

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

LIVING WITH PURPOSE

If you look deep inside, you can uncover the unique talents and interests that excite you.

Over time, your accumulated work and family experiences can make it seem like you're locked in place, without available alternative paths. But is that really the case? Amidst life's noisiness, you may be living according to what you believe others want for you — yet forgetting to live in ways that fulfill and satisfy you. Fortunately, you can retool. It's necessary, however, to stop and take stock of where you are now.

Find a quiet place where you can be still without distraction and listen for your heart's desires. Think: Is there a cause to which I'd like to devote myself? Is there a specific population I'd like to serve? How? Is there a current injustice I'd like to take a stand against? Is there a certain art form that I'd love to integrate into my professional or avocational life? Write your answers in a journal, meditate on them, or share them with someone you trust.

These activities can help you further define your purpose:

- Ask yourself if there's a cause or activity that you'd be willing to sacrifice and be inconvenienced for, be it gaining more education, changing industries, or pursuing an art to the level of mastery.
- Prioritize your passions and interests. Sometimes they become so buried under life's details that we can't see them. Try linking your interests to service. Some experts say a model for discovering purpose is the equation: **your talent plus helping people = purpose.**
- Consider whether your purpose would likely become a vocational choice or spare-time pursuit. Either is fine! Seek the overlap between what you love and are good at, with what the world currently needs and will pay for.
- Craft a personal vision statement. This will help you 1) make decisions that align with your values, and 2) stay motivated as you work toward your goals.
- Consider spending ten or fifteen minutes each day being the person you intend to be, until it feels natural and becomes a way of life. It may feel foreign at first.
- Adopt a growth and learning mindset to continually become a better version of yourself. You'll reach your goals faster and more skillfully.

