

Why You Are Here

Why are you here? Why do you exist? What is your purpose? This article explores these in easy to understand terms. Find the home site of Bill Allin at <http://billallin.com>

Why You Are Here

You are not here merely to make a living. You are here to enable the world to live more amply, with greater vision, and with a finer spirit of hope and achievement. You are here to enrich the world. You impoverish yourself if you forget this errand.

- Woodrow Wilson, 28th US President (1856-1924)

Many people in Western countries, usually in their quiet moments alone, wonder what the purpose of life is, why we are here. So we are told, just about everyone wonders this.

This is not true in most parts of the world where they know--or believe they know--why we humans are on earth. Does it matter whether they really know the purpose of life or whether they have simply come to believe in what they have been told. Either way, they have no need to ask the question. For them, the question of purpose of life does not exist. They learn what life is about within their families, their school systems and their communities as they grow up.

Why, then, does the question exist so predominantly in Western countries?

It's not that westerners care more than non-westerners. Nor that they are not as bright.

People in Western countries totally surround themselves--often of their own volition--with the belief that they exist to be consumers, to buy products made by industries. We are taught that happiness can be bought if we have enough cash.

If this sounds coarse, crass, unbelievable, look around you if you live in a Western country. Schools teach children to get a good education so they can get a good job, so they can earn money to buy stuff they will be persuaded they can't live without. Television bombards viewers with commercials touting their need for all kinds of products, some of which are unhealthy, harmful, damaging to the environment, or simply don't work as advertised.

Religions claim their members can buy their way into the afterlife by donating to their place of worship today and belonging to the congregation. True, religions don't make their claim that way, in those words. They use comforting words, attractive words, seducing words. As television commercials do. How comfortable could you be as a member of a religious congregation if everyone knew that you contributed nothing to the coffers? It's pay up and you're good.

In Western countries people argue and debate whether God exists, which religion God favours over others, whether God favours their side of the current war or not. All the while they wonder why they exist, what the purpose of life is.

Could the purpose of life be to follow, to buy, to believe what we are told? If so, what distinguishes humans from ants or wolves? From sheep that follow their leader (often a goat--apparently sheep don't even care) into the slaughter room of the abattoir? Most of us find it difficult, at least once in a while, to accept that our purpose for existence is to be obedient consumers.

If human life has a purpose, it cannot be to act similar to animals we believe ourselves to be superior to. If we do not act in superior ways, then we are not superior, which means that it will be hard to believe in an afterlife. If we do not act differently from other animals, then our fate is similar to that of those animals. Heaven, if you will, would be filled with toads, weasels and mosquitoes, though there would be room for us as heaven is infinite.

What makes us different from other animals? Is it our large brain that allows us to use cognitive processes that are

apparently unavailable to other animals? Maybe. We don't really know what other animals think about, what kinds of thinking they do. While we search the cosmos for life elsewhere, we can't even communicate with other living things on earth, things that have the proven ability to communicate with each other. Some, such as pets, understand our thoughts, feelings and language far better than we can understand theirs. Which brain is superior? We don't really know.

What can we do that other animals can't? We can help each other in ways far beyond what others animals can do for each other. We can deliver progress in research and technology that can help many. We can provide support for the weaker among us, where the weaker among other animals become lunch for predators.

We can do these things, but most of us don't.

If we don't do what we have the superior ability to do better than any other animal, we are like other animals. If we do not do these things to help our species, other living things and our planet to improve, then we choose to be nothing better than ants and rats. (We even refer to city life as "the rat race.")

If you wonder why you exist, look beyond other animals, look beyond television commercials that want you to be like everyone else, look beyond the forces among us that want us to be bipedal sheep. Our purpose is to be as good as we can be. To be better than other animals, we must not act like them. We must act differently from them. We must be superior to them, as we have the ability to be.

Superior doesn't mean forceful or powerful. That survival of the fittest and most powerful attitude pervades nature in all other animals.

If we have a purpose for existence, it's to be different. It's to help in ways that other forms of life can't even imagine.

That purpose, or evidence for it, is all around us.

Do not ask any more. Instead, do what you should to make a difference.

Bill Allin

Turning It Around: Causes and Cures for Today's Epidemic Social Problems, a guidebook for parents and teachers who want to know how and when to impart the important lessons of life to their children at the right time and in the right ways.

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