

What Makes Life Worth Living

Description

Many people have tried to answer what makes life worth living. In this article we are going to discuss 6 unique answers.

How Nietzsche Recovered From Nihilism And Decided To Shave That Ridiculous Stash

Nihilism is the belief that values, meaning, and purpose are all groundless. There is no inherent purpose to life and anything we do will ultimately be pointless in the end.

Nietzsche, a philosopher, argued that nihilism's corrosive effects would follow as society began to reject the idea of a higher power or meaning.

"God is dead! God remains dead! And we have killed him! How can we console ourselves, the murderers of all murderers! The holiest and the mightiest thing the world has ever possessed has bled to death under our knives: who will wipe this blood from us? With what water could we clean ourselves? What festivals of atonement, what hold games will we have to invent for ourselves? Is the magnitude of this deed not too great for us? Do we not ourselves have to become gods merely to appear worthy of it?"

God is a symbol of sorts in this quote. He is talking about god, but also indirectly about any situation where people reject the idea of a meaningful existence thrust upon them by some outer source.

Nietzsche believed that one of the most difficult tasks for humans, was that of creating purpose, meaning, and values in the face of nihilism.

In other words, there is no objective meaning in life, but that can be a freeing notion. Instead of being forced by something else to have a certain purpose, you can discover or create it for yourself. You can have meaning and purpose as you decide to have it in your life. It is just relative to you. But don't expect it to be easy.

In some ways you have already started rejecting nihilism, even if you consider yourself a nihilist. The very fact that you aren't already dead shows that you have chosen to create or recognize certain values in life. The fact that you are reading this article shows that you value something about what you are getting here.

Instead of crumbling in the face of nihilism, fight back. Discover what your body considers valuable. What else are you going to do with your time, anyway?

Oh, and he didn't decide to shave.

Finding Your Purpose In The Face Of Death

One man witnessed his friends being murdered, tortured, burned alive. His group had everything taken from them and were treated like animals. Yet he lived on. The man was Viktor Frankl. He was a Holocaust survivor.

While he was in an internment camp, he said that one of the things that kept him alive through the starvation, cold, and maltreatment was his desire to publish his book.

His book talks in depth about his experiences in the camp. It also discusses his psychology and philosophy that helps people find a purpose in life. He says “everything can be taken from a man but one thing: the last of the human freedoms – to choose one’s attitude in any given set of circumstances, to choose one’s own way,” and **“those who have a ‘why’ to live, can bear with almost any how.”**

Similarly we can imagine how much worse life could be, and perspective can give us a sense of appreciation for our situation. It can help us clarify what makes life worthwhile for us. If we were to die in the next few months, what would we wish we had done? But if that doesn’t work for you you can even just think about how lucky you are because you aren’t in an internment camp.

From The Sacrosanct Halls Of Science

Science has some legitimately important things to say about happiness and meaning in life for humans.

The [Schwartz Value Theory](#) looked at all the things that people value and sorted them into basic categories that are typically represented in a circle. Each side of the circle has a value, with the opposite side corresponding to the opposite value.

Some people value having an exciting life. Others value security and order. If you aren’t happy in life, consider whether your values aren’t being fulfilled well enough. For example, maybe you have a very stable life but you want more stimulation or excitement.

Combine this with [personality theory](#), which sorts people based on 5 traits. By understanding the traits that you have the most of, you can actually find what you are most likely to value.

For example, if you are conscientious, which is a word for orderly and task oriented, you will probably find self improvement motivating and desirable. If you are low on agreeableness, you probably will find preparing for, and taking part in competitive situations meaningful.

Find these values that you have and make sure you are fulfilling those each day.

Stoics, Buddhists, Mediators All Agree...

One of **the best answers to the question** what makes life worth living is the answer found across multiple philosophies. Stoics say “the mind that is anxious about future events is miserable.” Another

individual said, “If you make happiness your goal, you’ll be disappointed. If you make presence your goal, you’ll be satisfied.” Buddhists are known to say “do not dwell in the past, do not dream of the future, concentrate the mind on the present moment.” Meditators say “the present moment is the only time over which we have dominion.”

All these comments mean one thing. **Misery comes from not fully experiencing or focusing on the present.**

This makes sense given human history. For many years, people were just worried about surviving. Who thinks about interpreting what their friend said when a bear is chasing you? Now many countries have people who’s basic needs are met. Now people worry about small things that don’t require focusing on the present. They stew over the past and fret about the future. Anxiety and depression are rising for many reasons, but one of them is because we have significantly more leisure time on our hands.

The easiest way to change this and place ourselves back in the situation our forbears found themselves in all day long, with out losing all the benefits of modern life, is to simply focus on meditating and being in the present.

Simple Insight From The Front Page Of The Internet

Riffing off the previous paragraphs, sometimes the simple in the moment pleasures are most important. We scoured the internet [forums](#) to find a list of things that people said made life enjoyable or worthwhile. Here are a few of them.

One person said they want more time. They said they looked forward to their adulthood when they were a child, but now they barely have any time to themselves any more. They wish time would just slow down. Another suggestion is to watch more comedy shows, podcasts, or movies. A person wrote on Reddit that they only really wanted peace of mind. They just want to be able to tell themself that everything is going to be okay. Many people said things like wanting to make a positive change in the world, even if it is only small. Others listed practical activities like biking, playing music, or hiking.

Stare At Your Shadow More

Some of the misery we feel in life is because we aren’t fulfilling or satisfying parts of our character or identity. Instead of repressing those parts of our self, we can learn more about them and empower them. This leads to purpose and an enjoyable life in the long run. In the short run, it can make [life more painful since we are confronting difficult things](#). Click [here](#) if you dare.

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