



## “Live and Work On Purpose” Newsletter

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### What Do You Want to Be When You Grow Up?

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Remember when, as children, we would ask each other, “What do you want to be when you grow up?” Remember the exciting images that we conjured in our minds when we considered the answer to that question? Images of saving the world as a nurse or doctor, images of rescuing people as a firefighter, or images of ridding the world of hunger and poverty. Fast-forward to today. What are you doing now? Do you still have the same sense of anticipation about your future? Do you get excited each morning when you prepare to go to work? Do you have the calm but invigorating sense that you are living your divine purpose in life?

If you answered “no” to any of those questions, you’re not alone. A January, 2010 study by the Conference Board revealed that only 45% of those surveyed said they are satisfied with their jobs. That’s down from 61% in 1987. This is especially concerning since many Americans will likely need to continue working beyond traditional retirement age. It’s also concerning to those who are just about to enter the workforce. What causes job dissatisfaction and what can we do to find career satisfaction and fulfillment?

### What Causes Job Dissatisfaction?

According to Dr. Helen Harkness, a leading career expert, there are four key sources of job and career dissatisfaction:

- **Job Dissatisfiers** – This source of unrest is generally about the employer or the job itself. Job dissatisfiers include poor management, unmanageable workloads, a negative or unsafe workplace, poor salary, unfair treatment, chronic workplace conflict, etc.
- **Job Chaos** – This source of unrest is due to chaos in the organization or the career field. Job uncertainty, an unstable employer, perceived lack of future or stability, and layoffs are all examples of job chaos.
- **Job / Skill Mismatch** – This source of dissatisfaction is due to a poor match of an individual’s skills and competencies to the job. This is characterized by people who are doing work at which they’re not skilled and/or in which they feel they cannot succeed.
- **Job / Heart Mismatch** – This source of unrest is due to an individual doing work that does not match his/her value system, need for meaning, or definition of purpose and success.

### How Can I Find Satisfaction in My Work?

The same four areas that describe the typical reasons for job dissatisfaction hold the key for finding purpose and engagement in your work. Whether you are looking for your first job, your mid-career job, a retirement job, or searching for a new career field, here are six key questions to ask yourself:



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- **What am I good at?** What are my key skills? What have I recently accomplished that I am particularly proud of? What have I been complimented on recently? These questions can lead you to your key skills; the things you are truly “good at”.
- **What am I interested in?** What captures my attention and interest? If I’m in the library, what kinds of books or magazines am I drawn to? If I could do any job I wanted to do, regardless of my skills, what would I have the greatest interest in doing?
- **What are my values?** What do I hold dearest in my life? What do I value in life more than anything else?
- **What suits my personality?** Am I more introverted or extroverted? Am I an organizer or prefer to “go with the flow”? Am I more drawn to defined processes or prefer to “do it my own way”?
- **What are my strengths?** Strengths are not skills. They are areas of life in which you are strong. This could include love of learning, optimism, or curiosity.

Finally, you should ask yourself:

- **What about me and my "best self" meets a key need in the world?** After you’ve completed an inventory of your skills, interests, values, personality, and strengths, what type of work or career contribution emerged for which there is a need in your world or community?

Answering these questions will help you consider your “best self” when identifying the job or career that will engage, energize, and fulfill you for life. Working with a career professional can help you consider the answers to these key questions. As a coach, I have a number of highly validated and reliable assessment tools that will help you answer these questions and be on your way to living your purpose.

Are you living your greatest life? If not, what do you want to be when you grow up?

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Bradley Davidson is a certified personal & professional coach whose personal mission is to empower people and organizations to lead their lives and worlds with purpose, vision, passion, and integrity by providing individuals life-changing learning, coaching, and support. He may be contacted through his website at [www.liveandworkonpurpose.com](http://www.liveandworkonpurpose.com) .