



## Lessons from Your Soul

I think it's finally safe to pack away the parkas here in Iowa – yahoo! These spring days have me wanting to cart out the skirts and bask in the warmth of the sun, white pasty legs and all (watch out, the reflection off of them might cause serious eye damage – and where did all those veins come from anyway?). The shift in seasons is a definite boost to my spirit. But wouldn't it be wonderful to have a means of creating that feeling independent of weather or anything else left to chance? Lucky for you, there is one. It's not a quick-fix solution, but if you really take the time to reflect and initiate action, you will reap the rewards.

This month I'll be tackling the fourth and final component of my mantra for living well and thriving – fulfilling your purpose.

### **Your purpose in life is your reason for being on a soul level.**

It is at this deepest level that you discover you can have wellness independent of your physical state. **Because your soul isn't bound by the physical world, neither is your purpose.** This has become strikingly evident to me this week as our local community mourns the death of a 15 year-old boy from cancer. My heart goes out to his family and I am sending much loving-kindness and prayers their way. If there is one message that has become abundantly clear, it is that his courage and positive attitude has inspired – and will continue to inspire – many people well beyond his time spent here on earth. His purpose is being lived out.

### **Fulfilling your purpose is a critical component of wellness because it is what makes you feel like you've come truly alive and nourishes your spirit.**

When you're living out your purpose you feel a deep connection to something or someone and time often passes without you even noticing. Fulfilling your purpose contributes to a universal greater good and brings immense meaning and joy to your life.

Too often people make the mistake of thinking living out their purpose has to mean having a certain job title or attaining a certain level of achievement. For some, fulfilling their purpose leads to fame, fortune, and acknowledgement. But for the vast majority, our purposes get played out in very ordinary, quiet, yet important ways. You may play out your purpose through your job, but you may also play out your purpose by how you show up in your relationships, the volunteer work you do, the artwork you create that moves other people, etc. Get the picture?

Don't underestimate or bash your own purpose. I'm here to tell you, you were wonderfully and beautifully created for a reason!

**Here are two additional key points to consider:**

**Recognize that how you live out your purpose may take on different forms as your life progresses, but there will be a common underlying theme.**

For example, I feel like my purpose is inspiring and equipping people with strategies to get healthy so that they can then live out their own purposes more powerfully in the world. In my 20's this took the form of being a school psychologist. In my 30's my purpose took on the form of parenting, teaching yoga, and starting wellness coaching. In my 40's it is creating Wellfinity and being able to speak to others as a cancer survivor.

**Fulfilling your purpose doesn't mean that you will constantly be living in a state of bliss.**

Sometimes fulfilling our purpose comes with some boring components. Take parenting and laundry for instance. With a 12 year-old boy in the house I have a LOT of it. I guess I should be happy he changes clothes – some 12 year-old boys are content to wear the same outfit for a week. I don't particularly enjoy doing laundry, but I really do enjoy being a parent. So I take on the task of laundry for the bigger purpose at stake. Same goes for any "techie" aspect of running my own business. Nothing makes me want to pull my hair out more! But again, if I connect to the bigger purpose of my business, I deal with the tech aspects – and have Geek Squad on speed dial.

**How do I fulfill my purpose?**

Whole books, courses, and coaching programs have been created on the topic, so I can only scratch the surface here. Determining your purpose and living it out is something only you can do. Other people might come along beside you to help you through the process, but you need to own it yourself.

**Even if you're life looks perfect on paper, if something feels "off", is missing from your life, or you aren't as happy as you thought you would be, then it's time to look at whether you are authentically honoring your purpose.**

Ask yourself the following questions and give yourself time for reflection – perhaps even writing your responses down in a journal that you can review again. Your responses will give you clues as to whether you are honoring your purpose and give you insights as to what it may be.

**Is my work (I'm using the term loosely here, it does not have to mean a paid position) done out of duty, because I "think I should" or do I feel deeply compelled to do it?**

I can speak personally here to give an example. I teach yoga because I feel deeply compelled to. It has become so much of who I am I can't imagine my life without it. It truly is my soul's work! When I'm teaching time flies, I connect with my yoga students, and feel a deep sense of

satisfaction in helping other people relax, get stronger, and discover more of their own true selves. That's how I know one of the ways I'm living out my purpose is being a yoga instructor.

**Do I have an idea of what my true purpose is but something is holding me back from making the shift? Perhaps it is fear of other people's judgements, financial concerns, or the fact that living out my purpose might require me to step away from stability and enter uncharted territory?**

I believe fear is the #1 culprit holding people back from fulfilling their purpose and living a life of soulful abundance.

**If money were a non-issue and I had an infinite supply of it, would I still be doing what I am doing now?**

Hopefully this question will give you a good "ah ha" moment as to whether or not you are honoring your purpose. To some degree we all would make some shifts if money were in infinite supply, but at the core – would you be the same?

For example, even if I had an endless supply of money, I would continue to teach yoga and do wellness coaching on some level. I love it and feel like it makes a positive contribution to the world. Would I outsource the cleaning of my house? You bet! So that's how I know providing cleaning services isn't part of my purpose while yoga is.

**If I wouldn't be doing the same thing as I am now, what would I change?** You can ask yourself the additional questions of:

What would I be doing instead?

Am I alone or with others?

Working indoors or outdoors?

What problems might I be solving or services would I be providing?

What form might my work take? (for example is it more intellectual in nature, hands-on, artistic, musical, social, etc.)

**When were times when I felt deeply fulfilled, alive, and engaged in something?**

Your answer to this question will give you great insight into what your true purpose may be or the conditions under which it flourishes.

Using information attained by answering these questions, what is one small action you can take to discover and live out your purpose? Maybe you research taking a class in something that you always have felt compelled to do but haven't made time to try. Maybe you secure a loan to start your own business. Or this Sunday you start perusing job adds for something that is more consistent with your purpose. Get the momentum going and see what happens.

Well it's literally 12:45am as I bring the writing of this newsletter to a close. And you know what? Despite the fact that I got up early to teach yoga I don't feel tired – in fact I feel pretty energized! I'll take that to be a sign that I'm living out my purpose through Wellfinity and inspiring readers like you. Off to get my wellness sleep!

A handwritten signature in a cursive script that reads "Shelly". The signature is written in a dark grey or black ink on a light, textured background.

**Live with Intention, Love Yourself, Create Balance, Fulfill Your Purpose & Thrive!**