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## Aging with purpose: Defining your true north



Study after study reveals that older adults with a sense of purpose, a sense of meaning in their lives, enjoy greater well-being and live longer than those without a life focus. They also have better cognitive and physical health and suffer less from depression, suggesting that purpose is an important component of a healthy and satisfying elderhood. To explore possibilities for yourself, try this simple two-step process.



Aging Wisdom —  
Your Experts in  
Aging Well

**206-456-5155**

Aging Wisdom supports individuals and families in King and south Snohomish Counties as they plan for aging.

Give us a call at 206-456-5155 to find out how we can support you.

### Begin by composing a purpose statement

- What topics or activities captivated your *interest* before the responsibilities of adulthood: Photography? Music? The study of space? Writing? Drama? Other cultures?
- What *contexts* give you a sense of well-being now: Creative activities, quiet contemplation, helping others, time in nature, achieving a goal?
- What do you want to *experience* more of in your life: Serenity and calm? Community and belonging? The excitement of new horizons?

Complete this sentence using your answers from above: "In order to experience more \_\_\_\_\_, I'd like to spend time [*context*], perhaps focusing on [*interests*]."

**Merge with activities.** Unless your focus is on solitude and contemplation, consider the three types of activities below that research has identified as generally gratifying for older adults. Which of these best supports your purpose statement?

- **Learning and growing.** Find a local tutor or class for whatever it is that interests you. It's not too late! Or try online learning. **OasisEverywhere.org** offers online courses specifically for older adults. National periodicals have Zoom sessions with opinion leaders. Accredited classes are offered by well-known universities through **Coursera.org**. Or view video lectures through companies like Great Courses and Wondrium. And locally, many senior centers offer educational programs and day trips.
- **Giving to others.** One study of older volunteers found that 94% said volunteering improved their mood; 78% said it lowered their stress levels and 76% said it made them feel healthier. Look for activities on **VolunteerMatch.org**. Or try mixing travel and volunteering. Google "volunteer vacations for seniors" to find international programs specifically tailored for older adults.
- **Starting a second career.** As an "encore," some people open a business, turning a hobby into cash. Others enjoy the perks of working part time in a sociable, low-pressure job. Check out **Encore.org** and **AARP.org/work** for later-life career guidance.

**Looking for a life with purpose? We understand the challenge!  
Give us a call at 206-456-5155.**