

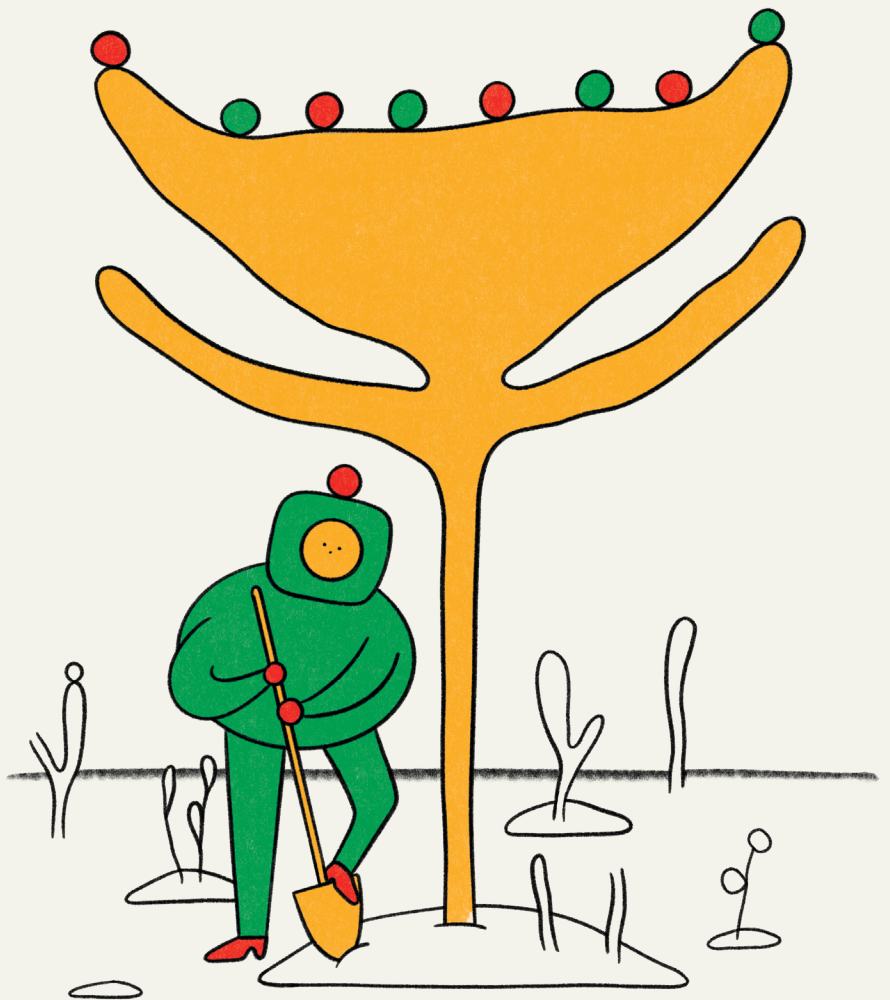
# pur- pose

Purpose is an abiding intention to achieve a long-term goal that is both personally meaningful and makes a positive mark on the world, potentially changing the lives of others.

## Reflection Questions for Parents

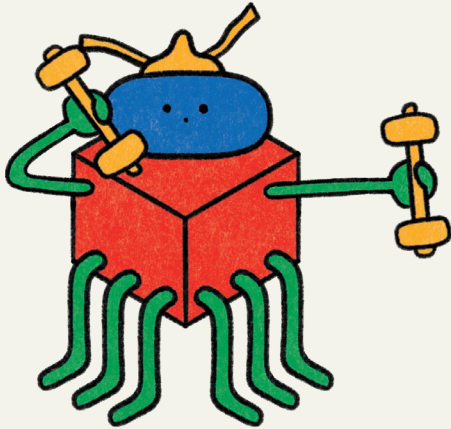
Reflect on the following statements<sup>1</sup> and consider how much you agree or disagree with the statements as well as opportunities for developing a greater sense of purpose.

- I know how to use my talents to contribute meaningfully to the larger world.
- I understand what it is that makes my life feel worthwhile.
- I put effort into making my goals a reality.



## Why cultivate purpose?

Having a sense of purpose can help parents sustain their energy and be persistent when times are tough. Fostering a sense of purpose may also make parents healthier. Parents tend to have a greater sense of purpose than non-parents. What's more, people with a greater sense of purpose tend to engage in healthier behaviors, like eating well and exercising.



## Practices to Help Parents Foster Purpose

**Life Crafting: Sharpen your sense of purpose by defining and committing to your goals.**



By reflecting on your present and future life, this practice can help you make sense of your priorities in life, better articulate the values and passions that are important to you personally, and also possibly contribute to the wider world.

**Reflect on Your Purpose as a Parent: Connect with your sense of purpose in your parenting by writing a short reflection.**



This short reflection helps parents recenter themselves by allowing them to remember just how meaningful their role is and how well-aligned it is to what matters to them.

## Why support children and teens in cultivating purpose?

While early life may set the stage for finding a purpose, the process really begins when we're teens as we explore who we are, what we value, and what we want out of life.

Only about one in five teens has a strong sense of purpose.<sup>2</sup>

Youth who have a sense of purpose tend to have greater coping skills, resilience, and well-being.<sup>3</sup> As they get older, more purposeful adults have better physical and psychological health, including better sleep, less chronic pain, less depression and anxiety, greater life satisfaction, and even a longer life.<sup>4</sup>

Mentorship is an important part of the process of discovering a sense of purpose, as children often need inspiration. Adults can support children in identifying how to best use their talents and provide encouragement to motivate them to move forward with their commitments.<sup>5</sup>

## Practice to Help Teens Foster a Sense of Purpose

**Talk with Teens about Purpose: Help adolescents start exploring and reflecting on meaningful life goals.**



Research shows that a sense of purpose can develop from early experiences that trigger ever-growing commitments in life.<sup>6</sup> These initial commitments do not have to be particularly noteworthy; what's important is that children identify a cause they are interested in or ways their talents can be used for the greater good.

## Read More About Cultivating Purpose in Greater Good

### Five Ways to Foster Purpose in Adolescents



Research suggests that young people rarely have a sense of purpose—but we can take steps to help them cultivate it.

