

“*True Purpose* is a profound book that walks you through a step-by-step, proven process to discover your life’s purpose. Tim is a master, and I have personally watched him transform hundreds of people’s lives—including my own.”

—MARCIA WIEDER, Founder & CEO of Dream University®
and author of *Making Your Dreams Come True*

True Purpose

12 Strategies for Discovering the
Difference You Are Meant to Make



Tim Kelley

“Tim Kelley gives us all a road map for the discovery of our true purpose in life. No other book that I have ever come across lays out the journey in such a thoughtful, challenging, and motivating way. If you want a life filled with meaning and purpose, let Tim be your guide. You won’t be disappointed!”

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“Tim Kelley’s work is of the highest caliber. His insight, precision, and skill shine out from a field that is typically hazy. If you are called to explore the realm of purpose, I know of no better guide than Tim.”

–HELEN PALMER, Best-selling author of *The Enneagram*



“What Einstein did for physics and Gutenberg did for printing, *True Purpose* does for purpose. You’ll discover that we’ve been in nursery school with respect to what we know and how we access purpose. This book puts us into college. Whether you know your purpose or not, I urge you to read this book and do its exercises. It will put you on a path of magic and blessings. *True Purpose* will be the standard for years to come. Well done, Tim.”

–MARTIN RUTTE, Co-editor of *Chicken Soup for the Soul at Work*
Founder of www.ProjectHeavenOnEarth.com




“*True Purpose* is a profound book that walks you through a step-by-step, proven process to discover your life’s purpose. Tim is a master, and I have personally watched him transform hundreds of people’s lives—including my own.”

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“Tim Kelley understands human nature—on the ground level and according to our highest desires. Any person who desires to make an ongoing impact with their work and life will benefit from the ideas and steps he shares in this book. At once practical and wise, *True Purpose* will give you a broader and deeper understanding of your motivations and the actions that will move you in powerful new directions toward the greatest challenges that are still ahead of you.”

—JOHN MITCHELL, Former president of Planters & LifeSavers Co., and
Former president of Business Printer Division, Lexmark International, Inc.




“True Purpose offers practical strategies to help meet one of life’s greatest challenges: finding our unique path and giving our life true meaning. Tim Kelley’s methods draw on his own inner work, his extensive coaching experience, his passion, and his creative gifts. This is a highly original and useful book.”

—RIANE EISLER, Author of *The Chalice and the Blade*,
The Real Wealth of Nations, and *The Power of Partnership*



“Tim Kelley has pioneered a methodology which will allow you to understand your very specific purpose and begin to find the satisfaction that comes when one’s life activity is centered on that purpose. Tim’s new book, *True Purpose*, embodies the knowledge and experience he has gained in this life’s work, complete with exercises and clear instructions as to how we can bring this understanding into each of our daily lives.”

—SIMON RICH, Jr., Former Chairman & CEO of Louis Dreyfus
Natural Gas, and Chairman of the Board of Visitors at Nicholas School
of the Environment and Earth Sciences, Duke University



“Knowing your *real* purpose is essential to doing big things in the world. Tim’s book will help you find your true purpose—and start living it.”

—MICHAEL PORT, Author of *The Think Big Manifesto*
and *Book Yourself Solid*

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*“The secret of success is
constancy of purpose.”*

– Benjamin Disraeli

Chapter Five

Direct Access to Purpose

How Direct Access Works

Direct access methods are far more accurate for identifying life purpose than indirect access methods. Since the soul is the part of you that already knows your purpose, having your soul directly disclose it to you gives the least subjective, most clear expression of your purpose possible. Think of this like running a telephone wire from one floor to another. A person on the top floor of a house would like to have a conversation with a person in the basement. Shouting does little good, but running a telephone wire from the top floor down to the basement will solve the problem.

All direct access methods share this two-way line of communication between the ego and the soul. Using this two-way communication link, the ego asks questions and the soul answers them. The questions need

not be restricted to life purpose, which makes these methods extremely useful for answering any question that is plaguing you.

Let me draw an important distinction here: I am *not* talking about using a psychic or channeler to find your purpose. In those methods, another living human being tells you what your purpose is. In the direct methods we will use, your soul will tell you directly what your purpose is. This eliminates the concern that the psychic or channeler got it wrong. It also means that you can talk to your soul whenever you like, without having to set up a session with a psychic.

The reason that there are so many direct access methods is because there are many different ways of establishing this connection. Each method is a different way of getting the ego into a state where it is capable of asking questions and receiving answers from the soul. Unlike indirect access methods, not all direct access methods work for all people. The individual methods have different rates of success as well.

Furthermore, while indirect access methods work for people who have most any belief system, this is not true of direct access methods. Some direct access methods may be uncomfortable for some people, or may fall outside of the confines of their belief system or faith. Therefore, it is appropriate to have a number of different direct access methods from which to choose. You will need to read about and evaluate the different methods. Select the ones that are most likely to work for you and most closely match your belief system.

The direct access methods are divided into two categories: self-study methods and facilitated methods. The self-study methods are ones that you can do on your own. It makes sense for you to start here because you can get the answers more quickly and will not have to hire someone in order to learn your life's purpose. The facilitated methods require the assistance of someone with specific expertise. Each of the facilitated methods requires some form of training.

I recommend that you read about each of the self-study methods first and choose the ones that feel and seem most appropriate for you. Try each of these methods and see if you are able to create a connection with your soul. You only need one method to work in order to find your purpose! Once you find a method that works, you can continue to use it to get whatever information you need. If you are unable to create a connection to your soul using any of the self-study methods, consider using the facilitated methods.

Trusted Sources

So now we've cleared the fears and concerns that block access to your purpose. Since we'll be using direct access methods, we need to connect directly to someone or something that already knows your purpose. But what does that mean? To whom or what will we connect?

In setting up any two-way communication, it is important to know to whom you're talking. Returning to the telephone metaphor, we are about to try to place a call and to get answers to some very important questions. Whom are you going to call? This is the place in the book where your personal psychological, spiritual, and religious belief systems matter the most. I've been using the term "soul" very loosely to describe the part of you that knows your purpose. Now, it is time to get much more specific.

The basic question is this: Whom or what will you trust to answer questions about your purpose? To designate whom or what you're going to call, I will use the term "trusted source." "Trusted source" means just that. Whom or what do you trust to answer these questions?

In order to qualify as a trusted source, something or someone needs to meet three criteria. You must believe that:

1. It exists.
2. It already knows your purpose.
3. It is capable of communicating with you.

You don't need to be absolutely certain about these things. You could believe that something might exist, might know your purpose, and might be able to communicate it to you. This can be sufficient (though being more certain is helpful).

We're talking about something divine or transpersonal, not a living person. I don't know your purpose! (Neither do your living parents, children, or spouse, even if they insist that they do.) What, in your universe, already knows your purpose? This is the key question! Until you answer this question, you won't know whom to ask! Having a name or label for your trusted source is important; think of it like a phone number. It's hard to make a call unless you know whom you're trying to reach.

There are three basic types of trusted sources: internal, universal, and personal. You may have any or all of these types of trusted sources.

INTERNAL SOURCES

An "internal" trusted source is some aspect of your psyche that knows your purpose. It is called "internal" because you view this as a part of yourself. Where we draw the line between ourselves and the rest of reality is somewhat arbitrary. Recall that one of the functions of the ego is to preserve your sense of self, your individual identity. It does this by establishing and maintaining this line, by declaring certain things to be "me" and everything else to be "not me."

Some people will be comfortable only with internal trusted sources. This is often true of people who are atheistic, agnostic, and/or strongly mentally oriented. For some of these people, it is challenging and uncomfortable for the ego to acknowledge powerful or divine forces outside of themselves. That's fine; look inward. Do you believe that some part of you is divine? Is there some source of deeper wisdom or intuition within you? Can you accept, even hypothetically, that some part of you already knows your purpose, and has known it all along? If so, what would you call this part of you? Some typical terms used

to name internal trusted sources are “soul,” “spirit,” “higher self,” “Buddha nature,” and “entelechy.”

Remember, in order to qualify as a trusted source, you must believe that it exists, it knows your purpose, and it can communicate with you. Here is how one client described his internal trusted source: “Do I believe that some part of me already knows my purpose? I suppose that could be true. I sometimes feel that something deep inside me is guiding me in some way. I don’t really have a name for it, but ‘soul’ is as good a name as any. If I do have a soul, it would definitely know my purpose. Could it communicate with me? Sure, I suppose so, though that’s never really happened in any kind of direct way. It would be nice if it did, though maybe a little spooky.”

Note that this man doesn’t have a strong belief in his soul, but it is sufficient to use direct access methods. His belief system allows for his soul to exist, to know his purpose, and to communicate his purpose to him.

If you have an internal trusted source, take a moment and write down the name you use for it. Don’t worry about what anyone else calls it; just write down the name that feels right to you.

In addition to looking inward for trusted sources, you can also look outward. There may be external trusted sources in your universe. External trusted sources come in two types: universal and personal.

UNIVERSAL SOURCES

A trusted source is universal if you believe that it knows (or would know) everyone’s purpose, not just yours. Some common names people use for universal trusted sources are God, Jesus, the Universe, Source, and Spirit. Universal trusted sources work well for monotheists (e.g., Christians, Jews, Muslims, and Bahá’ís), but poorly for agnostics and atheists.

Here’s an example of how a Christian client chose her universal trusted source: “Well, of course I believe in God. And yes, God knows everyone’s purpose; He has to. I’m not really comfortable communicating

directly with God, though. But the Holy Spirit talks to people; I could learn my purpose from the Holy Spirit.”

Note that for this client, though God exists and knows her purpose, she’s not *allowed* to talk directly to Him. That’s fine; choose an intermediary. Who could communicate your purpose to you on God’s behalf? Jesus? The Holy Spirit? Mother Mary?

Is there a universal trusted source in your universe? What deity or entity in your belief system knows everyone’s purpose? Write down the name of your universal trusted source, if any.

PERSONAL SOURCES

Personal trusted sources are another kind of external trusted source. A personal trusted source is something or someone that you believe has a special, personal interest in your purpose (but not everyone else’s). Do you believe that someone or something watches over you? Examples of personal trusted sources are a guardian angel, a guide, a spirit animal, or a loved one who has died.

Remember, in order to qualify as a trusted source, you must believe that it exists, knows your purpose, and is capable of communication. Here’s how a coach I trained described her personal trusted source: “I know my husband is still with me; I can feel his presence. He wants me to live my purpose.”

Do you have a guide, a dead loved one, or a guardian angel? Does something watch over you? Do you believe it knows your purpose? Write down the name(s) of any personal trusted source(s) you believe in.

Vague concepts don’t make good trusted sources. We’re looking for an active, sentient agency. “Life” would qualify as a trusted source if you believe Life to be a self-aware force with a plan. If you believe that everyone matters and ought to be nice to one another and call that personal value “Life,” then “Life” probably isn’t a sufficiently specific

being or force to qualify as a trusted source. It needs to be something that could answer your questions, which a principle or idea can't do.

For those who are neither religious nor spiritual, the appropriate place to look for a trusted source is psychology. Most people don't find it hard to accept that they have an unconscious. If you believe you have an unconscious, you can probably entertain, if only for the sake of argument, the idea that within your unconscious is some aspect of your psyche that knows your purpose. This is what I have been referring to as a "soul." If you're uncomfortable with the term "soul," the term "entelechy" works well. This word was originally coined by the Greek philosopher Aristotle. It refers to an organism's innate perfection, its impulse to growth and development, its instinct to manifest to its fullest potential. Your entelechy, then, is the part of you that knows your purpose and is seeking to manifest it through you. It is unnecessary to attach any religious significance to this. You can view it in the same way you view your inner Critic or Skeptic, just another part of you with a specific function to perform. The only difference is that it's probably unconscious: You may have no clear sense of this part of you, while you may be very aware of your skeptical and critical thoughts.

If you've been keeping a list, it's pretty common to have 2-3 trusted sources written down at this point. This is fine, but you only need one for the direct access methods to work! Pick the one that seems most comfortable for you and start with it. If that doesn't work, you can try another one.

If you have no trusted sources written down, then direct access methods may not work for you. Perhaps you believe that you have no innate purpose, that nothing is predetermined. Simply declare your purpose! What meaning would you like to create in the world? How would you like your life to be remembered? Choose some lofty goal, something that will stretch your abilities, and pursue it wholeheartedly. Give this book to someone else who believes they have an innate purpose.

It is also possible not to identify your trusted source by name. In effect, this means inviting any entity or agency that is capable of answering questions about your purpose to do so. For the sake of convenience, it usually works to ask the agency or entity what it wishes to be called. This is helpful if you wish to repeat the direct access method in the future to gain more information. A caution, though: Your chances of using direct access methods successfully are reduced if you try to work without naming a specific trusted source.

Remember, selection of your trusted source is a highly personal decision. I recommend against allowing yourself to be influenced by others in this choice. It doesn't matter what you were taught in Sunday school when you were a child or what your friends and family think you believe. Be honest with yourself. What do *you* really believe? Only you can determine who or what you should be asking about your purpose. If you use somebody else's beliefs, it just won't work.

Asking Good Questions

Now you know where you will go to ask questions, your trusted source. You also need to know what questions you're going to ask. So long as you understand these three aspects well enough, it will be simple to ask your trusted source about them:

1. "What is my essence?"
2. "What is my blessing?"
3. "What is my mission?"

These were defined in Chapter 2: What Does Purpose Look Like? Recall that your purpose is the sum of these three things, so it doesn't make sense to ask, "What is my purpose?" These three questions will probably be plenty for your first time out; don't try to get everything resolved at once!

The answers you get in your first session will likely require clarification, so feel free to ask follow-up questions. In particular, it makes

sense to ask a bunch of questions to fully understand your blessing and mission. It usually takes several interactions with a trusted source to get all these questions answered.

CLARIFYING YOUR BLESSING

Since your blessing is a process that you have been designed to do, you should ask enough questions to fully understand this process. This will typically take place over a series of interactions with your trusted source, not just one. Here are the questions I recommend asking:

- ✓ “What is my blessing?”
- ✓ “For whom is it intended? In what state are people when they need my blessing?”
- ✓ “What are the steps of my blessing? What happens first, second, third, etc.?”
- ✓ “When does it end? How do I know when I’m finished?”
- ✓ “What effect does it have on people? In what state are they when my blessing is complete?”

Knowing when to stop is a very important feature of the blessing. You can make yourself miserable if you are unaware of your blessing and continue past the end of the process. My college roommate’s father was a gifted leader and entrepreneur. His blessing expressed itself with distressed companies; he was a turnaround expert. Startups that were failing would hire him as CEO, and the results were pure magic. Within months of coming on board, he had fired the problem people, set a new course for the company, and things would be moving forward beautifully. But once things were going well, problems began. He would continue to reorganize and shift things around, and the company would have difficulty settling into a rhythm. Within a few years, his influence began to be a negative one. Several times he was fired by company owners or venture capitalists.

Had he fully understood his blessing, he would have known when to leave. He could have told the owners that they would need him for about two years, but then they would have to find someone else to replace him. The transition could have taken place amicably, and everyone would have been served by it.

CLARIFYING YOUR MISSION

If you have a mission, it can be challenging to understand it completely. Trusted sources are often reluctant to reveal the details of your mission, and your ego probably will feel daunted and overwhelmed by it. Nonetheless, it is critically important to grasp as much of your mission as you can, so that you can make informed choices about it. You can do some of it, all of it, or none of it, but you can't choose unless you know what it is. Here are some questions I recommend asking to get a good sense of your mission. Again, this will probably happen over the course of several interactions with your trusted source, not just one.

- ✓ "What is my mission?"
- ✓ "What problem in the world have I been created to solve?"
- ✓ "Which group of people have I been sent to serve?"
- ✓ "What change in the world have I been designed to make?"
- ✓ "Given all of the ways I could use my blessing and all of the people I could serve with it, in which ways and with which groups of people would it be most purposeful for me to use it?"
- ✓ "How do I get started with my mission?"

Taken together, these questions should give you plenty of information about your purpose. Trusted sources can reveal lots of other things, too, in addition to your purpose. But what else can you ask?

While trusted sources are highly informed on some matters that to the ego are very opaque, they will generally only answer certain types of questions. Trusted sources are strategists. They think big picture, in terms of an entire lifetime, rather than in terms of individual events or

choices. As a result, while your trusted source might be very willing to answer questions about your life purpose, asking it questions about what you want for lunch or what color of car to buy are completely irrelevant from its point of view. This kind of detailed question will tend to either elicit no answer or confusion. Try to stick to big-picture questions about events in your life and about your growth and development. These are the things your trusted source cares about the most and the things it is most qualified to advise you about.

It does make sense to ask your trusted source questions about critical choices that you're facing. For example, taking or leaving a job, a marriage, moving, or other things that significantly influence the course of your life. Avoid asking questions about predicting the future. Trusted sources don't view time in the same way we do. They aren't particularly interested in giving you stock tips or telling you who is going to win the next election. Remember, trusted sources are concerned with your growth and development. Understanding explicit details about the future is unlikely to help you grow and manifest into the person you're most meant to be. It does make sense to ask trusted sources questions about who you're becoming, who you're developing into, and how to facilitate that process.

Avoid yes-no and multiple choice questions. Open-ended questions work best. "What do you recommend? What counsel do you have?" Obviously, in seeking your life purpose, it makes sense to ask questions about your essence, blessing, and mission. Having a firm grasp of these concepts will enable you to ask good questions about them and to understand your trusted source's responses. Your trusted source may flatly refuse to answer certain questions. This is normal. Trusted sources are very selective about what information they reveal and concerned about the effect that information will have on you. If your trusted source deems that you are not ready to know something, it will not disclose it. From your trusted source's point of view, the question is this: "Will knowing this information help you to develop and manifest purposefully?" If the answer is "no," the information will not be revealed. Trusted sources

deal on a “need to know” basis. This means that certain information that is not available now may become available later. Think of it as a matching funds program. If your trusted source gives you instructions and you follow them, then it will likely give you more instructions and information later. If your trusted source gives you information and instructions and you ignore them, usually, no more information will be forthcoming in later sessions.

When you engage in a dialogue with your trusted source, don't lecture it. You are there to ask questions and to record the answers. Remember, you get to choose what to do with the answers. Just because your trusted source gave you an instruction, it doesn't mean you have to do it. Now it's time to write down some of the things you would like to get advice about from your trusted source.

Exercise: Create Your Question List

It will be useful to have your list of questions ready before your first attempt to contact a trusted source. Trying to think of them on the spot can be distracting and take you out of the experience.

Go ahead and write the title “Questions” on a blank piece of paper or computer document. The first three questions should be:

1. “What is my essence?”
2. “What is my blessing?”
3. “What is my mission?”

Okay, now write down 3-5 additional questions. Make sure they are open-ended questions about issues facing you in your life: problems or decisions at work, at school, or in relationships. Keep this question list handy; you'll need it when you start using the direct methods!



About the Author

Tim Kelley is a nationally renowned expert on helping people find their life's purpose. He has worked with over a hundred CEOs and trained more than a thousand coaches, therapists, and consultants. He formerly worked as a leader at Oracle, two levels below the CEO. Tim has transformed entire organizations, coaching top leaders and executive teams from such companies as Nabisco, AOL, ING, Oracle, Lexmark, and Louis Dreyfus.

Tim's methods have been featured nationally in magazines and on TV. He has led trainings and workshops for over fifteen years in leadership, meditation, Voice Dialogue, and men's work, and he is certified by Helen Palmer to teach the *Enneagram*. Tim is also the co-author of *Wake Up... Live the Life You Love: Living on Purpose, A Search for Purpose*, and *Blueprint for Success*.

Tim has commanded military organizations, including an amphibious assault craft unit, and is a retired Naval Reserve officer. He holds a bachelor's degree in mathematics from MIT, where he taught calculus and studied philosophy and astronomy. He lives in Berkeley, California, with his wife and son.