



The Meaning of Life: A Guide to Finding Your Life's Purpose

Nathanael Garrett Novosel

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The Meaning of Life is an ambitious self-help work about achieving personal satisfaction.

Nathanael Garrett Novosel's philosophical and scientific treatise, *The Meaning of Life*, suggests means of finding greater fulfillment.

The book explores concepts as grand as how life began on Earth and the Big Bang Theory, supplementing these discussions with original material regarding physical, intellectual, artistic, and communal growth. It incorporates notions of conditional probability, optimism bias, and the "don't look down" principle alongside those of self-fulfilling prophecies, healthy coping mechanisms, freedom of choice, and personal responsibility.

These grand and diverse subjects are integrated with the help of complementary research into topics including Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs and, in relation to an argument regarding the necessity of new experiences, a University of Texas study about the nature of experiences and their impact on the retention of information.

Bookended by identical self-assessment tests that ask the audience to evaluate themselves in relation to their self-purpose, appreciation, and other factors, the book's subject-specific chapters focus on topics like emotions, ethics, and choice. Questions regarding one's personal definitions of success and personal progress make the work more personal, using its arguments on each subject to pinpoint individual life purposes.

This work places heavy emphasis on finding personal meaning and one's "self-determined destiny." Ranging questions related to growth opportunities and the "purpose of finding a purpose" arise. The book also addresses those who might be confused, or who want simplified solutions, raising questions about self-imposed roadblocks. It consistently suggests personal reflection as a means of uncovering personal reasons for procrastination, excuses, and bad habits.

Illustrative examples give shape to material that might otherwise remain elusive. In a discussion of beliefs that hold people back or sustain their drives, a scenario in which people want a million dollars becomes a useful illustration, while the juxtaposition of take-action business planning with the unlikelihood of a lottery windfall helps to bolster the book's argument that the smartest investment is in oneself.

While each chapter is capable of function on its own, all connect back to the book's ultimate goal of enlarging one's primary thinking. As the book's pieces flow together, they result in increasing understanding of key questions about the universe and ultimate meaning. The book's topics are complex, but its work is accessible and its arguments concise.

Packed with practical applications for identifying and reaching individual goals, *The Meaning of Life* is an ambitious self-help work about achieving personal satisfaction.

ANDREA HAMMER (February 28, 2020)

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