

## Our Third Life Goal Deals with Aspiration to Develop Our Creativity or Mastery

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### Commentary

When we have fulfilled the first two life goals, society becomes an extension of our family. The community and the environment are treated with respect and love. Motivated by true love, we interact with society, our work, and the environment, leading to our individual and social prosperity.

The third life goal deals with the human aspiration to develop our potential for creativity or mastery in some field of endeavor with the intention to leave a legacy for future generations. We can contribute to society by adding to the material prosperity of others or improving their quality of life. Success in the third life goal needs the foundation of a mature character (first life goal) and loving relationships (second life goal). Our character can be likened to the roots of a tree. The trunk and branches of the tree symbolize our relationships with others. Our contributions to society are the fruits.

### What is Healthy Passion?

There is a lot of talk about the value of following our passion. Self-help books and programs stress the need to love what you do. When we are passionate about something, we forget about time and are raptured into an almost hypnotic bliss. However, not all passion is good. The defining point of healthy passion is the determination to use our passion for the sake of others instead of serving our own needs. For instance, the motivation of doctors can be to help heal people or it can be to make a lot of money. Singers can want to inspire or comfort others or can multiply their own resentment and hate. Politicians can have a desire to make the country better or they can be wrapped up in their own power. Students can study to build the skills to do something for others or they can only be thinking of getting into a university of their choice for self-aggrandizement.

To find happiness through our passion, we need the goal to use our talents and abilities for others. As we mature, we take responsibility for creating our goals rather than be swept up by the tides of our environment. We need to search and become one with goals having the world as our canvas and fulfilling the activities that are best suited for our personal strengths and desires.

### Passion and Goals

At one point, after having our fourth child, I felt I needed to see above the routines of diapers, dishes, and dirt. Since it felt like I was already at my wit's end, my vision needed something beyond a mundane desire. I knew I needed a bigger vision, but I also needed the internal motivation to rise above the usual daily routines.

When I thought of my children, and their futures, there was no limit to the care I had. At the same time, I considered caring for others beyond my own family. This reflection process planted the seed to do two things. Improve my computer skills (this was around 1993) and enrich my spiritual beliefs. This eventually morphed into publishing a children's religious study book. I started with a few pages and shared it with others. Eventually, amidst the designing of diagrams and summarizing beliefs, I found myself working well into the night most of the time. The only thing that kept me from continuing all night

was my infant son needing to be fed. Only after being pulled away from my work each early morning did I realize I needed sleep to care for my family the next day.

Our goals need to be passionate, but they also need to raise our bar of accomplishment. We need to find what gives us power to overcome adversity. Angela Duckworth explains in her book, *Grit: The Power of Passion and Perseverance*, that passion isn't just what you care about but "that you care about the same goal in an abiding, loyal, steady way.... Most of your actions derive their significance from their allegiance to your ultimate concern, your life philosophy."

Only when we have realized what it is that makes us committed to something bigger than ourselves and beyond the present moment can we persevere through difficulties and grow. In other more spiritual words, we find our calling.

### **Types of Goals**

Angela Duckworth goes on to describe the kind of goals needed to follow a passion. She categorizes goals into different levels. For instance, getting ready for school, putting fuel in the car, and answering an email would be the lowest level goals and they would be a means to the end. The top-level goal is the "end in itself" or an "ultimate concern."

To find the main goal in life, continue to ask questions for each goal until you find the answer to what you want in life. Getting to school on time is a low-level goal. The answer to the question "why?" is so I can pass the class. The next level reason is so I can graduate high school. Why? So, I can go to a good college, so I can get a good job, so I can make a difference. Again, there is still a question. How do you want to make a difference?

Goals need to be personal and specific. Perhaps we don't know exactly what will bring us the greatest fulfillment. However, this is one of the most important question in our lives because it's what gives us purpose and direction. Going to school to get a good job is not enough incentive to get us through the hard times or sustain us through the years. To find what will bring us the greatest fulfillment, we need to do something such as; read biographies, watch documentaries, listen to podcasts, research the internet, and/or talk to people with this question in mind. It's okay to start with one ultimate purpose and tweak or change it as experiences and maturity may lead us on another path.

### **Example of Goal-Setting**

When my husband and I came up with the idea for Uplifting Education, we wanted to raise the educational outcomes not just for our own children but for as many students as we possibly could. At first, this seemed like a far-fetched goal, but it is what gave my life meaning so I kept making the intermediary goals to get there. I kept asking deeper questions as to how to make a better impact on today's education. I didn't just think about it, but I read books on educational topics, frequented educational forums, networked with people, watched documentaries, and investigated websites that exhibited the values I was forming.

I'd go to sleep and wake up with pertinent questions on my mind to explore. For a couple of years, I wrote a book, *The Life Goals Approach to Education*. Then, based on experiences, we restructured our online program to renovate our guiding values. As time passed, so did my intermediate goals and my foremost goal in life which is to invest my heart and energy toward a peaceful world made up of heavenly families.

Based on the seed, which is our individual potential, our values need to be polished as the root. Then, our relationships need to be fortified as the trunk and branches. Finally, our skills need to be expanded to produce valuable fruit.

### **Contemplation**

What makes you excited to wake up or keeps you up late at night?

How have your goals changed in your life?

What are the most important life goals in your opinion?

What innate ability do you have that can be expanded upon?

How can your natural characteristics be utilized to make a difference for others?

How can you make your goals in life more realistic and inspiring at the same time?

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Duckworth, Angela. *Grit: The Power of Passion and Perseverance*. 2016. New York, NY: Scribner. P. 63 - 65. Nook

For more information on *The Life Goals Approach to Education*, see this website:  
[www.upliftingeducation.net/life-goals-approach](http://www.upliftingeducation.net/life-goals-approach)