



The
Quest

"Find and Fulfill Your Life's Purpose"

Gary B. Doyle



The Quest: Find and Fulfill Your Life's Purpose is for anyone who is at a crossroads in life and needs a straightforward road map to fulfillment. Author Gary Doyle uses his own lifetime of learning as a business leader and father, combined with the real world experiences of others, to set out a clear, simple path to defining one's personal Quest, developing a plan for its fulfillment, and sticking to it.

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Find and Fulfill Your Life's Purpose

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THE QUEST:

*Find and Fulfill Your Life's
Purpose*

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ISBN: 978-1-62141-827-6

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Published by BookLocker.com, Inc., Bradenton, FL.

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Printed in the United States of America on acid-free paper.

BookLocker.com, Inc.
2012

First Edition

Step 1: Begin Wherever You Are

It is not the critic who counts: not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles or where the doer of deeds could have done better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood, who strives valiantly, who errs and comes up short again and again, because there is no effort without error or shortcoming, but who knows the great enthusiasms, the great devotions, who spends himself for a worthy cause; who, at the best, knows, in the end, the triumph of high achievement, and who, at the worst, if he fails, at least he fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who knew neither victory nor defeat.

- Theodore Roosevelt

If ever a person lived out their life's purpose with gusto and courage in the face of adversity, it was the great Theodore Roosevelt. The story of Roosevelt's personal Quest – being of service to others, which he identified early in his life – offers stirring proof that anything is possible for a person with a never-say-die spirit and a strong sense of direction.

"In the long run, no man or woman can really be happy unless he or she is doing service," Roosevelt once said. And wow, did he ever "do service!" Even though he began his life as a sickly child who was stricken with asthma and was barely able to breathe, Roosevelt devoted himself to reaching a level of physical fitness that led to a lifetime of robust activity and exertion rare in our history. He boxed,

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played tennis, hiked, rowed, practiced judo, and rode horses, among other things. And despite the unimaginable pain of seeing his mother and his young wife die of unrelated causes on the same day, he never stopped moving forward. He believed in action and being in the arena above all else, and he believed that one must lead by example. These core beliefs compelled him to abandon the life of privilege and leisure into which he had been born, and become a public servant.

He formed and led the Rough Riders, a volunteer cavalry unit that fought in the Spanish–American War. He created the U.S. Forest Service, and set aside 230,000,000 acres of public land for protection. He formed the Progressive “Bull Moose” political party, served as Assistant Secretary of the Navy, Governor of New York, Vice President, and President of the United States. He won the Medal of Honor and the Nobel Peace Prize – the only U.S. president in history to achieve both such distinctions.

From youth to death – a death which arguably occurred early because his health was keeping him out of the arena, and life outside the arena was not the life for Teddy – Roosevelt’s efforts were designed to prepare and improve his ability to serve. Teddy Roosevelt lived in the moment, completely focused on the task at hand. He began wherever he was, over and over and over again. Undeterred by difficult circumstances, roadblocks and obstacles that even the rich have to overcome, he continually reassessed his situation, set his sights on the road ahead, and did whatever it was he had to do that day

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to carry out his personal Quest. No excuses. No alibis. No kvetching.

First say to yourself what you would be; then do what you have to do.

- Epictetus

The purpose of this chapter is to set you upon (or return you to) the journey to your personal Quest with a Roosevelt-like determination to get in the arena and stay the course, no matter what. The first step is to get a grip on your current bearings.

Think about it: before setting out on a journey of any length, you have to know where you are. For navigational purposes, you've got to identify the current reading of the stars. You do this not only to give yourself the proper perspective when it comes to direction, but also to accurately assess the true reasons for why you are where you are so that you can address them in the future. In order to make your journey as productive and efficient as it can be, you must understand what has hindered you in the past and why you have traveled only five miles each day when you had planned to travel ten.

Sherlock Holmes once said, "Nothing is more deceptive than an obvious clue." So it's time for a bit of detective work. What are the real reasons for that gap between where you are and where you want to be? What clues have you been missing in the past? What clues have you misread? It is time to find out. Grab a piece of paper and a pencil and write down the following eight

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questions, leaving several empty lines between each one. Then write your answer to each question:

Current Status:

1. Do I have a personal Quest?
2. Have I strayed from my personal Quest path? If so, for how long?
3. Am I happy with my family?
4. Am I happy with my love life?
5. Am I happy with my finances?
6. Am I happy with my health?
7. Am I happy with my job?
8. Am I happy with my community?

Now, for each question – even the ones for which you answered “yes” – take time to write two or three sentences that best describe your feelings about that life component. For example, if you are happy with your community, you might write, “I feel a sense of belonging and security here.” If you are unhappy with your finances, you might write, “I feel frustrated when I can’t pay my bills” and “I feel ashamed that I can’t contribute to the office fundraiser this year.” This is critical. Without an understanding of why you feel this way, it will be very difficult to make the changes necessary to improve your situation.

Then, for each question, write down the events or circumstances that directly led to your current status. For some there will be a particular event; for others there may be a multiplicity of events or occurrences. For example, if you feel unhappy with your love life, you might write,

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“Chad broke up with me and I haven’t felt like dating yet.” This is not an exercise to find every event in your life that led to a setback. It is about the **critical** events that led you to where you are. Note whether the circumstance(s) are permanent or temporary. Is there anything you could have done to prevent it? If so, write it down. Be realistic.

Next, write down who caused you to abandon your path and/or to feel the way you feel about each of the above life components. HINT: Take responsibility and name yourself whenever applicable. Avoid blaming others. Recognize that you cannot control other people, but you can control yourself and your responses to whatever they throw at you. Focus on identifying which of your actions – or lack of action – led to your current status.

Then, for each of the eight questions, write down one to five reasons or things that are keeping you from improving your current status. For example, if you are unhappy with your job, you might write, “The job I want requires a college degree, and I don’t have one,” or “I haven’t made time to update my resume and start sending it around.” Do not turn this into a pity party. Make it a realistic assessment of your situation.

And finally, at the very end of the page, write down anything new you have learned about yourself from this exercise.

*Start where you are. Use what you have.
Do what you can.*

- Arthur Ashe

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Answering these kinds of questions can be hard – especially if you don't feel particularly good about yourself and your situation right now. In fact, I have seen far too many people get hung up on this step and have a very difficult time getting past it. I believe this is the reason that change is so hard; we don't want to make ourselves temporarily vulnerable by facing the reality of our situation and accepting responsibility for it. It hurts to dredge this up and commit it to paper, but writing it down is essential. Thoughts rambling around in your brain are only fragments. They are hard to get a hold of and impossible to fully understand. But when you bring them out into the open and see them in black and white on the page in front of you, you will begin to see patterns and solutions.

A friend of mine named Jill, who is in her mid-fifties, recently told me that she is basically just waiting around to die; that she has no purpose and no direction because it was browbeaten out of her by her parents many decades ago and reinforced by her ex-husband and life in general.

"Your hair is awful!" they used to tell her. "You've got such a big nose!" And, "You can't do that, you're not smart enough to do that! Don't embarrass us by even trying." It was heartbreaking to hear the details of Jill's story, but I assured her that she has the power to overcome it. So I gave her an assignment: to write down her thoughts about where she is in her life and why; and who or what is responsible. She promised me she would complete the assignment. But when I ran into her the following week, Jill admitted that although she had given the matter some thought, she hadn't written anything down because she hadn't had the time. Instead, she had made a list of some

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of the things she could do career-wise that would make her more money in the short term.

When I saw her a week later, she admitted that the real reason she did not do the assignment was that she was afraid of the answers; afraid that she might have to try something new and fail again.

The victorious strategist only seeks battle after the victory has been won, whereas he who is destined to defeat first fights and afterward looks for victory.

- Sun Tzu

I am cognizant that this kind of exercise can be a very hard thing for some people to do, especially when they are feeling low or are in crisis. But think about it – making a formal assessment is what wise people do when they are trying to plot a winning path. This is where they win the battle, before the battle even begins. A task like this is basic to setting any kind of strategy, whether it is in business, sports, politics, or anything else that is dynamic and ever-changing. At regular intervals you must stop and honestly examine where you are and what got you there in order to fully understand the nature of your reality, and then determine what adjustments, if any, need to be made going forward.

A perfect illustration of this notion of assessment comes from Jerry Kramer, a former offensive lineman for the Green Bay Packers. I grew up in a place with no other NFL team around, so the Packers were my team as a kid. In adulthood, I worked in a senior leadership position for five years in a Green Bay business that was a heavy

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supporter of the Packers. We sponsored an annual Packers alumni event and also a golf tournament. It was the coolest thing. All these heroes of mine would come back to town, and I got to hang out with them. I developed a casual relationship with Jerry Kramer, who by that time was famous not only for playing football, but also as an author and sports commentator.

One evening at the Packer Hall of Fame, Jerry and I had a conversation that I will never forget. He told me that the year he was drafted by Green Bay, the team was lousy. Jerry admitted that he played halfheartedly, goofed off a lot and paid little attention to his coaches, but it didn't seem to matter since rookies rarely got to play anyway. But in Jerry's second year with the Packers, Vince Lombardi was hired to lead the team, and suddenly everything changed. No matter what Jerry did, Lombardi was all over him – in his face, shouting all the time, telling him he was worthless and that his blocking stunk, and that he was lazy. It was unmerciful, to the point where Jerry was ready to quit. One day after a particularly grueling practice session during which Lombardi had been relentless in his criticism, Jerry had had enough. He stormed off the field and slammed his helmet against his locker in frustration. He was a breath away from throwing in the towel and walking away from professional football forever.

But just at that moment, Lombardi came up to him and asked him what was wrong. Jerry told him that he could not take the constant badgering and criticism anymore. He went on to say that he obviously was not good enough

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to play in the NFL, so there was no point in continuing to try.

Jerry steeled himself for what he imagined would be a fierce reply, but instead, the coach reached out and patted him tenderly on the cheek.

“Kid, there’s only one reason that I am pushing you this way,” Lombardi said, “and that’s because you have a huge amount of talent but you are not giving it. All you’ve got to do is use it, and from my perspective, you could be one of the greatest linemen who ever played this game. **That** is why I’m on your back all the time. That is why I spend my energy on you, not because you can’t but because you can if you will!”

In that instant, the ground shifted under Jerry’s feet. Tears came to his eyes. He knew that his coach spoke the truth – he had not been giving his best effort. No one had ever expressed that kind of faith in him before. No one had ever exhibited that much patience in trying to show him the way. From that moment on, Jerry took everything Lombardi said to heart. He began practicing in earnest and playing harder than ever before. And ultimately, he **did** become one of pro football’s finest linemen, just as Lombardi had predicted. In fact, Jerry Kramer made arguably the most famous block in NFL history when he bulldozed a clear path for Packers quarterback Bart Starr to score the winning touchdown against the Dallas Cowboys in the last ten seconds of the great 1967 NFL Championship game that came to be known as The Ice Bowl. The Packers went on to beat the Oakland Raiders in Super Bowl II.

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Dear Past, thank you for all the lessons.

Dear Future, I'm ready.

- Author Unknown

The reason Jerry had that kind of huge success in his career as a football player, and later as a motivational speaker and author, was because in that one critical moment in the locker room with Coach Lombardi, he allowed himself to be vulnerable. He could have easily walked out the door and spent the rest of his life complaining about how “that damn Vince Lombardi drove me out of football.” After all, other Packers players did walk out and never come back. But Jerry was willing to control himself and candidly assess his own skills, talents, capabilities and effort. He chose to be honest with himself and admit that he had not been doing his best. He listened to Lombardi’s guidance. He was open to changing; open to learning and practicing and taking responsibility for his actions. He was willing to set his ego aside, honestly assess himself and his efforts, and begin again exactly where he was. Jerry almost quit without ever facing his reality. What a shame that would have been... especially for us Packers fans!

Is it worth the emotional strain of answering deeply personal questions and being totally, brutally honest with yourself? ASK JERRY!

Yes, it is hard work, but trust me, it is one hundred percent worth it. It is the first step on (or back on) the road to living your personal Quest. So set a deadline to complete this chapter’s assignment (three hours is reasonable) and make it a priority to give it your undivided

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attention. Do not worry if you can't answer or can't answer deeply enough today. You will come back to this document time and time again, and eventually you will have the answers you want and need.

I'll be right here, waiting for you!

Remember:

- You have to know where you are today before you can plot a winning course for tomorrow.
- You must come to terms with the true reasons why your current situation is the way it is, so you can make corrections.
- **Responsibility=Power.**
You must take responsibility
- Writing down your thoughts and feelings shines a light on them, helping you make sense of them and removing any fear of what they are.

Suggested Reading:

THE RIVER OF DOUBT: Theodore Roosevelt's Darkest Journey, by Candice Millard

Take a Break With...

Jesse's Story

Let me tell you, Jesse hated his job. And you would too, I imagine, if you had to do it. Jesse was a chicken plucker. That's right. He stood on a line in a chicken factory and spent his days pulling the feathers off dead chickens so the rest of us wouldn't have to. It wasn't much of a job. But at the time, Jesse didn't think he was much of a person. His father was a brute of a man. His dad was actually thought to be mentally ill and treated Jesse rough all of his life. Jesse's older brother wasn't much better. He was always picking on Jesse and beating him up.

Yes, Jesse grew up in a very rough home in West Virginia. Life was anything but easy. And he thought life didn't hold much hope for him. That's why he was standing in this chicken line, doing a job that darn few people wanted.

In addition to all the rough treatment at home, it seems that Jesse was always sick. Sometimes it was real physical illness, but way too often it was all in his head. He was a small child, skinny and meek. That sure didn't help the situation any. When he started to school, he was the object of every bully on the playground. He was a hypochondriac of the first order.

For Jesse, tomorrow was not always something to be looked forward to. But, he had dreams. He wanted to be a

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ventriloquist. He found books on ventriloquism. He practiced with sock puppets and saved his hard earned dollars until he could get a real ventriloquist dummy. When he got old enough, he joined the military. And even though many of his hypochondriac symptoms persisted, the military did recognize his talents and put him in the entertainment corp.

That was when his world changed. He gained confidence. He found that he had a talent for making people laugh, and laugh so hard they often had tears in their eyes. Yes, little Jesse had found himself.

You know, folks, the history books are full of people who overcame a handicap to go on and make a success of themselves, but Jesse is one of the few I know of who didn't overcome it. Instead he used his paranoia to make a million dollars, and become one of the best-loved characters of all time in doing it!

Yes, that little paranoid hypochondriac who transferred his nervousness into a successful career, still holds the record for the most Emmy's given in a single category. The wonderful, gifted, talented, and nervous comedian who brought us...

*Barney Fife
WAS
Jesse Don Knotts.*

- Author Unknown

Step 3: Uncover Your Purpose

To realize one's destiny is a person's only obligation.

From THE ALCHEMIST, by Paulo Coelho

One of my favorite movies is the Christmastime classic *It's a Wonderful Life*, which stars Jimmy Stewart as the benevolent banker George Bailey, a community leader in the picturesque village of Bedford Falls. I think I love that film so much because it is the perfect illustration of how beautiful and powerful it is to live ones' personal Quest. As a lead-in to the movie's climax, George's Uncle Billy loses a bank deposit of \$8,000. The loss was not George's fault, but nevertheless, as the firm's principal he faces arrest – not to mention the financial ruin of the bank founded by his late father and uncle. George is so distraught and desperate that he contemplates killing himself by jumping off a bridge into the icy waters below. As he prepares to jump, he wishes aloud that he had never been born.

At that moment, a clumsy angel named Clarence is sent down to intervene and save George. In the process, Clarence shows George a series of scenes from his past, but he makes the scenes George Bailey-less, as if George had indeed never been born. For example, George's beloved kid brother drowns at the age of nine because George was not there to save him. A sick child is poisoned and dies because George was not there to stop

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the delivery of the wrong prescription. Bailey Building and Loan fails because George was not there to take it over when his father passed away. As a result, scores of decent, hardworking Bedford Falls families were unable to get the loans necessary to achieve their home ownership dreams. The town descends into chaos.

With the angel's help, George finally sees the light. He discovers that he truly *has* had a wonderful life filled with great success and much love, and that he has made a positive difference in the world by living his personal Quest. George discovered that his purpose was not about the Building and Loan, but about helping others build a life of independence and creating a community that supported each and every person within it. Even if the Building and Loan failed, George would go on living his purpose

You too can make a difference – to yourself, to your family, to your community and to the world. All it takes is to uncover your personal Quest and to pursue it to the best of your ability. Your purpose need be neither complicated nor glamorous. It need not produce exceptional riches, nor seem cool to your peers. It is yours, and that is enough.

*Life is valuable and is sustainable only so long as
life has something valuable as its object.*

From *See You At the Top*, by Zig Ziglar

Those who have uncovered their purpose cannot imagine how they got through their lives before they did. Those who have not discovered it are not sure how to find it. They have been told to find and live their passion, and

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have in many cases played a guessing game, or a frustrating game of try-it-on-for-size, only to be left empty by the result and have thus given up on ever finding it. There is one thing that is clear, however: finding, keeping and nurturing your purpose is critical to living a life that is valuable, sustainable and fulfilling.

Your purpose has been called a variety of things. Some of the more familiar descriptors are passion, personal legend, dream, the music within, mission... you get the idea. Often when I ask people to describe their personal Quest, they will say things like, *I want to be rich. I want to be famous. I want to be a teacher. I want to be a candlestick maker. I want to be a basketball player. I want to be a leader in my industry.* But those are characteristics and roles, not purposes. Your purpose is neither a job nor a goal, but rather the end result of our lives.

In other words, your purpose is **the deeply seated expression of the reason you are living this lifetime.** It is the benefit of your being here on Earth. It is the “so what” of your existence. To me, it can best be described by the words you might find in a speech given at your 100th birthday celebration. *He helped others. She changed the way we educate our children. He eased the suffering of Alzheimer’s patients. She encouraged people to maintain fitness through exercise and nutrition. He protected the ecology. She created a healthy environment in which a happy family could grow. He raised his children in a way that they understood their Quest and lived it. She created a business that provided people a place to work and flourish.*

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It is important to note that your Quest is not about reaching a particular destination and then stopping. Rather, it is about going on a journey to a definite destination, yet when you reach the top of each hill you can always see, and feel compelled to go, further. You will never fully accomplish your mission because it is something that burns within you regardless of how well you have done. You will spend a lifetime refining, striving, and reaching as you travel the path prescribed by your purpose. The trick is to enjoy the journey; to appreciate each milestone along the way. You will know that you are on the right path when the smile on your face is transformed with the happiness that is reserved only for those who feel the fulfillment of pursuing their purpose.

If you are looking for the love of your life, stop. They will be waiting for you when you start doing the things you love.

For many of us, finding our passion and purpose comes easy. Others never discover it, while some find it later in life. For instance, Julia Child was in her late forties before she discovered her love of cooking after attending a French cooking class. She was 49 when her first cookbook, *Mastering the Art of French Cooking*, was published. At 51 she gained television fame. At the age of 69, she became co-founder of the American Institute of Wine and Food to help advance the knowledge of food and wine through restaurants. In 1984, at the age of 72, she completed the series of six videotapes called *The Way to Cook*. So what if she was no spring chicken – Julia's passion for the culinary arts shaped the way the world views food and wine, and her influence continues to

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be felt years after her passing. Julia found her purpose by chance, later in her life, proving that it is never too late to strike out on your personal Quest.

But not everyone has to wait until the autumn of their lives to realize their passion. One who discovered his purpose early and therefore had the distinct pleasure of living it out the majority of his life was Ronald Reagan. When the future president was eleven or twelve years old, he read a book called *THAT PRINTER OF UDELL'S*, by Harold Bell Wright. The book opens with a young boy named Dick Walker witnessing the death of his beloved mother, a devout Christian, while his alcoholic, abusive father lies passed out nearby, unable to help. Dick runs away and seeks refuge in a church in another town. A kindly man named Mr. Udell takes him under his wing and gives him a job as a printer. Over the years, Dick grows into a fine man whose passion is to be a good Christian who works to make his adopted town a better place. His tireless efforts pay off – the town eventually becomes a model community thanks in large part to Dick's good judgment and problem-solving capabilities. He develops his skills as an orator by speaking in church, and he even marries the girl of his dreams. Ultimately, Dick is elected to the House of Representatives, and the book ends with him kneeling in prayer before heading off triumphantly to Washington D.C.

The story goes that young Reagan finished reading that book and declared to his mother, "I want to be like that man." He clearly recognized his purpose when he saw it, even though he was only a child at the time. Years later, Reagan wrote to the author's daughter-in-law, "The

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term 'role model' was not a familiar term in that time and place. But I realize I found a role model in that traveling printer whom Harold Bell Wright had brought to life. He set me on a course I've tried to follow even unto this day. I shall always be grateful."⁴

Indeed, Reagan undoubtedly called upon the inspiration of Udell's printer often as he pursued his purpose and reached each leadership milestone he set for himself. Reagan was not content to be simply a radio and film star. His passion was to make his industry better, so he became president of the Screen Actors Guild. He was not satisfied with simply being a resident of California. He wanted to make his state a better place, so he became Governor. And it was not enough for Reagan to be just another American citizen. His passion was to make his country and the world better, so he became President of the United States.

Finding your passion no matter who you are or where you are in life is a wonderful thing, but it is not always as straightforward a path as it was for Ronald Reagan. Take my friend, Dave, for example. I have known Dave for 25-years. He is in his late forties, and just went through a cancer scare – an aggressive tumor near his lung. He is recovering from major surgery that required, among other things, the removal of some of his ribs. Dave has always been a very active, athletic guy. He has done quite well in his professional life, too. He worked for a division of a multi-national company that merged with the parent

⁴ Kengor, Paul. "The Intellectual Origins of Ronald Reagan's Faith." Heritage Lectures. The Heritage Foundation. February 25 2004.

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company, and he was suddenly faced with the choice of either relocating or taking a severance package. He and his wife had a son who was still in high school at the time, so he chose to accept the package and stay where they were. He took a job as vice president of sales for another company – a job that is significant in the sense that it is important to the world, but not very satisfying for him. Now his son is off to college, and Dave is faced with that age old question: *Is this all there is?* He knows he needs to find his passion, his purpose, but he cannot figure out what the heck it is.

Dave is a logical, analysis-driven individual. He has thus thought about his dilemma as if it were a business opportunity by digging for the facts that will lead him to a logical answer. Yet he has been stuck trying to identify a job he would like to do, or come up with a list of things he is good at. I have tried to shift him from the cerebral realm into the emotional realm to get him thinking about what he loves rather than which role he might fill, but he is fighting the concept. Like many people, Dave has never really faced his emotional side (what is in his heart). On the one hand, he is afraid all the while knowing that he must do so if he is to find his personal Quest. *I haven't had time, or I will get to it next week* are his common responses when I ask him where he is in the process.

Do not be like Dave. Dive in with all the caution fear generates, yet with the burning desire to get in the arena in a powerful, controlled way.

Draw your own map of your journey. Don't let others draw it for you.

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My friend and former colleague, Karen, has a similar story. Karen worked in her family's small business when she was younger, but she always had a burning desire to be the leader of marketing for a major company. She applied and was accepted to one of the world's most highly regarded business schools. After graduation, she worked for a variety of large food businesses in progressively more responsible roles. She then went to work as vice president of marketing for an insurance company that was trying to change the way they sold life insurance. The company discovered that changing from a sales-driven to a marketing-driven focus was too risky, and scaled back their marketing efforts. Karen had to look for another job.

Next she took a position abroad with a major fast food chain as vice president of marketing, fulfilling a lifetime dream of returning to her country of birth. Eventually she became interim general manager of that overseas division and got it moving forward. But then the company brought in a new local permanent manager, and for whatever reason, he and Karen did not get along. Karen found that her dream of returning to her homeland was not what she had anticipated and decided to go back to the United States.

After coming home, Karen spent a bit of time trying to figure out what it was she would do, but everything always came back to this longing to be the leader of marketing with a big company. She took another job as vice president of marketing for the retail division of a restaurant and retail foods company. She soon became senior vice

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president of marketing for the entire business. She had finally reached her goal.

And guess what? One day she looked at herself in the mirror and asked, “Is this all there is?”

That is the danger of trying to make a particular position or job title your purpose, because once you reach it, what else is there? A Quest is not a destination!

Since then, Karen and I have had many discussions about where she has been and where she would like to go next. She has been working diligently to sort everything out, and I think she has finally had a breakthrough. She realized that there are two things she truly loves to do: the analysis and strategizing that goes along with marketing, and teaching it to others. In a nutshell, Karen’s purpose is to help people have rewarding careers by teaching them everything she knows about how to market effectively. In my view, she is finally on the right track – a track that transcends her current job and leads to a lifetime journey toward her Quest.

Karen’s story demonstrates that discovering your personal purpose starts not with the brain, but with the heart. It starts with love. For me, this was the hardest of steps. Business is not about emotion but about logic and control, and my success had been driven by that. But to find my purpose and my passion, I had to force myself to step away from logic and control. This is difficult for many people, especially those who are having enough trouble just trying to survive and thus have little time to think about what they love. For others, thinking about what they

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love is uncomfortable because they have spent a lifetime learning to hide their emotions. If any of this describes you, do not worry – the brain (the practicality part of the discovery process) will come into play later and will temper the emotional aspects of this process. For now, let your emotions go – let them run – and find your purpose.

Get out your pen and paper, because it is time to get started with another exercise!

Discovering Your Passions

First, ask yourself, ***What do I love to do, and why?*** Target at least three things that you really enjoy doing. “Likes” don’t count. Here are my answers, to get you thinking:

- I love to play golf, because it is both mentally and physically challenging, and it is a game that one never conquers. It is something that I can always get better at, no matter how good I get.
- I love to develop business strategies, because it requires analysis of a broad base of facts to arrive at a direction that will produce outstanding results.
- I love to read, because books provide an endless supply of new thoughts and ideas.

Next, ask yourself, ***What do I love to learn about, and why?*** Again, try to come up with at least three things. Here are mine:

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- I love to learn about the American Civil War, because it demonstrated our nation's Quest of liberty for all. It proved that pursuing a Quest is never easy, but with patience, persistence and faith it is always possible.
- I love to learn about people, because understanding what they believed and how they lived their beliefs provides direction and inspiration.
- I love to learn about what motivates people, because understanding others will help all of us work better together.

Then, ask yourself, ***What do I love to teach to others, and why?*** Here is how I answered that question:

- I love to teach others to play golf, for it is a game that will challenge them and bring them joy for a lifetime.
- I love to teach others to sell themselves, because it requires great understanding of self, along with confidence in their own abilities.
- I love to teach others how to find direction in their lives, because knowing that I have helped another brings great satisfaction to me.

Gary Doyle

Now, ask yourself, ***What do I love to experience, and why?*** My answers:

- I loved living in Bangkok because it allowed me to learn and understand an entirely different culture.
- I love going to seminars because I meet so many interesting people.
- I love experiencing the great geological wonders of the world because it makes me feel humble.

Next, ask yourself, ***What am I good at, and why?*** My responses:

- I am good at convincing others, because I usually know forty times more about the subject than I will need.
- I am good at public speaking, because I enjoy the opportunity to inspire and instruct others.
- I am good at analysis, because my mind works logically and I am energized by finding relevant facts and bringing order to them.

Then, ask yourself, ***How would I like to make a difference in the world, and why?*** Do not debate the practicality or possibility of success; just define it. I wrote:

- I would love to find a way to convince everyone that we have more commonalities than we have

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differences, because the focus on differences tears us apart and causes us to fight one another.

- I would love to make a difference in how people approach making decisions about their life's work, because I know the world will be a better place when everyone is doing work that aligns with their personal Quest.
- I would love to make a difference in the lives of people with disabilities, because I know that everyone deserves a fair chance to succeed.

Next, ask yourself, ***Whom would I love to serve, and why?*** Do not underestimate your influence. My answers were:

- I love to serve my family, because I want to help them to be happy and enjoy a high quality life.
- I love to serve our schools, because that will allow me to positively impact kids now and in the future.
- I love to serve humanity, because I believe we are all members of one family regardless of our differences. I want everyone in "my family" to succeed.

And finally, ask yourself this question: ***If I could accomplish any one thing in my life, what would it be?*** Again, don't debate or justify, just answer the question from your heart. My response:

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- I would love to inspire and instruct first my children, then as many other people as possible to find their purpose and live it while ensuring a community environment that encourages and facilitates each individual's personal responsibility to do so.

Read over all your answers and look for any common threads running throughout. Make a list of any recurring themes you discover in your answers. Next to each item on the list, note how many times each appeared. This will lead you to two or three items that will help you focus on your purpose. Mine were *teaching* and *inspiring others to live their lives strategically and with purpose*.

Spend some time thinking about your common themes. Look in the mirror as you do so. Do the themes seem to "fit" you well? Do they feel right? Are you energized when you think about them? They should... but if they don't, do not despair. Dig deeper and try again until you discover your common threads. Trust me, they are there and they will appear, but only if you do not give up.

In the next chapter, we will take this newfound knowledge and use it to begin breathing some life into your personal Quest.

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Remember:

- Like George Bailey, you really can make a difference by living out your personal purpose.
- Your purpose is not a job or a role, but rather the result of your life; the benefit of your having lived with intention.
- Purpose lies more in the **heart** than in the **brain**.
- Sometimes it takes work to uncover your personal purpose, but it is worth it.
- Once you are on the road to your personal Quest, everything else will fall into place.

Recommended Reading:

THE ALCHEMIST by Paulo Coelho

JONATHON LIVINGSTON SEAGULL by Richard
Bach

Take a Break With...

Finding Passion

Sean Morrison, a recovering alcoholic wrote this blog describing how he found his passions:

For someone who has been affected by addiction, finding passion can often be hard at first. My definition of passion is loving what I do and doing what I love; it's about having that feeling in my gut that says I am doing what's good for me. My passions are living life, loving America, and helping others find recovery. I found them by asking myself the question, "What do I love doing?" And it wasn't until I found recovery that I seriously asked myself this question.

For me the scariest, most dreaded question before I got into recovery was this: WHAT DO I LOVE DOING? I answered this question a million times with, "I have NO idea, STOP ASKING, stop bugging me."

*Something changed for me when I got into treatment. I found this overwhelming desire **not** to be stuck in the world I had created, and I knew that world was not far behind me—so when I started asking myself what I was going to do to stay clean, my answer was passion. In treatment I found meditation. I found a group of people who loved me, and best of all I found my first passion: life. When I say life, I say it in the simplest terms: I love being awake, I love talking to people, I enjoy the sun and I like*

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to work. These are not complicated things, but they are still great things to be passionate about.

My second passion is kind of silly, but I love America. I believe in the good ol' USA; I believe in buying things made in the USA and US manufacturing; and I know that there is no better place to travel and see the sights than the USA.

My third passion and the one that hits closest to my heart is helping others find recovery. As a young person in recovery, it can be hard to find things to do. I am surely not always the funnest one in the crowd, but I am the one friends come to when they want to know more about the disease of addiction. I find that when I tell people that sobriety does not have to be boring, the young people in recovery get a smile on their faces. It's the simple offer to get coffee at Starbucks or go bowling together that makes recovery fun.

*Recovery has offered me many things; one of them is finding my passions. It was not until I got into recovery that I seriously took a look at my life and said, "What is it that I love and how am I going to stay clean?" **Passions do not have to be complicated, they don't have to be cool by someone else's standards and they don't have to be the next million dollar idea.** What I do suggest though is to find your passions, write them down and read them often. What are your passions? How did you find your passions?*

By Sean Morrison

(<http://www.heroesinrecovery.com/blog/finding-passion/>)



The Quest: Find and Fulfill Your Life's Purpose is for anyone who is at a crossroads in life and needs a straightforward road map to fulfillment. Author Gary Doyle uses his own lifetime of learning as a business leader and father, combined with the real world experiences of others, to set out a clear, simple path to defining one's personal Quest, developing a plan for its fulfillment, and sticking to it.

The Quest

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