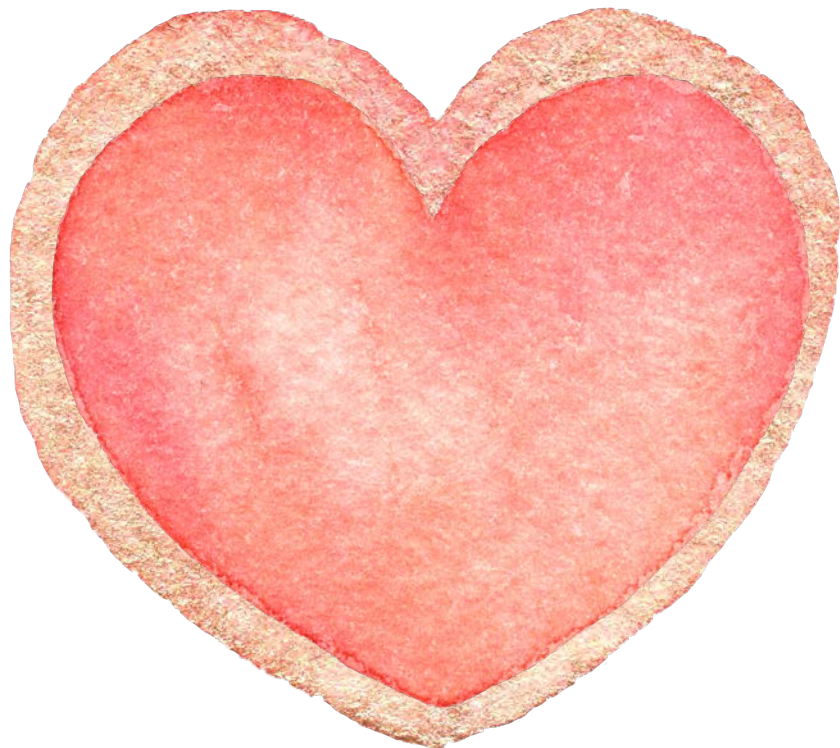


*Discover Your Purpose  
So You Can Love Your Life*

A Food for Thought Journal  
and Manifestation Guide



# Discover Your Purpose

## A Food for Thought Journal and Manifestation Guide

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*“If you do what you love, you’ll never work a day in your life.”  
– Marc Anthony*

If that sounds like the stuff of Facebook memes, it is, and it no doubt graces many office walls and whiteboards, as well. But while doing what you love sounds wonderful and romantic, getting there can be pretty darn daunting.

Maybe you grew up in a working-class home where you watched your parents dutifully put in their shifts at “the plant.” They worked Monday through Friday from 7am to 4pm, just so they could enjoy the weekend off and two weeks at the campground each summer.

Or perhaps you went off to college and studied law or sales or biology, and now you feel trapped in a job you don’t love. You’d like to change course, but what if you make the wrong choice? What else are you even qualified to do? And what about those student loans?

Here’s another dilemma for those who feel as if they’re “working for the weekend” and not pursuing their passions: How can you even know what you want to be when you grow up?

Sound familiar? The truth is, there are millions of people out there who trudge off to work each and every day, wishing they were anywhere else, and hoping one day to find what really inspires them. If that’s you, then rest assured, you are not alone. But know this, too: There is still time to discover your passion and start doing the work you love.

# Brainstorm About Your Own Personal Passion Project

Unlike boring corporate brainstorming, though, we're not going to use a whiteboard (unless you want to) and we're not going to be solving a big sticky problem. Instead, set aside an hour or so of uninterrupted time. Head out to the park or a coffee shop and take along your favorite notebook and pens. Find a quiet corner, and just let your mind wander. Do a little daydreaming.

Imagine that money is not a concern. You have enough to manage your day-to-day needs, with some left over for fun. You have the freedom to do anything you like with your days. In your notebook, make a list of all the things you would do with your time if you could spend it any way you liked.

- Would you shop?
- Would you paint glorious watercolors?
- Would you go back to college and earn a degree in computer science?
- Travel the world?
- Rescue animals?
- Work with abused women?
- Plant a garden?

If you get stuck, think about what you do on weekends and holidays. Nearly everyone looks forward to relaxing and enjoying their favorite activities after the workweek is done. What are the activities you most enjoy?

The purpose of this exercise is not to make a realistic list of business opportunities, but rather to make a list of possibilities, so don't censor yourself. Write down whatever pops into your head without considering if you can make money with it, whether or not you'll love it forever, or even if you have the skills or talent for it. That is, after all, what brainstorming is all about. Unfiltered ideas. We'll sort them out later.



# Keep a Journal

Maybe you already do this, but I want to challenge you for the next 30 days to keep a daily, purposeful journal. Here's how that works.

First, set aside time each day for journaling. This can be first thing in the morning (great for planning), last thing before you go to bed (perfect for gratitude), or even right after lunch. It doesn't matter so much what time, but that you make an unbreakable appointment with yourself, and that you commit to doing the work—even when it feels hard or uncomfortable.

Next, rather than just random thoughts and events, try answering specific questions each day. This type of journaling helps you maintain focus, and will allow you to look back later and know exactly what works, what doesn't, and where you might want to focus your energy.

Some questions to ask each day include:

- What was the best thing that happened to me today?
- How did I make someone else's day better?
- How could today have been better?
- What's the one big thing I want to get done today?
- What's one thing I did today just for me?
- Who made me smile today?
- What has been my biggest achievement this week?
- Fast forward to next year. What has changed about your life or your business?

You don't have to answer each and every question every day, and there may be others you'd like to add to your list. Have fun with it, and use your journal as a source of inspiration and reflection. Look forward to what you hope to achieve, and backwards at how far you've come.

# Keep a Journal

Taking note of recurring themes in your journal is a powerful way to discover your true passion. If the best thing that happens to you every day is that you served a beautiful dinner to your family, then it's clear that being a mom and a great cook is one of your passions.

On the other hand, if your day could have been better if you didn't have to struggle with your accounting software, clearly bookkeeping is not something you want to pursue.

Another thing to include in your journal is gratitude. Every day, you're surrounded with reasons to be grateful. It didn't rain until after your son's last baseball game of the season. You remembered at the last minute to take your new sweater out of the dryer and avoided disaster. That cold you felt coming on yesterday passed you by after all.

By noting the small (and large) things you're grateful for, it will help keep your attitude positive, and when you're happy, you're more open to discovering your life's passions.

One last point about journaling—embrace your creative side. Many people love to journal on a computer. It's fast and with you everywhere. But it also tends to be cold and impersonal.

Rather than using a bland old Word or text document for your daily journaling, consider creating a pretty paper journal instead. Buy pens in different colors, and fill your journal with not just words, but pictures and doodles and anything else that makes you happy. Collect fun stickers to add to your pages, use sticky notes for important points, and even tuck a photo or two into your updates to remind you of what you've achieved.

Remember, your journal is for your eyes only, and you'll be more likely to use it if it's as colorful and unique as you are.





## *Exercise: Create a Journaling Space*

Journaling should be fun and inspiring, not dry and boring. It's not a college essay, but rather a tool to help you discover your deeper truth. Along with your notebook, collect your other journaling supplies and tuck them away in a beautiful bag you can easily pull out when it's journaling time.

Be sure to include: Brightly colored pens, sticky notes, pencils, stamps and stickers, erasers...

*What's in Your Ideal Journaling Space?*

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# What Others Think

When it comes to finding your true purpose and passion, what others think might seem like the last thing you should consider. But the truth is, what others think of when they think of you can offer valuable insight into your unique genius. And once you find that, your passion won't be far behind.

So think about the questions your friends and family and even Facebook acquaintances ask of you. Do they come to you for assistance with their family finances? Writing a resume? Organizing the kitchen?

Are you a sounding board for dating troubles? Called upon for career advice? Consulted when the family dog won't quit barking?

Whatever it is your friends and family rely on you for, they don't do it out of loyalty or because they don't want you to feel left out. They do it because they value your input and opinion. They know that you have not only a natural talent, but **a passion** for what you do.

## **Exercise: Discover Your Superpower**

Not sure what others think? Ask them.

But don't just ask them what they think you're good at. Ask them what your superpower is. Everyone has one, and when you discover yours, you'll very often find it's closely related to your passion.

Superpowers can be anything. Maybe you're a good connector of people, with a knack for matching complementary businesses. Perhaps you're amazing at creating healthy meals even confirmed junk-food addicts love. Maybe you're simply a great listener who's able to help a friend through a crisis.

Ask your friends, family and colleagues what they feel your superpower is. The answer might just point you to your passion.

# What Are Your Super Powers?

On this page, write about what YOU think your super powers are.

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# What Do Others Say Your Super Powers Are?

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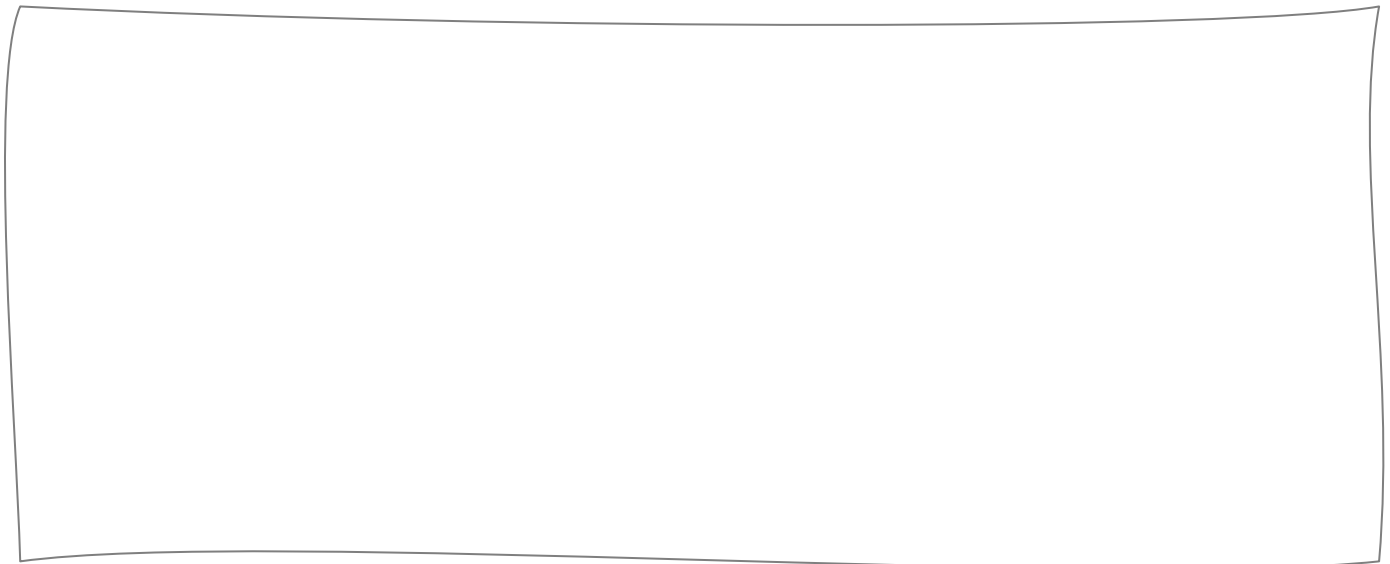
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# Looking Back

There's a viral video of a couple who—at the hands of a talented team of makeup artists—are made to look decades older than they actually are. As they “age” from 30 to 40 to 50 and beyond, they get a glimpse of each other as they might look in the future. For a brief moment, they get to experience what it might be like to grow old together, and what they're life may have been like.

Imagine yourself at 90 years old, looking back on the life you've lived. You're surrounded by mementos of the past. Photos line the walls, your shelves are filled with trinkets and souvenirs, and your heart is filled with memories of a life well lived.

Your children are accomplished, and their children are happy and healthy. Your great-grandchildren are just starting to experience life for themselves, and if you're very lucky, they love nothing more than to hear the stories of your life.

## **Exercise: Write Your Autobiography**

Write your memoirs from the point of view of your older self. Don't worry about your creative writing ability, and don't stumble over spelling and grammar. Just spend some time imagining how you'd like to feel at that age, as you look back on your life.

Pay special attention to the events that made you feel powerful and gave you the greatest sense of accomplishment.

- Did you do anything that changed someone else's life for the better?
- Who did you have a positive impact on? How?
- What was your favorite year? What happened?
- What do your children say is the most important lesson they learned from you?
- What's your favorite memory?
- What do you look back on fondly?
- What was your greatest accomplishment?

# Write About Your Biography

Draw from the journal prompts on the previous page and write about your biography. You may find it helpful to break it down into decades.

Did you do anything that changed someone else's life for the better?

Who did you have a positive impact on? How?

What was your favorite year? What happened?

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# Get Out of Your Office

In “The Artist’s Way,” author Julia Cameron reminds us that creativity cannot survive in a vacuum. She recommends writers and others spend time in nature, visiting museums, and other activities that “refill the well.”

When it comes to discovering your life’s purpose, you’ll definitely want to get out and try new things as well. Now is the time to try out all those things you’ve thought you might enjoy but never got around to doing.

- Take a yoga class.
- Train for a marathon.
- Learn to design jewelry.

Only by trying out a variety of activities will you find those that bring you joy—and eliminate those you never want to do again.

## **Exercise: Plan for New Experiences**

Start a list of things you’d like to experience. This can be a living document that you continue to add to as new ideas come to you. It’s also the document you’ll refer to as new opportunities present themselves.

But don’t just list things. Make a plan and do them. Add at least one new experience to your calendar every month, then do what it takes to fulfill that obligation with yourself. You might just discover a favorite new hobby, or meet your new business partner in that yoga class. But at the very least, you’ll be refilling your own well.





# Chase Those Shiny Objects

Ask any business coach the secret to a better business, and they'll tell you it's focus. To be distracted by other opportunities or ideas is to dilute the power of your core business.

While this can be true in many cases, it can also cause the purpose-seeking entrepreneur to freeze in her tracks, unwilling to move in any direction for fear of choosing the wrong one. Much like the college grad who feels trapped in a job she hates, simply because that's what she knows, you'll only end up hating your business and wishing for a day job again.

Rather than wearing blinders to keep you laser focused every moment, take some time to explore other possibilities. Look for complementary ideas that are a natural match for one another.

For example, one prolific and in-demand jewelry designer turned years of teaching and a passion for jewelry into a wildly popular training program for up-and-coming designers. Now she divides her time between creating stunning engagement rings and teaching others how to have a business they love.

Had she remained focused only on jewelry design, she would still be popular, and still doing what she loves, but the addition of the training course allowed her to find her true passion.

Don't be afraid to follow that winding path from time to time. You never know what you might discover around the next bend.

## **Exercise: Create a List of Future Projects**

Productivity gurus call this a "someday" list. It's the projects and plans you want to do, but not right now. Much like your new experiences list, this is a living document where you'll record every new project that crosses your mind.

Some will be good. Most will not. But that's okay. The point is to not close your mind to the possibilities.



## *Time to Evaluate What You've Written About in this Guide*

The various exercises in this guide can help you find those moments of true joy, where your mind and your spirit soar, and you're able to feel as if you're truly reaching for your life's purpose. When your responses to these exercises are looked at as a whole, you'll begin to see themes emerge that will point the way to what you really want to do with your life. Look back over your journal, your autobiography, your brainstorming session, and your superpower list, and ask yourself:

What recurring theme pops up time and time again? (Examples of themes might be technology, children, crafts, animals, or fitness.)

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What did you discover about your super powers?

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What new experiences do you want to have?

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How can you spend more time doing what you love & less on things you're not so fond of?

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