

# SOLIDMAN

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strong · present · confident

Pillar Three

Group Exercise #16

Question #5: Where am I going?

Discovering Your Purpose

## 16 WHERE AM I GOING?; DISCOVERING YOUR PURPOSE

"Your life is far deeper, far weightier than you have probably come to believe, and that is why all of the career, calling, or personality tests, assessments, and indicators have not helped a great deal or at a profound level. You are more than you have imagined, and there is more going on than you have probably been led to believe." Gary Barkalow ([www.thenobleheart.com](http://www.thenobleheart.com))

Don't ask what the world needs, ask what makes you come alive and go do it. Because what the world needs is people who have come alive. – Howard Thurman

### **Discovering Your Purpose**

Discovering your purpose is the final exercise as you answer the 5<sup>th</sup> question; Where am I going? The previous questions were important to answer to get you to this point; to discover your purpose in your life. You would never be able to find the deep, true meaning of your life's purpose if you did not know where life truly comes from and connect to that, if you did not know who you truly are at your deepest being, and if you did not know what you need and want.

**☞ To be a strong, free man you must answer the five questions.**

Now upon that strong foundation you can build the ultimate internal referenced outcome; building a life of deep purpose and meaning. All of us on this journey know that there is something significant about our lives, but with an external referenced life would never even be able to conceive what it is, let alone begin to live it out.

**☞ Discovering your purpose requires a deep internal look.**

The journey of discovering your purpose will require a deeper look internally than anything you've done so far. Your Maximus Statement has been a really good start and it will guide you into that deeper place. Discovering your purpose will be a lifelong journey.

*In what ways are you aware that you have been created for more than you see before you?*

**Solid Man® Integrity Group****Internal Journey**

This chapter will only be a start to your whole process of discovery. It is just a call out that you actually have a purpose.

The real work of discovery will be your ongoing exploration of who you are deeply, what really makes you come alive, what moves you and what you have been interested in your entire life.

As the quote from Howard Thurman said at the start of this exercise, finding your purpose requires that you look to what makes your heart come alive. It is an internal journey.

When we live an externally referenced life, much of our energy is placed in what others think or what would be helpful to others. While this seems noble, our lives will completely miss the mark.

☞ **As with all other exercises, this will require checking in with yourself.**

Doing what others think you are good at or what needs to get done, is ok, but will not allow you the opportunity to do what you were made to do.

***How have you been stuck volunteering for something that did not fit you?***

The internal journey requires that you ask yourself some very important questions that come from deep within you. What makes my heart come alive? What has interested me my whole life? How have I done things, every time I have done things? What captures my attention? Or What seems to drive or motivate me?

☞ **Your purpose is a significant part of life most of us disregard.**

As an externally referenced man, you probably listened to everyone else's voice but your own internal voice. You may have had someone in your life say something like, "you would be good at this" or "If I were you I would see if I could do that."

While it is important to listen to important people in your life, people who are just trying to help really do not know your deep inner workings.

***What have others who were just trying to help, said that you'd be good at?***

**Solid Man® Integrity Group****Mid-life Crisis**

Before we go deeper and ask some important questions, let's talk about something that happens to many men, the mid-life crisis.

Midlife crisis is a crisis of meaning. Everything you thought had meaning in your life has now been disrupted so much you have no idea which end is up. No matter when it happens to you, it is always a deep disruption of what I thought life was about or how I would be able to get what I needed.

All at once you realize that everything you worked for, everything you thought would bring meaning and influence, everything you invested in has given you no return on your investment.

The crisis may start with a divorce, health issues, a lay-off or loss of job. It may be the loss of a loved one or a betrayal by a friend or an organization which you gave your life to. It may be caused by a serious mistake you made which resulted in estrangement from your kids or other family members. It may be because of a very healthy boundary that you set, which was not received well.

You may have lost a business or your 401k because of the market or a bad business deal.

👉 **Mid-life Crisis is a crisis of meaning. It feels like everything is falling apart.**

Whatever it is, you lost it. You thought it would be here for you, but it's gone. All that you had bought in to has failed to deliver what you thought it would give you. Now you are empty, somewhat lost and ready for change. Which is good. Because it is time for real change, but most men just change the curtains.

This is where the traditional path of finding a new job, growing a ponytail, buying a Harley or upgrading to a newer model of wife happens. The problem with this is that you are just doing the same thing over, with no thought to what really will bring you true meaning in your life. You are still externally referenced.

Since you are in a crisis of meaning because you have lost all that has had so much meaning to you, it is time to refine what actually has true meaning. Usually this is where a man will begin to observe how externally referenced he has been all his life.

Now becoming internally referenced will help bring true meaning. Essentially since he has now lost so much, he is now ready to make some real changes.

***How have you experienced this kind of crisis in your life?***

## **Discover Meaning by Asking the Right Questions**

There are some people who coach others to actually create their purpose. If you want to be this or that, go for it, it is fruit ripe for the picking. The truth is that we can't really create our purpose. It is not something we can make out of nothing. But, something is already there, that's what we want to find.

Your purpose is hidden inside of you even as you are reading this. It already exists within you. Your work in this exercise is to begin the process of discovering it. You will find it from a number of important clues. Those clues awaken your understanding of the deep truths of why you were put on this planet.

👉 **“The two most important days in your life are the day you are born and the day you find out why.” - Mark Twain.**

This exercise will probably only begin to scratch the surface of finding your purpose, but hopefully you will begin to move in the right direction. To get deeper into this process consider some of the resources at the end of this exercise. For now here are a few of the most important questions you can ask yourself, so you can discover more about you.

### **What makes my heart come alive?**

Consider the things that move you. What makes you excited or gets you anticipating something? What are the things that really gets you going? It could be spending time with certain people. It could be going someplace. It could be doing something. It could be the preparation of doing something or going somewhere. When have you felt most alive?

It could be sports, movie themes, getting up in front of people performing, it could be planning or organizing. It could be playing, seeing someone grow or learn, reconciling relationships, or fixing stuff.

👉 **Your heart is where your life is found. Let it come alive!**

It could be learning, risk-taking, building, destruction, or seeing awesome sights. It could be good conversation, being alone to contemplate, growing things, rescuing or saving. It could be a billion different things.

***What are things that make your heart come alive?***

**Solid Man® Integrity Group****What has interested me my whole life?**

If you look back you will see certain patterns. What has captured your attention your whole life? What things keep coming up again and again? What comes up every time you have free time to just let your mind wander when you have no pressure or agenda? What is there?

When you were a kid, you may have been enthralled by World War II or the Civil War when you were a kid. You were amazed with geography and cultures. You discovered math equations way before the teacher taught them in class. Things that captured you, you spent time reading way more than you needed to on an assignment. What were some of these things?

You found out how things work and tore stuff apart to see what was inside. You explored under the house to see how it was built. You wanted to find out what made animals tick. You made everything a game for competition. You read voraciously, or you read nothing at all trying to experience it all. What was your unique interest? As a man you see how you do things the same way as when you were a boy.

***What are some of those patterns that have been with you your whole life?***

**How do I do things, every time I have do things?**

Think about how you do things like the way you do them. You may be a conformist and do it the same as everyone else. You may be an anti-conformist and do it differently.

You may be innovative and have to do it in a new way. You may be a pragmatist and do it in the easiest or most efficient way.

Every one of us have our own style of getting things done. Some of us focus on the task at hand. Some of us are more interested with the people we are doing it with. Some of us need to make whatever we are doing, fun. What about getting into the deep details of something or just concerned about the big picture. Knowing how you do things is a big part of discovering your purpose.

***What have been a few ways that you always do things?***

**Solid Man® Integrity Group****What seems to drive or motivate you?**

You may be unaware of some of your deeper drivers or motivators in your life. They often stay quite hidden until we look deeper, or like looking for a timid animal, you must wait quietly for it to come forward. Or some of them are bold like crows or roosters making themselves known and in your face.

As we saw in some of the initial Solid Man material, your drivers can be externally referenced. This is a significant thing to observe. Notice if things that are driving you are things like expectations or what might make others approve of you. To discover your true mission, you'll need to find it from your internal resources. So, notice if it is external and reboot.

What moves you to do things or accomplish things? What are you driven to do? I have a friend who later in life began to have a drive to climb all the highest peaks on each continent. His drive took him around the world and in the best shape of his life. Another man, a retired engineer, was compelled to build a business which made it easier to purify water for drinking, and then made it available to people who needed it.

Often, these drives seem to be way out of the box and not ordinary. Sometimes they seem very risky. Sometimes they seem boring and not so exciting. That does not matter. What matters is finding the thing that moves you to action and to making a difference in the world.

***What are some things that seem to have been driving or motivating you to action?***

***What is coming up that seems risky or out of the ordinary, maybe even audacious?***

***Of these questions, which answers seem to have the most weight or significance, why do you think?***

**Solid Man® Integrity Group****Waves of Purpose**

A man's purpose comes in waves throughout his lifetime. Sometimes with two, five or more waves. Often we think our purpose of mission is one thing. It could be that way for sure, but even then it may be a different context or way of doing that one thing.

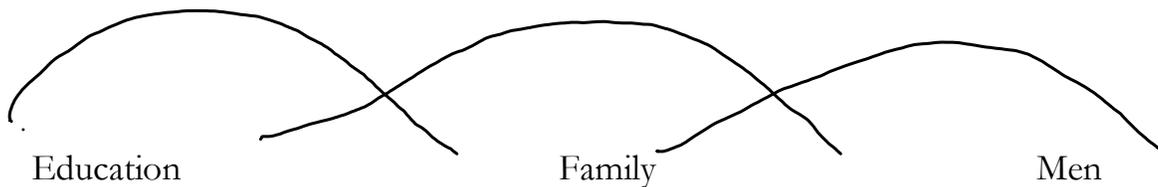
The important thing is to not tie yourself down to one thing in your life. You could even be moving on the path of purpose on two different things at once. Your mission could be doing something in a certain way. Or it could be specific tasks.

👉 **Our purpose comes in waves in our lifetime.**

Let's say your purpose is teaching, but in your life you have trained in a corporate setting, taught urban kids life skills or taught fifth grade for 16 years.

Maybe you are a maximizer and you developed a logistical flow for a trucking company, helped create protocol for an HR department and developed storage and distribution for gear with your son's football club.

Your purpose could be clearly distinct and different seasons and pursuits. Take some time to consider how your mission has developed, what it looks like and how it is flowing in your life. Here's a graph as an example. Your waves will be very unique to you.



Very simply, mine has been these three. My first purpose was to get myself educated from grade school into High School, College, Master's degree, and Post-graduate certificate. I am actually still learning today. (This possibly is a lifelong purpose for me)

Second was my purpose of creating, providing for and getting my family educated. I have three kids, and now everyone in my family has a college degree. So everyone is good to go if I was to die.

Third has been my latest passion to see to it that as many men as possible are living empowered and solid lives. It is what this writing and my counseling practice is about. This work is my passion.

Eventually, there may be something else that comes up, but right now it seems like I will die doing this. I take what I have learned and I am making it so other men can build their lives into strength.

*What have been the waves of your mission so far with you? Draw a graph.*

### **A Serious and Common Pitfall; Making Your Woman Your Purpose**

One of the most profound pitfalls men have in life is making their woman their purpose. Making sure she is happy, working your butt off to give her the standard of living she wants or orbiting around her to manage her moods and anxiety are ways to greatly limit your ability to find your purpose in life.

Living for your woman makes for very small living. Your life will become inward focused upon itself, forced into a tiny little space. Living for the pleasure of your woman creates a life with diminished influence or legacy. You will lose your potential to experience and live out your full purpose in life. You will lose your ability to develop an expansive life.

#### **☞ Having your woman as your top priority in life is Living Small.**

Of course trying to make her happy is so small when put next to curing cancer or inventing a life-changing device. But compare the idea of your woman's happiness to coaching young kids, tutoring inner-city children or fundraising for homeless men, there is no comparison because you are changing the lives of people and making a huge contribution to the world.

Your woman is important, this is true, but she cannot be your main focus in your life. Often women will push to be your main priority. But it important that she is 4<sup>th</sup> or even 5<sup>th</sup> in your priority. Anchoring with your Source is first, Self-care is second, your Purpose is 3<sup>rd</sup>, then your kids and your woman are next. This order of priority positions you to have the most influential life as possible.

*In what ways have you been caught up in making your woman happy?*

*What does it feel like as you read the list of priorities where your woman is number 5?*

**Solid Man® Integrity Group****Abundance**

Most people live with a scarcity mindset where there is not enough to go around. Not enough power, not enough money, not enough of anything. So, when a man begins to consider his purpose, often the first thought is “Dang, I have really missed my purpose! Why did it take until now for me to wake up? I have missed my whole lifetime of living out my purpose.”

This is true especially if you are well on your way in life and you’ve lived an externally referenced life. You find yourself in positions where you’re living for others and never really looked for your internally driven mission. So we think life sucks because I missed the bus. This is scarcity thinking.

☞ **A man knows he has found his vocation when he stops thinking about how to live, and begins to live. - Thomas Merton**

You must make the shift to abundance thinking. Abundance means there is enough to go around. Not only enough, but more than enough. It is true that you are starting late with your purpose, but now is the most beautiful time to move with passion. If you dwell on scarcity, (I have blown my life.) you will be stuck. Don’t look back, look forward with abundance.

Don’t live in the past, begin to live now. There is so much to be experienced and enjoyed.

*How have you been stuck with scarcity?*

*In what ways do you feel like you’ve missed the boat on living out your purpose?*

*What steps could you take to begin to powerfully live in abundance?*

**Your Glory**

Every man has glory. This is a word that is rarely used for people. Glory is also known as brilliance or radiance. It is the thing that defines the most significant or powerful part of something or someone.

Everything and everyone has glory. It is easy to just be convinced that you are made of base materials or have an insignificant or menial existence. But if you get stuck in that kind of thinking you will never discover your purpose in full.

☞ **The process of discovering your purpose is the same as discovering your glory.**

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Even considering the idea that you have glory in your life feels arrogant or prideful, but if it is true it is not arrogant it is just truth. It is not arrogant for Michael Jordan to say, “I am possibly the best basketball player that has ever lived.”

Or for Cindy Crawford to have said, “Because of my mole, I am possibly one of the most beautiful women in the world.”

These things sound arrogant up front, but it’s not arrogant because it is true. The same is true for you. There is something about you that is your glory. You bring something unique, beautiful and strong which influences and changes the world because you are here and you know what you bring.

***How does it feel to consider that you have glory in your life?***

***What things come to mind about your glory as you think about this idea?***

**Branding**

A concept that describes your purpose in today’s world is the idea of personal branding. Branding is taking your talents, skills and passion (aka your purpose) and making yourself known in a specific way to people around you.

** Toot your own horn.**

This is not just creating a logo, but courageously getting your authentic self out there into the world. It is tooting your own horn. Most of us have a hard time doing this. It seems arrogant to say, “Hey, over here, look at me!”

It is not arrogant, it is just being you and getting you out there. It feels very vulnerable to get yourself out there. As you are discovering and refining your purpose, begin to think about how you can talk about it.

Create an elevator speech, saying what or who you are in a couple sentences. Begin to think about what your web domain might be. I chose Solid Man because I believe the word solid is the best individual word which describes a good, strong man.

** Your goal will be to take your passion and make a dent in the universe. - Kolby Kay**

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Consider what kind of platform you might use to get yourself and your message out there. There are a million ways. Your Maximus Statement would be a great place to start. You've already started the process by putting words to who you really are.

*What seems awkward about tooting your own horn?*

*What ideas have come up already about concepts that could be part of your Branding?*

*How about domain names, key words or descriptors of who you are or what you do?*

Use this page to write down any thoughts or notes about what might be part of your purpose in life. Remember that this exercise is just a start to even thinking about what it might be, or what form it may take.

**Passions**

What makes me come alive?

What am I interested in?

What would I love to do?

How do I want to change the world?

What am I really good at?

What have I already been involved with that I love?

**Solid Man® Integrity Group****Group Presentation**

*Of the main questions; What are things that make my heart come alive?, What has interested me my whole life?, How have I done things that could be my purpose? Or What unique things have motivated me in my life? Share insights:*

*How have you had a crisis of meaning, what has this revealed to you about what is important?*

*What have been the waves of your mission so far with you? Draw a graph. Share this with the group.*

*How have you gotten stuck with having your woman as your purpose?*

*In what ways do you feel like you've missed the boat on living out your purpose?*

*What are concepts that could be part of your personal branding?*

*What have you come up with that is your purpose or aspects of your glory?*

*Share other important insights you've gotten from this exercise.*

**Resources**

*It's Your Call*, by Gary Barkalow of [www.thenobleheart.com](http://www.thenobleheart.com) Gary also does weekend retreats for the purpose of discovering your purpose.

*Halftime*, by Bob Buford. Bob also has an entire website and network for the purpose of helping people discover their purpose.