

Curious? Discover the missing ingredient to a fulfilling life.

Kashdan Todd (2009) *Curious?* Harper

Todd Kashdan describes a fulfilling life as one in which we live according to our values, we find or make meaning, we have effective relationships, and we manage anxiety to our benefit. Central to the achievement of these life-affirming outcomes is curiosity.

Meaning is about gaining insight into what to do and what not to do when we are faced with life's decisions big and small. Meaning enhances our capacity to work towards a future that is most in sync with our deepest values and interests. People who are meaning-makers and able to learn from events, gain valuable insights, and grow as a person experience profound health and well-being.

In the workplace, especially in management and leadership roles, purpose is a particular form of meaning-making.

The tolerance of uncertainty is about remaining open to what your mind has to say while continuing to move in the direction of core values and interests.

Curiosity is the ultimate tool.

What does Curiosity Look Like?

Guidelines for practicing curiosity are as follow:

1. When waking, what am I seeing that I overlooked before?
2. When talking, I am going to remain open to whatever transpires without categorizing, judging, or reacting. I will let novelty unfold, resisting the temptation to control the flow.
3. When walking outside the house, I will gently guide my attention so I can be intrigued by my every bodily movement and whatever sights, sounds and smells are within my range.
4. I will assume or presume nothing, except that novelty exists everywhere.

Within this mindset, every single gesture is guided by openness and curiosity.

Traits of curious people

What the research shows as the traits of curious people:

- + Display a wide range of interests
- + Highly proactive, enthusiastic, energetic and animated
- + Talkative
- + Dominant in conversations
- + Express their ideas well
- + Say and do interesting things (intriguing and surprising)
- + Appear relaxed and comfortable
- + Completely attentive and engaged in conversations
- + Easily volunteer information about themselves (including provocative topics such as sex and religion)
- + Highly intelligent
- + Funny, often the first to be playful
- + More open and less judgmental

Curiosity and Enhanced Relationships

Curiosity helps us to switch our perspective away from ourselves and towards others. This switch of perspective, showing a greater interest in others, greatly enhances the quality of our relationships. Tapping into the power of curiosity helps others to capitalize on their interests and strengths, which is itself highly motivating. Behaviors that will motivate others include the following:

1. Visualize the big picture and share it with others;

2. Reward people beyond money by giving those things that have personal meaning...of course you first need to know what is personally meaningful for each individual!;
3. Ask people thought-provoking questions;
4. Listen, accept, and avoid confrontation;
5. Create bridges;
6. Persist

Guidelines for Infusing Work with More Meaning

- ✚ Discover your strengths (Using a tool like the [VIA Survey of Character Strengths](#)) and values (See list below).
- ✚ Bring your strengths into the workplace (as well as your partnership, family, recreation, and wider social engagements)
- ✚ Find a secure base. This means feeling safe and secure enough that you are OK to take risks, explore, and undertake safe-to-fail activities. You'll need your boss to
- ✚ Take action: The only thing worse than doing something is doing nothing. This means making opportunities for your work to have variety and challenge that keep you attentive and interested. Even the most routine tasks can be made more interesting or challenging by looking for ways to modify, vary, re-organise or re-shape them.
- ✚ Focus on people as the source of support and meaning. Be assertive and express what our strengths and interests are to other people. Focus on ideas and solutions. Show your supervisor how your attitude, efforts and performance improve. Sell yourself as having un-tapped capacity and wanting to be more motivated and productive.
- ✚ Find a link between your identity and both your work and your work team. This means finding the alignment between the team's purpose and your personal values.
- ✚ Become more curious by remembering to be curious.

Three Ingredients for Lasting Love

Use these and change your love life.

1. Shared commonalities, which create a secure base where core values are respected and appreciated;
2. Shared differences, which create opportunities for expansion and growth; and
3. Shared access to how each partner changes and evolves, which allows needs to be constantly acknowledged, adopted and met.

Difficulties that Interfere with Strong Connection

- ✚ Loneliness
- ✚ Boredom
- ✚ Mindless scripts
- ✚ The interest gap
- ✚ Difficulty working with negativity

Core Values

Our core values are the best guide to our sense of identity, or who we really are. Identity includes our innermost thoughts, ideals, aspirations, strengths, weaknesses and sense of self in the world. Often, our identity is more obvious to others than to ourselves. Use the list below to clarify your values.

Instructions

- I. Select the 10 most important values to you. (You may have different priorities for core values at home and at work)
- II. Ask people close to you for feedback on your selection.
- III. Think of times when you experienced great success or a feeling of great achievement in your life. Which of the listed values were most strongly in play.

1. **Acceptance:** To be accepted as I am
2. **Achievement:** To set goals and make important accomplishments
3. **Accuracy:** To be accurate in my opinions and beliefs
4. **Attractiveness:** To be physically attractive
5. **Authority:** To be in charge and lead, command, and be responsible for others
6. **Autonomy:** To be independent and in control of my thoughts and actions as opposed to being controlled by outside influences
7. **Caring:** To take care of others and be kind and generous
8. **Challenge:** To take on difficult and demanding tasks and problems
9. **Commitment:** To make enduring, meaningful commitments
10. **Conformity:** To respect rules, be obedient, and meet societal obligations
11. **Contribution:** To make a lasting impact on the world
12. **Cooperation:** To work collaboratively with others
13. **Courtesy:** To be considerate and polite toward others
14. **Creativity:** To have new and original ideas
15. **Dependability:** To be honest, reliable, and responsible
16. **Faithfulness:** To be loyal and trustworthy in relationships
17. **Family:** To create and sustain a happy, loving family
18. **Genuineness:** To act in a manner that is true to who I am
19. **God's Will:** To seek and obey the will of God
20. **Growth:** To continue learning, changing, and evolving
21. **Health:** To be physically well and healthy
22. **Hedonism:** To simply enjoy myself and satisfy my desires
23. **Helpfulness:** To be helpful to others
24. **Humor:** To see the humorous side of myself and the world
25. **Industry:** To work hard and well at my life tasks
26. **Inner Peace:** To seek out and experience tranquility and serenity
27. **Knowledge:** To learn and contribute valuable knowledge
28. **Loving:** To give love to others
29. **Mastery:** To be competent in my everyday activities
30. **Order:** To have a life that is well-ordered and organized
31. **Popularity:** To be well-liked by many people
32. **Power:** To gain social status and prestige
33. **Purpose:** To have meaning and direction in my life
34. **Romance:** To have intense, exciting love in my life
35. **Safety:** To be safe and secure
36. **Security:** To protect loved ones, my community, and/or my nation
37. **Self-control:** To be disciplined in my own actions
38. **Self-esteem:** To feel good about myself

- 39. Self-sufficient:** To take care of myself without being dependent on others
- 40. Spirituality:** To grow and mature spiritually by connecting to things bigger than myself
- 41. Stability:** To have a life that stays relatively consistent
- 42. Stimulation:** To actively seek out adventure and create a life filled with novelty and variety
- 43. Tolerance:** To accept other people, as well as opinions and beliefs differing from my own
- 44. Tradition:** To respect and preserve the past and maintain order through tradition and customs
- 45. Universalism:** To create a sense of harmony among different people and preventing war and conflict; to create a sense of unity with nature and protecting it
- 46. Virtue:** To live a morally pure and excellent life
- 47. Wealth:** To have plenty of money