

# The wellness boost of a purposeful life

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(HealthDay)—Research has long shown how psychological disorders lead to poor physical health. Now scientists are learning more about the flip side of emotions, how living a purposeful life may have as many

physical benefits as inspirational ones.

Having purpose in life is simply believing that your life has meaning and that you live according to goals you set for yourself.

One study found that a purposeful life has protective health benefits as you age. It can help people maintain the physical functions necessary for day-to-day life, such as good walking speed and grip strength. Another found that it improves [sleep quality](#)—life-altering sleep disturbances like [sleep apnea](#) and [restless legs syndrome](#) were less likely among people who feel good about themselves.

One explanation for this deep mind-body connection could be that people with greater purpose in their lives tend to follow numerous healthy lifestyle habits, such as exercising, managing stress and taking preventive wellness steps. But one thing's for sure: It can't hurt for you to try it on your own and see how it makes you feel.

Living a more purposeful life starts with self-reflection. This can involve using practices like meditation and writing in a journal to better understand yourself, what's most important to you, how you want to live and how to be open to new possibilities. The second step is to find ways to put your goals into action, taking steps, big and small, to live that life.

**More information:** The University of Minnesota has step-by-step advice for how to [live a more purposeful life](#).

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