

I'm not a robot



百度知道>提示信息 知道宝贝找不到问题了> 提示信息 知道宝贝找不到问题了> 3. Recognize your strengths and talents We all have strengths and skills that we’ve developed over our lifetimes, which help make up our unique personalities. Yet some of us may be unsure of what we have to offer. If we need help, a survey like the VIA Character Strengths Survey can be useful in identifying our personal strengths and embracing them more fully. Then, you can take the results and think about how you can apply them toward something you really care about. But it can also be helpful to ask others—teachers, friends, family, colleagues, mentors—for input. In the Purpose Challenge, students were asked to send emails to five people who knew them well and to pose questions like: What do you think I’m particularly good at? What do you think I really enjoy? How do you think I’ll leave my mark on the world? Adults can do this if they need feedback, too—either formally or informally in conversation with trusted others. People who know you well may be able to see things in you that you don’t recognize in yourself, which can point you in unexpected directions. On the other hand, there is no need to overly rely on that feedback if it doesn’t resonate. Getting input is useful if it clarifies your strengths—not if it’s way off base. 4. Try volunteering Finding purpose involves more than just self-reflection. According to Bronk, it’s also about trying out new things and seeing how those activities enable you to use your skills to make a meaningful difference in the world. Volunteering in a community organization focused on something of interest to you could provide you with some experience and do good at the same time. Working with an organization serving others can put you in touch with people who share your passions and inspire you. In fact, it’s easier to find and sustain purpose with others’ support—and a do-gooder network can introduce you to opportunities and a community that shares your concern. Volunteering has the added benefit of improving our health and longevity, at least for some people. However, not all volunteer activities will lead to a sense of purpose. “Sometimes volunteering can be deadening,” Stanford University researcher Anne Colby. “It needs to be engaging. You have to feel you’re accomplishing something.” When you find a good match for you, volunteering will likely “feel right” in some way—not draining, but invigorating. 5. Imagine your best possible self This exercise is particularly useful in conjunction with the magic-wand exercise described above. In Greater Good’s Purpose Challenge, high school students were asked to imagine themselves at 40 years of age if everything had gone as well as it could have in their lives. Then, they answered questions, like: What are you doing? What is important to you? What do you really care about, and why? The why part is particularly important, because purposes usually emerges from our reasons for caring, says Bronk. Of course, those of us who are a bit older can still find these questions valuable. However, says Bronk, older folks may want to reflect back rather than look ahead. She suggests we think about what we’ve always wanted to do but maybe couldn’t because of other obligations (like raising kids or pursuing a career). There seems to be something about seeing what you truly want for yourself and the world that can help bring you closer to achieving it, perhaps by focusing your attention on the people and experiences you encounter that may help you get there. 6. Cultivate positive emotions like gratitude and awe To find purpose, it helps to foster positive emotions, like awe and gratitude. That’s because each of these emotions is tied to well-being, caring about others, and finding meaning in life, which all help us focus on how we can contribute to the world. In her study with young adults, Bronk found that practicing gratitude was particularly helpful in pointing students toward purpose. Reflecting on the blessings of their lives often leads young people to “pay it forward” in some way, which is how gratitude can lead to purpose. There are many ways to cultivate awe and gratitude. Awe can be inspired by seeing the beauty in nature or recalling an inspirational moment. Gratitude can be practiced by keeping a gratitude journal or writing a gratitude letter to someone who helped you in life. Whatever tools you use, developing gratitude and awe has the added benefit of being good for your emotional well-being, which can give you the energy and motivation you need to carry out your purposeful goals. 7. Look to the people you admire Sometimes the people we admire most in life give us a clue to how we might want to contribute to a better world ourselves. Reading about the work of civil rights leaders or climate activists can give us a moral uplift that can serve as motivation for working toward the greater good. However, sometimes looking at these larger-than-life examples can be too intimidating, says Bronk. If so, you can look for everyday people who are doing good in smaller ways. Maybe you have a friend who volunteers to collect food for the homeless or a colleague whose work in promoting social justice inspires you. You don’t need fame to fulfill your purpose in life. You just need to look to your inner compass—and start taking small steps in the direction that means the most to you. This article is part of a GGSC initiative on “Finding Purpose Across the Lifespan,” supported by the John Templeton Foundation. In a series of articles, podcast episodes, and other resources, we’ll be exploring why and how to deepen your sense of purpose at different stages of life. Scroll To Top By Jill Suttie | July 9, 2025 By Jill Suttie | July 9, 2025 A new study suggests that even across cultures, there is a lot of similarity in where humans find purpose in life and how it brings us fulfillment. 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