

Purpose

Connect meaning, direction and contribution to daily choices.



A WORKING DEFINITION

Purpose is an evolving, beyond-self direction that connects values and strengths to meaningful contribution and guides choices across time.

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IN PRACTICE

Names what matters, who or what the work serves, chooses in alignment and revisits direction when life or context changes.

It is

A direction, not a destination.

Personal and connected beyond the self.

Expressed through choices.

Able to evolve.

It is not

One perfect calling.

A corporate slogan.

Constant passion or certainty.

A reason to tolerate harmful conditions.

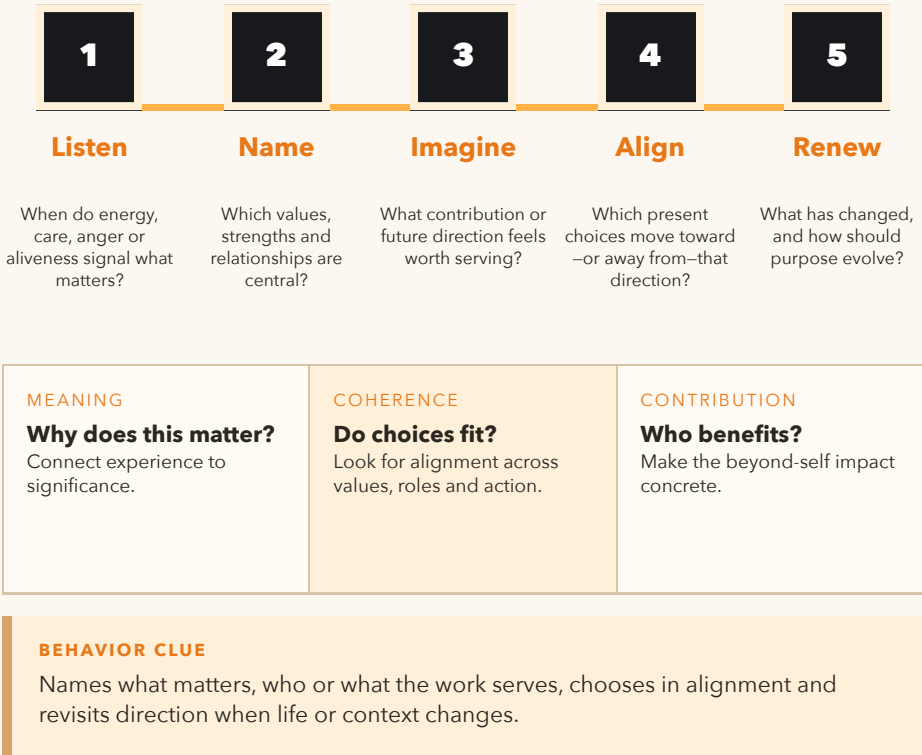
WHY THIS MATTERS NOW

When roles, tools and identities change quickly, purpose helps people decide what is worth learning, preserving, changing and contributing.

THE CAPABILITY LOOP

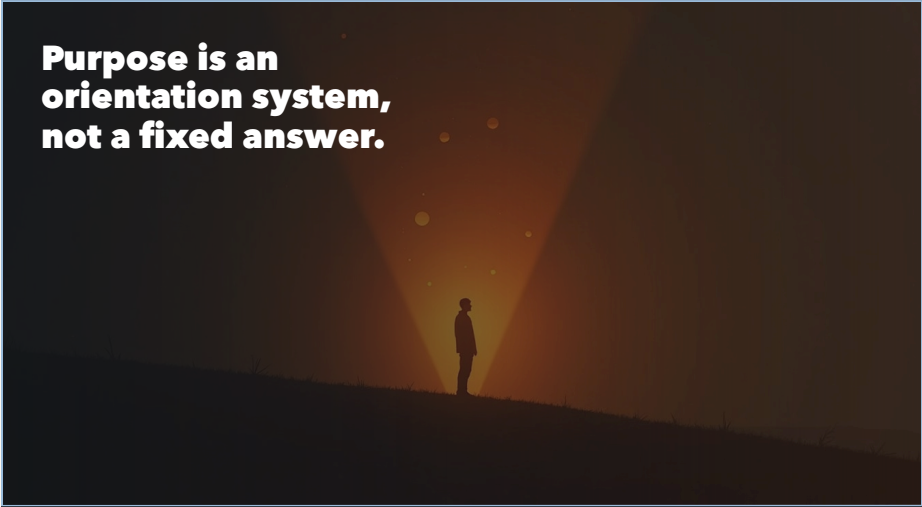
Purpose becomes real through alignment.

Meaning is discovered and constructed through attention, choice and contribution.



8 CONNECTED CAPABILITIES

Purpose is a system.



Direction clarity Holds an overarching sense of where to move.	Meaning recognition Notices what creates significance and aliveness.
Beyond-self orientation Connects personal direction to contribution.	Values alignment Uses values to guide real trade-offs.
Goal integration Links daily activity to larger aims.	Purpose articulation Expresses direction clearly enough to guide action.
Resilience through purpose Draws strength from what remains worth serving.	Purpose evolution Lets direction deepen as experience and context change.

The components strengthen one another. Development depends on how they are combined in context—not on maximizing one behavior in isolation.

WHY WE PROTECT THIS SKILL

Three signals—three different questions.

H

Human Core

How central should human agency, judgment and responsibility remain?



Human owns

Signal 5/5



Future Readiness

How strongly does this help people learn and act as roles and technology change?



Foundational

Signal 5/5



Safeguard Value

How strongly does this protect capability from over-reliance, deskilling and loss of agency?



**Critical
safeguard**

Signal 5/5

READ THESE AS STRATEGIC SIGNALS

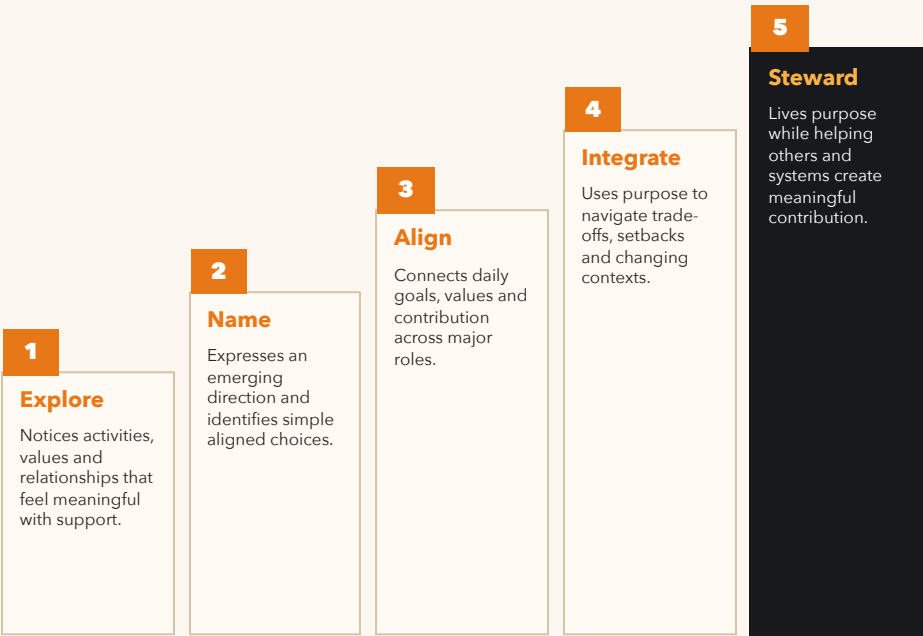
They describe why the capability matters—not how advanced a learner is.

AI can help explore options or language. Meaning, values, contribution and the choice of what is worth pursuing must remain human.

LEARNING PROGRESSION

Five stages of lived purpose.

Purpose development is not a race toward one permanent statement. The progression describes greater clarity, alignment and contribution.



USE THE PROGRESSION WELL

Ask for the next observable behavior—not a label for the person.

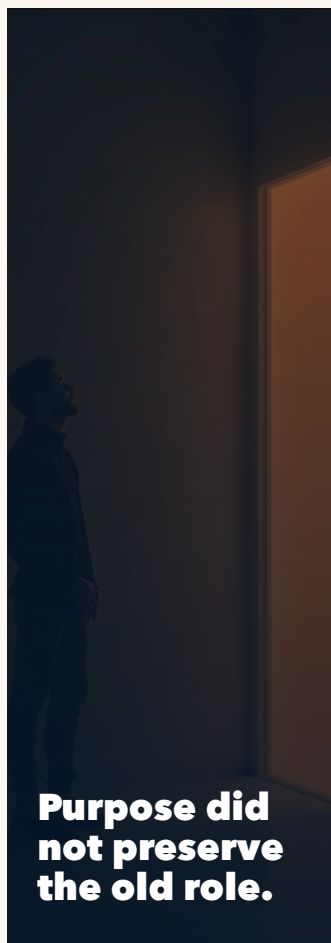
BEHAVIOR MAP

What purpose looks like around a choice.

01 Before Name what matters Identifies values, people and outcomes at stake. Define contribution Clarifies who or what the choice should serve. Check the horizon Connects the decision to longer-term direction. Notice tension Makes conflicting values or roles visible.	02 During Use purpose as a filter Compares options against meaning and contribution. Choose the trade-off Accepts that alignment can require saying no. Stay connected Keeps affected people present in the decision. Act concretely Turns direction into one observable commitment.	03 After Review alignment Compares intention with lived action. Notice impact Checks whether contribution reached others. Learn from friction Uses discomfort to refine values or boundaries. Renew direction Updates purpose without abandoning continuity.
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CASE STORY · COMPOSITE

When automation changes the role—but not the contribution.



The challenge. After an AI-enabled redesign removes much of her familiar work, Leena feels efficient but replaceable. Her old job description no longer provides identity or direction.

1 • Listen

She notices that the loss is about usefulness, connection and craft—not only tasks.

2 • Name

Her enduring values are clarity, service and helping others make sound choices.

3 • Imagine

She reframes her contribution from producing reports to strengthening decisions.

4 • Align

Leena develops facilitation, evidence translation and AI-quality assurance skills.

5 • Renew

A six-week experiment shows which activities restore contribution and energy.

CAPABILITY IN PRACTICE

Purpose did not preserve the old role. It helped preserve direction while the form of contribution changed.

A PRACTICAL PROTOCOL

ALIGN direction and action.

Use this short structure in real work, reflection or coaching. Keep the action specific enough to observe.

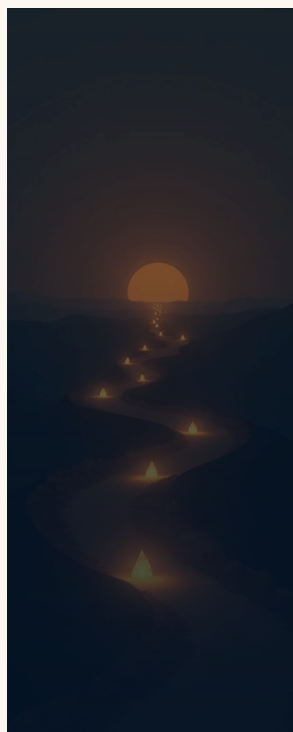
A Attend Where do energy, care and tension reveal what matters?	L Locate Which values, strengths and relationships are central?	I Imagine What contribution or future is worth moving toward?	G Ground What choice, boundary or commitment expresses it now?	N Navigate What did the action teach, and how should direction evolve?
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One-minute start: "What matters here is ... The contribution I want to make is ..."

The protocol supports practice. It does not remove the need for context, expertise, ethical judgment or appropriate human support.

LEADERSHIP AND LEARNING CULTURE

Connect strategy to contribution—not slogans.



CLARIFY Explain whose needs the work serves and why the outcome matters.

TRANSLATE Connect roles and priorities to visible contribution.

PROTECT Do not use purpose language to justify overload or sacrifice.

INVITE Let people shape how their strengths and values contribute.

REVISIT Renew shared purpose when strategy, technology or society changes.

RESEARCH PULSE · 2021

A meta-analysis of 33 randomized trials found that several interventions can increase meaning in life, including relatively brief approaches. Effects varied substantially by comparison group and intervention type.

Manco & Hamby, American Journal of Health Promotion. [R1]

SEVEN-DAY EXPERIMENT

Run a seven-day alignment check.

- Day 1

Record three moments that felt meaningful, empty or morally important.
- Day 2

Extract the values and relationships underneath those moments.
- Day 3

Write one sentence describing the contribution you want to make.
- Day 4

Audit one normal day: where did time align—or conflict—with that direction?
- Day 5

Say no, renegotiate or redesign one misaligned commitment.
- Day 6

Take one small action that benefits someone beyond yourself.
- Day 7

Review the evidence and write the next version of your purpose direction.

MY PURPOSE COMPASS

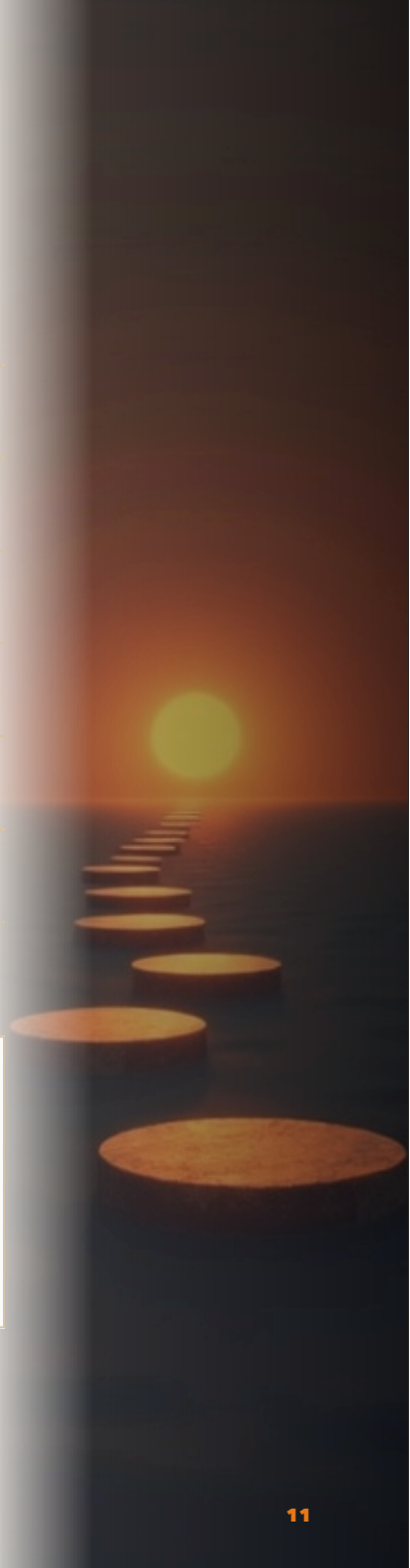
What matters:

Who or what I want to serve:

My next aligned choice:

What I will revisit:

Track behavior and evidence. Reflection matters when it changes the next action.





PURPOSE • HUMAN CAPABILITY FOR CHANGE

Purpose is direction made visible.

It lives less in a perfect sentence than in the choices,
boundaries and contributions that repeatedly show
what matters.

Source note. Skillspathfinder Purpose profile in segments.json. [R1] Manco & Hamby, American Journal of Health Promotion. Composite case created for learning use.