

## Workshop: Purpose

The fifth workshop, Purpose, is where it all comes together. This is where we get ultimate insight into what it will take to achieve and sustain a state of flow (See Flow Theory in the Theory Section of the Guide).

### Background

To have a purpose is to contribute to something greater than ourselves. A purpose is something that is never-ending, that doesn't have a deadline and which is not attainable in and of itself.

Brain scanning has shown that when we contribute to something bigger than ourselves the body's "happiness" hormones are triggered.

Almost everyone has thought at one point or another "there must be more to life than this". We may feel a nagging dissatisfaction but are unable to locate the source of this feeling. We may be uncertain of the choices we make, and whether they are contributing meaningfully to what we might achieve in life.

Finding one's purpose in life is one of the most transformational experiences we can have. Finding our purpose enables us to experience true inner motivation, leaving us with a feeling of effortlessness and satisfaction. As a first step we can take note of how our current goals and choices are guiding our life's path.

Whether we are aware of it or not, our life is completely governed by the choices we make in relation to the goals we have. Even day-to-day routines are governed by goals. We go to work in order to make a living. We shop in order to be able to cook the evening meal. We take our children to day-care and pick them up again, so that we are able to go to work, etc.

Here we investigate three different ways of living:

- Letting your choices govern your goal
- Letting your goal govern your choices
- Letting your purpose govern your goals and choices

Take an ordinary shopping situation, which most of us will recognize: the ultimate result is to get dinner on the table.

## When your choices govern your goal

Your Goal: "I want dinner"

You drop by the supermarket on your way home, and have not really decided what you will cook for dinner. You go to the cold case and have a look. There is a wide range of poultry, fish and meat. What do you choose?

At this moment, your choices will be determined by a number of circumstantial factors, such as:

- Are you hungry?
- How much money are you carrying?
- What is your time frame for cooking?
- How many mouths do you have to feed?
- Are you in a good or bad mood?
- Are there special offers vying for your attention?
- How healthy do you want dinner to be?



All these in-the-moment factors will determine what you choose to put in your shopping basket. Let's say you are hungry and tired at the moment your peer into the cold case.

You are in a hurry and want to get it over with it as quickly as possible, so that you can head home. You notice a pound of ground beef on special but with very high fat content. OK, so the fat content is high, but you are already visualizing Pasta Bolognese on the table: easy, fast and cheap.

**EXAMPLE:** From Founder, Helle Bundgaard: "I lived the first 40 years of my life like this, allowing my choices to govern my goals. When a new and interesting possibility showed up, I went with it. And when a different possibility occurred, well, then I went in that direction instead. But no matter which way I went, the pattern remained the same: I got bored after a short while and my motivation disappeared. My life was like a rollercoaster, one moment up, the next down. I was deeply frustrated by the fact that I was not happy all the time.

"Healthy and wonderful children, a husband I loved, financial prosperity, good health, and plenty of career opportunities. There wasn't anything that wasn't in my favor. So why was I often feeling restless and frustrated, and constantly looking for 'it'?"

"I did have a goal for myself: I wanted to work in sales because I was clearly competent in that area. But I had not really determined whether I wanted to work with partner sales, direct sales, or as a sales manager. For this reason I jumped at whichever opportunity that seemed interesting. My goal was: 'I want to work with sales'.

**My choices governed my goal:** "My choices were made on the basis of momentary factors which were in complete control of my life. And because there were so many possibilities, I was in constant doubt whether the choice I was about to make was a right one. But at the same time I almost made a virtue of not having a definite goal – "keeping my options open" as it were."

In 1980 an ordinary supermarket would stock an average of 12,000 different items. Today the average is 30,000. We live in an age where we face a multitude of options, not limited to daily shopping. We are bombarded with information to select from. As a matter of fact, a single issue of New York Times contains more information than a 17<sup>th</sup> century individual would get during his entire lifetime. Food for thought!

It can be demanding to live your life in a way that allows your goals to be governed by your choices. You are liable to say yes to things that only give you – or stem from - short-term motivation because your choices are controlled by momentary circumstances. Though you might avoid feeling restricted and or missing out on opportunities, in the long run, living with choices governing your goals can be complex, exhausting and, ultimately, unsatisfying.

## When your goal governs your choices

When your goal governs your choices, you are clear on what you want before you get started. Your choices will be a reflection of your goal.

Let's return to the dinner example. In this instance, you have defined the goal specifically:

Your Goal: "I am having fish with fresh asparagus and potatoes for dinner".

Now you are in a completely different situation: you can select your purchases quickly without being concerned with other products in the supermarket. This is the difference between:

- I want dinner (your choices govern your goal)
- I want fish with asparagus and potatoes for dinner (your goal governs your choices)

You are not controlled by here and now circumstances because you are buying it regardless of whether:

- It is on sale or not
- It takes a long time to cook or not
- You are in a good or bad mood

So it wouldn't be wrong to say that the shopping process is far less demanding. Yes, you may miss out on the special offer of the day, but shopping has been far easier.

The same goes for your career. If your goal is to be sales manager at Siemens Wind Energy Division, you will find it easy to dismiss job offers that will not lead you in the direction of that goal. This is the difference between:

- I want to work in sales (undefined, flexible)
- I want to be sales manager at Siemens Wind Energy Division (defined, inflexible)

Being goal-oriented offers many benefits: you proceed with certainty, your efforts are efficient, you are not distracted by doubt or alternative choices. You have consciously decided your direction even before you enter the supermarket. There are, however, at least two disadvantages to this approach: first, the danger of being so focused on a goal that you miss a better opportunity and second, the "So what?" or "What now?" factor.

## When your purpose governs your goals and choices

Let's say you want to lose 10 pounds. You are highly motivated, and you eat healthily and exercise. Once you have dropped the 10 pounds and you have reached your goal, then what? Well, many people who have achieved this goal start gaining weight again. This happens because they have reached their goal but haven't been clear about what they want to happen next. Alternatively, if your purpose is to live healthily, you will be able to maintain motivation and weight-loss indefinitely.

A healthy way of life doesn't have a deadline. Rather it is an identifier: "I am a healthy person" or a state of being "I live healthily" - and your choices follow suit over the long term. Of course you can still set yourself goals, but you will always have a higher purpose to link your goals to. This is the difference between:

- I want dinner (undefined, flexible)
- I want fish with asparagus and potatoes for dinner (defined, inflexible)
- I live healthily (defined overarching purpose allowing flexibility)

By having the purpose of "living healthily" you will be able to sort through the options you find yourself faced with in life. The process of shopping becomes much easier, as you have already rejected all the unhealthy options, yet at the same time, you are not locked into one particular option. You may never put a pound of ground beef with a high fat content in your shopping basket, yet you can still choose between fish and chicken. One might say that you are combining the best of both worlds.

**EXAMPLE:** *From Founder, Helle Bundgaard: "When I look back on my many years in IT, I realize that I was most successful working in companies selling software solutions that helped clients to optimize their sales processes. But because my goal was "I want to work in software sales". I also accepted positions for companies that sold software that optimized technical processes. I quickly lost my motivation in those environments because I did not realize what was truly important to me. If I had realized my purpose at that time: "I want to sell software that facilitates my clients' sales processes" I would have avoided some of the job changes I made. And I would have kept up my motivation to a much larger extent. This is the difference between:*

- *I want to work in sales (undefined, flexible) and*
- *I want to be sales manager at the Siemens Wind Energy Division. (defined, inflexible) and*
- *I want to sell software that facilitates my clients' sales processes (defined yet flexible overarching purpose)"*

## Passion's Role in Purpose

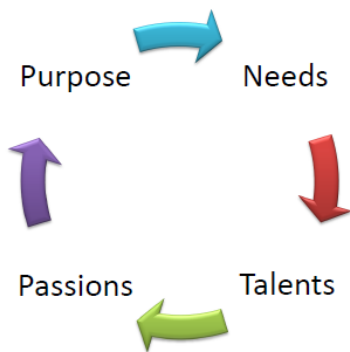
Essential to one's purpose is the incorporation of one's passions. Passions, as part of the Motivation Factor® Framework, are defined as those activities or contributions that give a person satisfaction, gratification, or a sense of accomplishment by engaging in them.

If one's purpose is to "sell software that facilitates my clients' sales processes" one's passions might include:

- Connecting people to solutions
- Making complex things simple
- Uncovering client needs

Passions are the things about one's work and life that give positive meaning. Being aware of and incorporating them into one's purpose results in a powerful cocktail for intrinsic motivation toward and guidance regarding life's choices.

## The Wheel of Motivation



It is important to remember that all our motivation factors are linked to each other. Imagining that the illustration at the left site is a wheel and each element in the wheel contains motivation. The higher the level of transferred motivation between the elements the faster the wheel spins. But if one or more element is damaged, the wheels ability to spin will be reduced or in worst case it will stop spinning.

If we lack motivation we should revisit our wheel of motivation to see what has changed and were we need to adjust in order to make the wheel spin fast again.

**EXAMPLE:** From Founder, Helle Bundgaard: "I used all my natural talents (discovery, mastery, creativity, empathy, connectedness) when I developed the Motivation Factor® Methodology. It was nicely tied to my purpose "I develop and catalyze new programs and tools based on the latest brain research which help the individual and team to find their inner motivation and balance." As the business grew I sometimes found myself lacking of motivation without really knowing why. I decided to take the Indicator to see if anything new came up. The result surprised me at first because my number one talent was now "lead" and my talent for "creativity" was not on the list. How could that be?

The answer became obvious as I considered my change in focus from "creating something" to "making a business out of it". Those two efforts require different competencies. I was now in a position where everyone looked to me for answers to everything. I became the leader within every aspect of the business: "What is the strategy, what is the empirical data behind Motivation Factor, what are the key messages, how do we sell it, what are your plans, what

*will the infrastructure look like, etc.” I had to use my “lead” talent in this new role but it was not really giving me any energy and consequently it became an energy drainer. At the same time looking at my number one need “Freedom” it became clear what was going on. Leading processes that didn’t give me energy took away my “Freedom” and at the same time having this urge for “Master” made it difficult for me to pass these assignments to others. No wonder that I had a motivation gap. When I revisited my purpose it became very clear to me, I didn’t live my purpose. I needed to allocate time to develop something new to get my motivation back.*

*Often we are in situations where we can’t influence our work assignments and where we need to keep doing what we do even if we feel lack of motivation. In these situations it is even more important to look at the purpose because it is our “leading star” and it is raised above everyday trivialities. In my case raising awareness to the fact that it had been a long time since I had developed something new made me take immediate action. I used a day to brainstorm and come up with new ideas and the result was 4 new products. I was back in the game!*