

8 Ways to Get More Out of Life: Finding Meaning in the Everyday

Americans' happiness levels hit new lows last year. A University of Chicago study cited by NBC News found only 14% who called themselves "very happy" with their lives in 2020.

That's not exactly surprising. But it is disappointing. So few of us can seem to find meaning in everyday life.

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Are you among them? Perhaps it's time to make some changes. Small changes, at first—changes that eventually add up to something big, perhaps even life-changing. Here's what you can do right now to start seeking meaning and get more out of life.

1. Set—and achieve—one small goal every week. Just one small goal every week. It may be as simple as committing to a 15-minute period of self-reflection every evening or a promise to your family to make it home for dinner every night. Whatever form these goals take, keep them coming, and treat each one as a small victory when you reach it.



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2. Begin to approach life as a personal journey. You've heard

the popular wisdom about life being a journey and all that. It may be cheesy, but seeing life as one long voyage of discovery can help us find meaning in the ordinary. That's what happened to Mike Signorelli, a former atheist who found religion later in life and set in motion a journey to become the founding pastor of V1 Church, a fast-growing congregation in the New York City area. You don't have to convert to a new faith to enjoy an awakening like Signorelli's; all you have to do is change how you interact with the world.

3. Volunteer one hour per month (then another, and another and ...). Helping those less fortunate is an amazing way to find meaning while feeling like you're making a real difference in the world. Start small, just one hour per month, and build from there as you grow more comfortable.

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