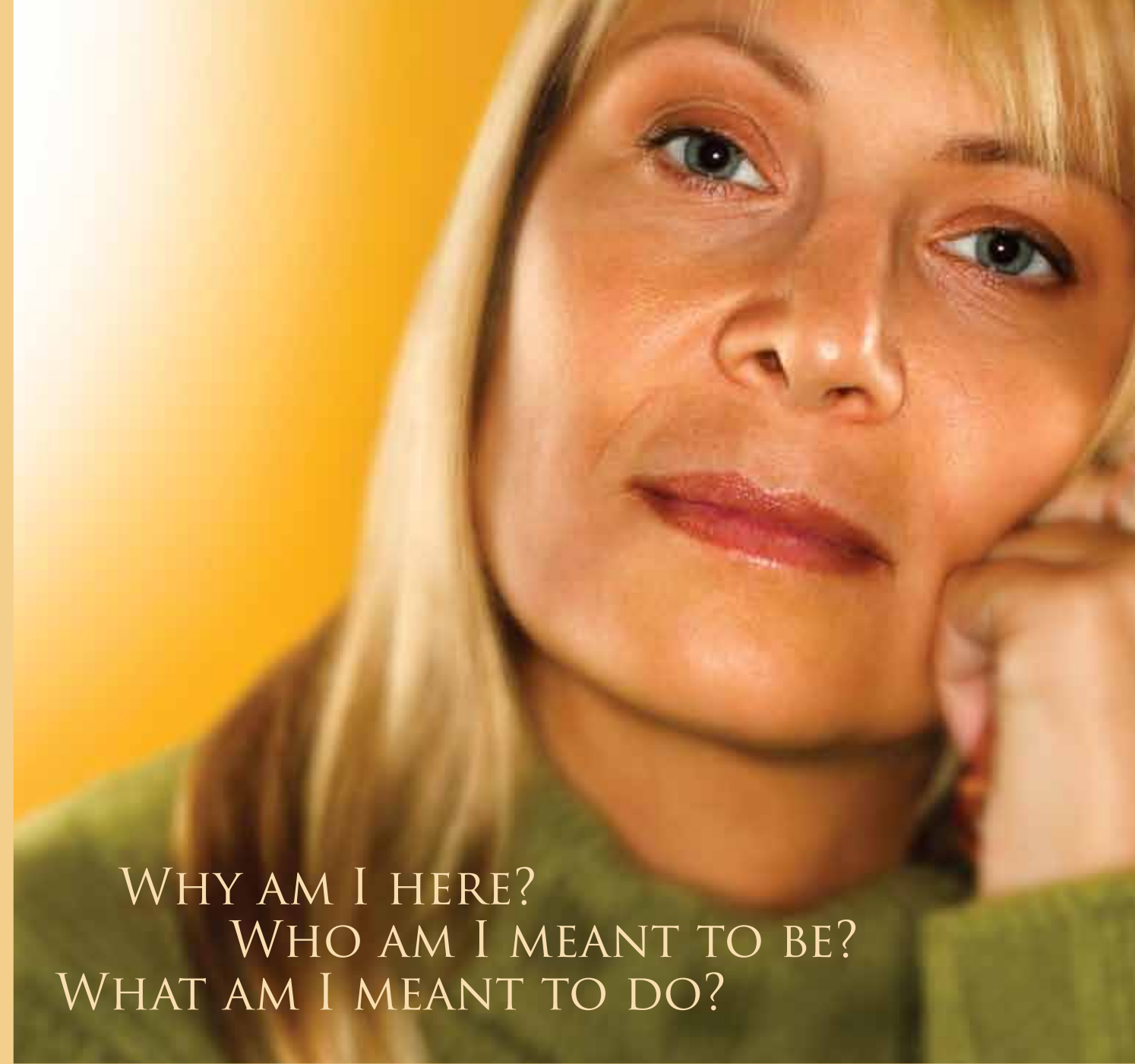
The ego, also known as the conscious, the persona, or the personality, is the sum total of everything you know about yourself, including your thoughts, feelings, memories, and desires. It is the part of you that gets things done and makes decisions. When you describe yourself, this is what you are describing. It is responsible for your sense of self, your safety, and meeting your needs.

THE UNCONSCIOUS

What else is there? The part of you of which you are unaware, variously called the unconscious, the subconscious, or the shadow. This consists of forgotten memories, suppressed thoughts and feelings, and everything else that you don’t know about yourself. There is nothing bad about the unconscious; it is simply the aspects of yourself of which you are unaware. It operates out of sight, yet has immense influence.

THE SOUL

Within the unconscious, there is a particular part of you that knows your purpose, variously referred to as “soul,” “spirit,” higher self,” or “entelechy.” Because seeking life’s purpose can be seen as a spiritual activity, spiritual terms are often used. In this context, it is not necessary to attach religious meaning to this part of the psyche; simply, it is the part of you that knows your purpose.



WHY AM I HERE?
WHO AM I MEANT TO BE?
WHAT AM I MEANT TO DO?

This source of deeper wisdom seeks to direct you towards your purpose, often by rewarding purposeful behaviors and discouraging non-purposeful ones. Times when you are on purpose often are accompanied by fulfillment, ease, meaning, and synchronicity. Times when you are off purpose usually are met with

obstacles, lack of motivation, lack of energy, and even failure and breakdown. Part of the natural defensive functioning of the ego is to suppress information from the unconscious. It requires intention and effort to access the guidance of the “soul”.



In either case, the common element is this: *you have a strong sense that there must be more to life, and you have a powerful urge to find out what it is.*

If this does not describe you, then consider yourself lucky. Keep doing what you're doing!

How Does the Process Work?

If you're looking for your purpose, you've probably discovered that there isn't a lot of help for actually finding it. If you've tried reading books about life purpose, you know most contain little or no specific techniques for discovering your purpose. You may have tried coaching or workshops that left you with a "purpose statement," but no increase in your ability to make powerful choices. You are left on your own, still seeking a sense of meaning and fulfillment.

» The *Purposeful Leader* methodology takes you through a process that results in clear, specific deliverables. Much more than a simple purpose statement, you end up with a detailed articulation of your purpose, confidence in its validity, and an action plan for moving forward. To achieve this requires a serious psychological and spiritual exploration, one that will bring you into contact with new awareness, new capacities, and new sources of power within yourself.

In some cases, this state of angst is accompanied by turbulent circumstances. You may have been fired from a leadership position and be scrambling to find the next opportunity. You may have been diagnosed with a disease. You may be in a divorce or recently have lost a loved one. If these circumstances keep you up at night wondering "why," it may be time to find your purpose.

The second scenario is that people sometimes have a strong urge to find their purpose when everything is going fine. You may have a sense that everything is working, but that there must be something more. Your desire for vision, purpose and meaning may not be the result of any crisis or "dark night of the soul." Some people seek out growth and transformation for their own sake, rather than as the solution to a problem.

The process of finding your purpose occurs in four phases. Each one moves you successively towards greater clarity of purpose. Each one also leaves you better prepared to manifest your purpose, once it has been identified.

Phase I: Purpose Hunting™

The simplest methods for finding purpose are "indirect;" they use the available evidence to infer or deduce aspects of purpose. This is usually done

by answering a series of questions that elicit purpose-related information, such as:

- » *When are the times you've felt most passionate in your life?*
- » *What would you do if you had a year to live?*
- » *What would you do if you won the lottery?*

Having spent an hour or two journaling to questions like these, you and your coach will review the answers. The answers usually contain patterns and clues to your purpose. Once these patterns are identified, it is best to leave them and move on. While indirect methods are a natural and useful way to start, they usually do not produce reliable purpose statements.

Phase II: Clearing Obstacles to Purpose

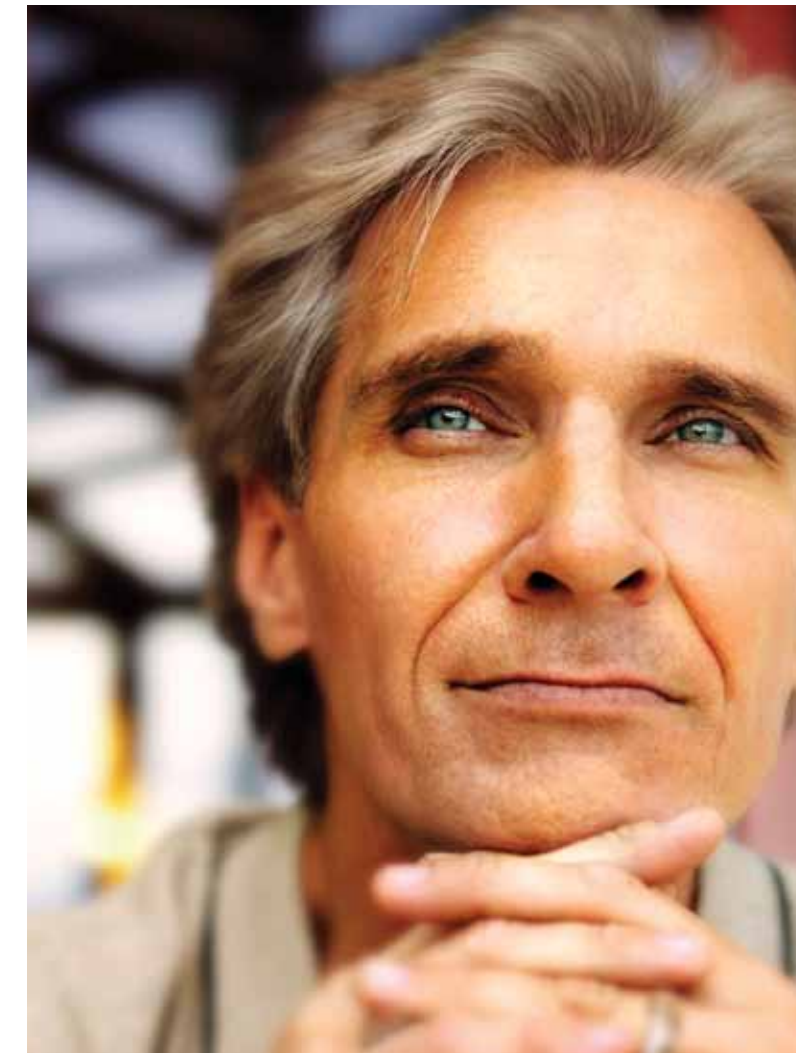
Nearly everyone has some degree of concern and reservations about finding his or her purpose. In the back of your mind, you may have questions like, "Will I be able to make money at my purpose?" "Will people think I'm crazy?" "Will I have to spend my life helping the poor?" Trying to bypass these concerns is not helpful. Until these fears are fully expressed and resolved, no method for finding your purpose will produce specific, actionable results.

Resolving these reservations can take anywhere from a single session to weekly sessions lasting a month or more. Deeply exploring concerns about purpose has very positive outcomes. Not only does it make finding your purpose possible, but it can also help old self-limiting beliefs and habits reform into new, positive patterns of thought and behavior. Most clients report that this phase is a period of self discovery and liberation.

Phase III: Discovering Your Purpose

Once the inhibiting concerns and fears have been dealt with, it is usually relatively easy to find the purpose itself. This phase involves using various methods to set up a direct, two-way dialogue with your "soul" (the unconscious aspect of your psyche that knows your purpose). Some methods can be done on your own; others require active facilitation and guidance.

Once the line of communication to your soul has been established, it is a relatively simple matter to interview it and "download" specific information about your purpose. You can also use this connection to get counsel and advice regarding other questions that are on your mind, such as career and relationship issues.



Phase IV: Interpretation and Integration

Having established a connection to your soul and discovered your purpose, the final phase is to analyze what you have received. This includes deciding whether what happened was valid, interpreting your purpose, constructing purpose statements, and deciding how to implement your purpose in your life.

This phase is critical, as it sets you up to be successful in implementing your purpose. Only when you fully understand your purpose and how it applies to your life can you reap the rewards of being a compelling and inspiring leader.

Outcomes of the Process

The Purposeful Leader process reliably produces a specific set of outcomes:

- » *A clear sense of purpose*
- » *A written and/or audio recording of your "soul" describing your purpose*
- » *One or more purpose statements*
- » *A plan for implementing your purpose in your life*
- » *A reliable, repeatable method to reconnect with your soul for further advice and counsel*

Once you are clear on your purpose and have discerned how to integrate it into your work and your life, the path forward becomes clear. Decisions are informed by your purpose, guiding you to those strategies and approaches that are most likely to bear fruit. Your actions become expressions of something deeper and more meaningful, leading to more fulfillment, more clarity, and a sense of being part of something larger.

This enhanced and expanded perspective is highly engaging and inspiring to others, causing them to want to join in your endeavors.

Not everyone is called to be a purposeful leader. The clarity, power and influence that naturally ensue from purpose are both compelling and confronting to the ego. You may find that you prefer to remain as you are, manifesting with known skills and predictable results, rather than playing a bigger game. Transformation has its downside! Most people choose a life without purpose, without mission. There is nothing wrong with that.

But if you feel compelled by your purpose, if you feel the need to leave your unique mark on the world, then call us and begin your journey today.

the collaborative operating system



Michael Ryan – In addition to training individuals and groups in the COS, I am also a purpose coach and organizational purpose consultant, and a principal of the True Purpose Institute. I work with leaders and their companies to help them find and fulfill their highest purpose in order to make their biggest impact in the world. Like Rachel, I appreciate the focus and wisdom that the True Purpose process brings to our life's journey. It is my pleasure to work with Rachel to use this remarkable process with groups.



Rachel Conerly – For the past 15+ years, I've worked as an organization and leadership development consultant to both executives and change agents. I've worked with leaders at all levels and with organizations of all sizes. I am a passionate teacher and derive great satisfaction from helping my clients develop more meaningful and sustainable lives. Because my own journey has been so enriched by the True Purpose Process(TM), I am committed to bringing this process to our clients. Michael Ryan is the perfect partner for this work. We make a good team!