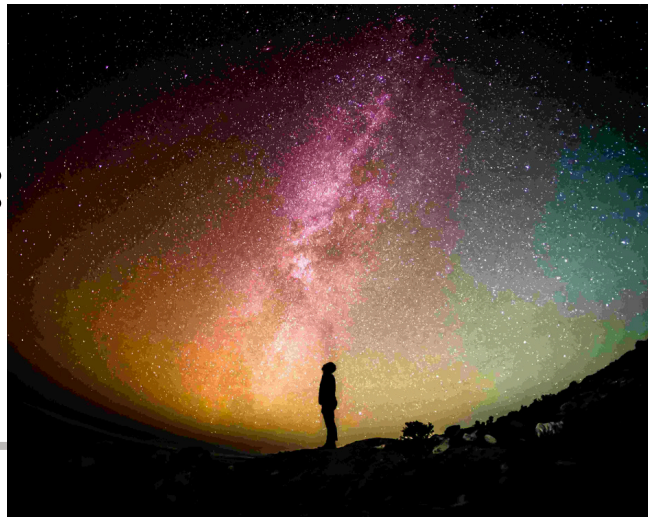


The Meaning of Life: Must Life Have a Purpose?

Advanced (C1-C2)



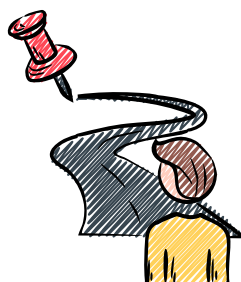
WARM UP

Choose the option that feels more meaningful, then explain why.

1. Achieving big goals 🎯 or enjoying small moments 🍰
2. Success at work 💼 or fulfilment in relationships ❤️
3. Creating something new 🧠 or helping someone else 🤝
4. Planning for the future 📅 or appreciating the present 🌅
5. Following your passion ❤️ or finding peace of mind 🌿

Discuss:

1. Which choices reflect your current priorities?
2. Have your answers changed over time?



READING TEXT

Part 1. Read the following text.

The Search for Meaning

Humans have always asked what makes life meaningful. For some, it's clear: a purpose to pursue, a dream to achieve, or a belief to live by. For others, meaning is found in small moments such as laughter with friends, caring for family, or simply noticing beauty in the everyday.

Psychologists today suggest that meaning and happiness are not the same. Happiness depends on how we feel; meaning depends on how we make sense of life. Purpose gives direction, but presence gives depth. When both combine, when we act with intention and appreciate what is, we experience a richer kind of fulfilment.

Meaning does not have to be discovered once and for all. It can grow, shift, and take new forms throughout our lives through learning, love, creativity, and contribution.

Part 2. Discuss the questions below based on the text.

1. What does the text say about the difference between happiness and meaning?
2. How can purpose and presence work together?
3. Why might meaning change over time?
4. Which idea do you personally relate to most?



VOCABULARY & SPEAKING

Part 1. Match the terms to their meanings.

Existential question	Grand narrative	Human resilience	Intrinsic value
Personal fulfilment	Societal expectation	Philosophical outlook	Search for meaning

1. _____ Pressure from culture or community about how life "should" be lived.
2. _____ The idea that life follows one overarching story or purpose.
3. _____ The strength people show in surviving or overcoming hardship.
4. _____ A way of interpreting life, often tied to philosophy or belief.
5. _____ The act of looking for deeper purpose or significance.
6. _____ A deeply fundamental issue about life and existence.
7. _____ Worth that something has in itself, not because of outside purpose.
8. _____ A sense of satisfaction and achievement in life.

Part 2. Complete each sentence with the correct vocabulary item. Then decide if each statement is true for you, false for you, or sometimes true.

1. I often reflect on the _____ of why we exist and what makes life meaningful.
2. Helping others gives me a deep sense of _____.
3. I sometimes feel pressure from _____ to achieve certain goals or milestones.
4. I believe that kindness and creativity have _____, even without external reward.
5. My _____ focuses on staying curious and learning from different experiences.
6. I admire people who show strong _____ during difficult times.
7. I see my life as part of a larger _____ that connects personal growth and purpose.
8. My _____ changes as I go through new stages in life.

Part 3. A close friend tells you:

"I feel lost. I don't know what I'm working towards anymore."

Discuss:

- What could you say to support them?
- Which ideas or actions might help them rediscover meaning?
- How could you connect their situation to wellbeing (e.g. mindfulness, connection, contribution)?

Part 4. Choose one idea below that resonates with you most and expand it in detail.

- Purpose through goals – finding direction in achievement.
- Purpose through relationships – creating meaning in connection.
- Purpose through experiences – enjoying and learning from life itself.

Explain why you chose it and give one real example from your life or someone you admire.

Part 5. Rank the following from 1 (most meaningful to you) → 5 (least).

- ☐ Growth and learning
- ☐ Love and connection
- ☐ Freedom and independence
- ☐ Helping others
- ☐ Creativity and self-expression

Then discuss:

Which of these areas gives you energy right now?

Has what you find meaningful changed since your teenage years?

REFLECTION

Discuss the following questions.

1. What does “living meaningfully” mean to you personally?
2. Which small daily actions make life feel worthwhile?
3. Is meaning something we find, or something we create?

WRAP-UP TASK (OPTIONAL HOMEWORK)

Write 180–220 words or record a 2-minute audio answering:

“What gives my life meaning right now?”

- Use at least 4 target vocabulary items.
- Mention one change you’d like to make to live with greater purpose or presence.

