



3 Steps to Help Align You to Your Purpose

By Sue Hawkes

We all know the importance of having a clear sense of direction and purpose, yet how often do you pause to reflect on yours? When we aren't living in our purpose, things feel off. However, in the busyness of day-to-day, it can be difficult to pinpoint what the problem is. Often, we play it off as stress or a lack of work-life balance. But without looking deeper, we really aren't fixing the problem.

Instead of adding or creating another productivity habit to fix your unsatisfied feelings, you need to slow down and look deep within to ask, what is not working? When you allow the space, you will be able to align with your purpose and work through any issue you encounter.

Knowing your purpose not only benefits you as an individual, it also has a positive impact on those around you. It can provide a clear vision for your team or your family, inspire others to join your cause, and drive meaningful progress towards your goals. Your purpose is your roadmap to success. Use these three practices to stay aligned.

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Journal: Take Time to Let Your Thoughts Flow

The health benefits of journaling are numerous. Journaling helps create clarity in your thoughts and feelings, facilitates more effective decision making, and reduces stress. Seeing your thoughts on paper creates an objective perspective, allowing the opportunity to address issues and work through them while bypassing negative, self-doubting thoughts that cloud your judgment.

Journaling can be used to work towards clearly articulating your purpose, allowing you to identify where the gaps in alignment are and what needs to change.

Begin journaling by assessing your purpose, ask yourself these simple questions:

1. What am I pretending to not know?
2. What life am I waiting to live?
3. If I had nothing on my to-do list, what would emerge?

Calendar: Live Your Purpose in Your Day to Day

When aligned with our purpose, we are at our best and spend time doing what matters. When we're misaligned with our purpose, life doesn't work, we are out of sync, and feel uncomfortable.

One way to keep priorities aligned with your purpose is through the practice of calendaring. This means asking the following: What matters most to you? Is your time spent in a way that reflects your purpose? This practice will help put your intention into the areas of life that are most important to you.

Start with these steps:

1. List three to five areas in your life that are critical to your purpose. They might include family, health, career, spirituality, community, relationships, learning, recreation, and anything else, as long as they are priorities for you.
2. Next, take a blank set of calendar pages and jot down your vision of an ideal purpose-driven life. Imagine it. Don't edit, set up a life you'd like to wake up to every day, excited to live.
3. Now, print out your actual calendar for the same number of months used for your "ideal" calendar in step 2 and compare the two calendars. How does what you actually do on a day-to-day basis compare with your "ideal" calendar? Where are the biggest gaps? What's included? What's excluded?
4. Write down the first step needed to realize a life that is more reflective of your purpose-driven calendar.
5. Begin immediately; especially if your ideal and reality visions are worlds apart.



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Reflect: Take a Clarity Break™

A Clarity Break™ is a practice developed by Gino Wickman as part of the Entrepreneurial Operating System® (EOS). The objective is to reflect and create space for strategic, purpose-driven thinking on a weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly basis.

Do this by taking a break from your phone, technology, home, or office. The point is to get away from distractions that tether you to work. Sit with a pad of paper and pen and let your thoughts flow. Don't focus on producing anything specific. See what emerges.

We must create space in order to have the space to create. By allowing your mind to wander and sitting in your purpose, you'll find numerous ideas and solutions will surface. We often have all the answers we need inside of us - we just need to create space for them to rise.

Conclusion

With the day-to-day pressures at work and home, it's easy for today's leaders to get misaligned. Often, we're concerned about meeting everyone else's needs, and our deeper meaning falls to the wayside. I challenge you to prioritize your purpose. When living in alignment with your purpose, everyone benefits – your company, employees, family, and community. Use the practices outlined here and give the world (and yourself) the gift of your purpose.



ABOUT SUE HAWKES

[Sue Hawkes](#) started her first business at age 10 and was immediately bitten by the entrepreneurial bug. She's moved on from her childhood days of selling macramé plant hangers to helping business owners be intentionally great in their businesses, as leaders, and in their lives. She is CEO of YESS!, a best-selling author, keynote speaker, Expert EOS Implementer®, Certified Business Coach, WPO Chapter Chair and globally recognized seminar leader. Sue is a frequent contributor to *Forbes*, *Fast Company*, *Inc.*, and *Entrepreneur* and has been recognized by the Regional U.S. Small Business Administration's Women in Business Champion of the Year award, Women Who Lead from *Minnesota Business Magazine*, NAWBO Minnesota's Achieve! Vision Award and as a 2018 Enterprising Woman of the Year. Her most recent book is *Chasing Perfection: Shatter the Illusion; Minimize Self-Doubt & Maximize Success*.

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