



## TRACK 2: WHOLE PERSON COACHING STUDENT GUIDE

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### Lesson 6: Life by Design—Not by Default

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#### Instructions

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1. Save this PDF to your desktop (File > Save As...).
2. Fill in the form fields.
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#### Introduction

Going through your life without knowing your purpose is like shooting a gun before aiming. Dr. Tim Elmore, president of Growing Leaders, has often described this approach as "Ready, Fire, Aim!" If we haven't clearly identified the target of our life's purpose, everything we do seems random and unrelated. We start in one direction and stay with it until something else seems better. Then we jump over to the next thing, and the next, and the next. Knowing our purpose produces confidence that we know where we're going. Of course, we

#### THIS LESSON COVERS:

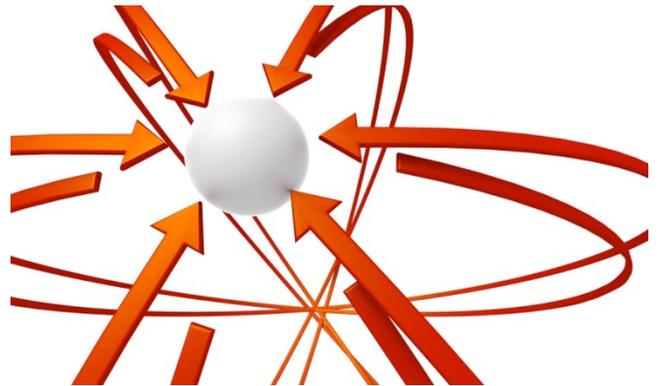
**Essential #1** Mission

**Essential #2** Vision

**Essential #3** Life Purpose

aren't born with a clear, compelling purpose in life. It gradually takes shape as we experience successes and failures, try new skills, and find roles that make us feel alive.

The process of discovering our purpose is as different as our varied personalities, backgrounds, and experiences. Some of us are adventurous; others value security. The process is as important as the destination. In their book, *The Critical Journey: Stages in the Life of Faith*, Janet Hagberg and Robert Guelich describe the difference between a *trip* and a *journey*. A trip, according to the authors, focuses primarily on the destination, but a journey has multiple dynamics, such as side trips, returning to former sites, and forays into the unknown.<sup>1</sup> Trips and journeys, however, aren't mutually exclusive. Having an ultimate destination in mind doesn't detract from the journey. It enhances and fulfills the journey.



This lesson is a culmination of the five previous lessons. With the previous insights and exercises, you're ready to write your life's mission, vision, and purpose.

Many authors and experts use "vision" and "mission" interchangeably. Dream Releaser Coaching makes a distinction between the two. The following statements serve as a word picture to help us visualize the distinction:

- » "Mission is the house. Vision is the blueprint."  
—*Tim Elmore*
- » "Mission is the frame. Vision is the photograph inside the frame." —*Stan Toler*

**Example:**

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**Brenda Chand's Mission is "When I become aware, I must share."**

**Brenda Chand's Vision is "When I become aware, I must share through teaching, coaching, mentoring, and modeling."**

## Essential #1 Mission

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Some coaches have noted, “Many people live with a secret deadly fear. They dread coming to the end having lived a meaningless life.” Finding a mission, and then fulfilling it, is perhaps the most important activity in a person’s life. Webster’s Dictionary gives several definitions of the word mission, among them are: “a specific task with which a person or group is charged” and “a preestablished and often self-imposed objective or purpose.”<sup>2</sup>

A person’s mission is to live by his core values—passionately, consistently, courageously, and compassionately. Every day we face multiple situations in which—consciously or unconsciously—our mission directs our choices. Our mission is not an addendum to life. It is the controlling force.<sup>3</sup>

A mission statement is a clear statement of the reason for existence—for a person, a family, or a company. It charts the overarching direction. In coaching, we help each client define his or her mission in life, and we may also assist clients in crafting an organizational mission. For individuals and organizations, having a clearly articulated mission statement provides a template for decisions and a yardstick to evaluate every activity.<sup>4</sup>

People who aren’t sure where they’re going suffer from a variety of problems. Some become stuck and can’t make decisions. Others make snap decisions and often change their minds. Still others drift from one new direction to another because every new idea seems equally valid. All of these people share a few things in common: They’re confused and frustrated.

But life doesn’t have to be this way. Knowing your mission can help you chart a clear course for the future and navigate relationships. All of us have a tendency to drift, to forget, and to go off course. Writing a compelling mission statement reminds us of our commitments and values. It’s essential if we’re to live a full, meaningful life.

To craft a workable mission statement, it should have these three characteristics:

1. It’s a single sentence.
2. It’s clear.
3. It’s easy to memorize.

Most of the outstanding leaders in history have had mission statements that fit these three criteria. Abraham Lincoln's mission was to preserve the Union. Franklin Roosevelt's mission was to end the Depression and win World War II. Nelson Mandela's mission was to end racial apartheid in South Africa. Mother Teresa's mission was to show mercy and compassion to the dying in India. And Joan of Arc's mission was to free France from oppression.

In creating mission statements, we find a paradox: The greater the mission, the more easily it can be stated. If our mission is miniscule, it won't capture our hearts. Fuzzy mission statements are easily forgotten or ignored. Clear ones remind us every day: This is why I'm alive! This is why my life counts!

A person's sense of mission is the natural extension of visions, values, and roles. Let's put it this way: It's inconceivable that a person's compelling mission would be in conflict with his vision for the future, his core values, and his roles in his family, business, and community. These things must align for the mission to make sense. Congruence of vision, values, and roles provide the context for the expressions of emotions, expectations and experiences, and these lead to a life of happiness, satisfaction and significance.<sup>5</sup>

**How do you know if your mission in life is finished? If you're still alive, it isn't.**

*—Richard Bach*

A compelling mission statement is a firm foundation for every aspect of life. With it, we have direction and motivation; without it, we wander.

People need a reason to live, a benchmark for progress, and a template for their choices. When a mission statement captures a person's heart, it opens a wide door to the future. Then, every role and relationship takes on added meaning, and every choice becomes clearer.

Haas and Madson observe, "Your mission, integrated with your vision and your values, dictates what's important in your life. You are naturally the most productive when you are working from your heart, investing the only life you have in what you care about the most."<sup>6</sup>

**Take time to reflect.**

**Think about all we have covered in the previous lessons on vision, core values, and important roles you play. Then, tie all of these things together in a succinct personal mission statement.**

My values evolve around humanity, and GOD, as I progress in standing for other things that are as equally important to me in relation to personal wellness, family, education and spiritual richness. Each quality ties into my purpose and drives my mission geared towards the disenfranchised, lost, broken and incarcerated. My stated mission is to end emotional and mental bankruptcy and despair and transform every life I touch by the way I live, the way I treat people and through the work I produce as a servant of the Lord's and as a Life Coach for the church, I choose to be a leading example of a leader through courage, integrity, and hope. As an innovator and promoter of change it is my driving determination to guide others to a place where they can harness their path of discovery, master their purpose, and reach the maximum of their greatest potential.

## Essential #2 Vision

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*Mission* is the map; *vision* is the road to get to the destination. Your vision includes the nitty gritty details that help you make real progress. Discovering and implementing your personal vision requires the process of self-discovery, establishing specific goals, and continually fine-tuning your direction. It's a dynamic and sometimes complex process. Your vision is increasingly refined as your purpose becomes clearer, and your purpose becomes clearer as you experience successes and failures, triumphs and defeats, joys and sorrows. A person's vision is an organic, dynamic growing thing.

Very few people have a clear vision from the outset of their lives and careers. All of the great leaders mentioned responded to specific challenges they faced. Situations in our lives change, too, so we need to come back again and again to assess our personal vision statement. At least once a year, we should take time to reevaluate our life's direction and course. The essence of vision is the ability to see into the future, to envision a desired destiny. Vision is seeing the future before it becomes reality.<sup>7</sup> Webster's definition of vision includes: "a thought, concept, or object formed by the imagination, the act or power of imagination, and unusual discernment or foresight."<sup>8</sup> Vision is how you see yourself fulfilling your mission.

### The Principles and Process of Vision

Sight is a function of the eyes, but vision is a function of the heart. J. Oswald Sanders observed, "Eyes that look are common, but eyes that see are rare." This means that we may look at our relationships and careers but fail to see beneath the surface. Sight is the ability to see things *as they are*; vision is the capacity to see things *as they could be*.<sup>9</sup>

Trying to construct a life without a clear vision is like a contractor trying to build a house without a blueprint. He may have all the resources at the site, but he doesn't know how to put them together. It's a sure recipe for frustration! We need a specific plan to fulfill our vision. The plan includes principles and process.

A number of authors provide lists of principles and processes in understanding and clarifying a person's vision. Consider these:

## **Principles of Vision**

1. Vision is confidence in a future reality.
2. Vision is progressive.
3. Vision is a function of mission and leads to a powerful purpose.
4. Vision is always challenging, threatening, and uncomfortable.
5. Vision inspires.
6. Vision is never satisfied with the status quo.
7. Vision always builds people up, never tears them down.
8. Vision drives planning.
9. Vision captures hearts.
10. Vision is fulfilled in stages.
11. Vision is essential for leaders.
12. Vision propels action.

True vision is the product of a clear sense of purpose and powerful, intrinsic motivation. It doesn't instantaneously appear. It always involves a process. The sequencing of the process may or may not be exactly this 10-step model, but it will involve this general flow:

## **The Process of Vision**

1. Vision often begins by recognizing a need.
2. Vision is the product of a compassionate heart and a big dream to meet the need.
3. Vision becomes clearer over time.
4. Vision is shared and adopted by others.
5. Vision doesn't diminish as it takes shape.
6. Vision is detailed, targeted, reasonable, and sequential.

7. Vision produces a comprehensive plan.
8. Vision is continually evaluated and revised.
9. Vision generates momentum with every step of progress.
10. Vision produces celebrations.

A vision of the future isn't tangible—not yet anyway—but a powerful, clear vision seems just as real as today's physical world. When a vision captures our hearts, we live for its fulfillment. Vivid dreams of the future feel like present reality.

**Take time to reflect.**

**Consider the factors in this section, and write your personal vision statement. Think about how it builds on your mission statement and defines specific ways to fulfill it.**

**Remember: Vision is how you see yourself carrying out your mission, so be specific.**

"Help With Love. Heal the World". This is my vision statement. As God's helper It is to master the gift of Life Coaching and to erase hurt from the world. My vision is to: create a better every-day life for many people, develop powerful critical and creative thinkers and builders of people, spread love and forgiveness, and to establish an empowering community through leadership.

**Which of the principles of vision stand out to you? Explain your answer.**

Vision is progressive. A vision is like a living force born out of thoughts and ideas of where we want to be in life. In order to get there we must be progressive in critical and creative ways. We must deposit our time and energy into our vision for it to manifest into fruition.

**Why is the process important?**

The process is important because it develops into the success of completing goals and reaching your destiny.

## Essential #3 Life Purpose

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*Mission* is the map, *vision* is the road, and *purpose* is the engine in the car. It gives energy, drive, and determination to climb every hill and enjoy every turn on the journey. The purpose of our lives is more compelling than personal fulfillment, peace of mind, or happiness. It defines our legacy: the way we shape people's lives today and the impact we leave behind when we're gone. It gives clearer, sharper definition to our reason for getting up each morning. Mission and vision let us know our lives matter; our purpose describes specifically *how* they matter.

Webster defines purpose as "something set up as an object or end to be obtained; intention." Dictionary.com defines it as "the reason for which something exists or is done, made, used." Unfortunately, many people live with nagging self-doubt and muffled fear that their lives don't really matter at all. They wander aimlessly.

A sense of purpose isn't an after market add on—it's essential if we're to have full and meaningful lives. We crave purpose like we crave delicious food. We can't live without a sense of relevance and significance. The search for purpose is our ultimate pursuit. Whether we realize it or not, this drive motivates us to enter relationships, take risks, and give our lives to a great cause. Before we discover our purpose, our lives have no meaning, because purpose is the source of true fulfillment.<sup>10</sup>

The search for the purpose of life confuses many people because they start at the wrong point. Many think of personal rewards, comforts, and accolades as their purpose in life, but these ultimately leave people feeling empty and flat. Our life's purpose is based on a vision for making a difference, but it goes one step farther. Purpose defines the impact. It asks:

- » Who are the people you love, lead, and serve?
- » What role do you uniquely play in each of their lives?
- » What impact can you have on each of them to make their lives as meaningful as possible?
- » What is your specific plan to have this impact?
- » If you don't invest time, love, and resources into their lives, what will they lose? What will you lose?<sup>11</sup>

**Take time to reflect.**

Answer each of the questions.

**Who are the people you love, lead, and serve?**

I love my family.

I lead my family and my team at work.

I serve my family, my customers and God

**What role do you uniquely play in each of their lives?**

My family leans on me for mental and emotional support. I am an encourager and motivator.

My co-workers/team members lean on me for guidance and empowerment.

My customers lean on me for knowledge, understanding and guidance.

**What impact can you have on each of them to make their lives as meaningful as possible?**

Being kind, patient, empathetic, and attentive has impacted our relation in positive ways. These attributes serve as a model to live by. As a leader others are looking for someone they can grow for and be like.

### **What is your specific plan to have this impact?**

Give more  
Love more  
Spend more quality time with loved ones  
Nurture business relationships  
Be a good samaritan  
Live Christ-like  
Smile more  
Go the extra mile  
Send thank you cards  
Be an encourager  
Be a motivator  
Be helpful

### **If you don't invest time, love, and resources into their lives, what will they lose?**

#### **What will you lose?**

They lose on the opportunity to learn and grow and the impact I can have on their lives

I lose in living out my vision, mission and life purpose by not meeting my potential.

I am caretaker of my Mom who relies heavily on my time, love and resources. These things sustain her in her life and brings her security, and happiness. My love aids her recovery and nurtures wellbeing.

## Understanding Purpose

The author of *The Purpose Driven Life*, Rick Warren, explains that people enjoy five great benefits of living a life of purpose:

1. Knowing your purpose ***gives meaning***.

A sense of purpose gives us energy to take advantage of opportunities, strength to face adversities, and wisdom to handle every situation. When our lives have purpose, we know that we are making a difference—and it feels right.

2. Knowing your purpose ***simplifies*** life.

We experience an incredible array of competing interests in every part of our lives. When we don't have a clear sense of purpose, they all look equally valid—and equally confusing. We feel frantic or overwhelmed—and sometimes both! Clarifying our purpose gives us a framework of wisdom to be able to distinguish between things that make sense and things that don't. Life is complex even with a compelling purpose, and it's a zoo without it.

3. Knowing your purpose ***focuses*** your life.

Instead of drifting in confusion, a sense of purpose rivets our attention on the things we've designated as most important. We become more effective by being more selective. Without a clear purpose, we change directions, jobs, and relationships, hoping each change will finally make us happy and fill the emptiness in our hearts.

4. Knowing your purpose ***motivates*** you.

Purpose inevitably produces passion. We may not express our passion in the same ways, but all of us—introverts and extroverts, visionaries and managers—put fuel into our life's engine when our purpose is crystal clear.

5. Knowing your purpose ***prepares*** you.

A clear purpose gives us the incentive to devote adequate resources to planning. When we know our lives matter, we can't afford to assume good things will magically happen. We invest in time, money, energy, and other resources to prepare ourselves to be our best. Our legacy is at stake. It's not that we live to be remembered, but we'll be remembered if we make a difference in people's lives.<sup>12</sup>

## Principles of Purpose

The definition of a principle is “an accepted or professed rule of action or conduct,” “a fundamental, primary, or general law or truth from which others are derived,” or “a fundamental doctrine.” Principles are foundational truths with universal applications. Four key concepts apply:

### 1. *The uniqueness of purpose.*

Every inventor or manufacturer begins with purpose. He establishes the purpose of the product or service before beginning production. In the same way, a person’s purpose is his unique driving force of meaning. When you uncover and discover your unique contribution, you’ll devote everything to fulfill your purpose.

### 2. *Everything in life has purpose.*

Life may seem random, and in fact, it may be random and meaningless for many people. Those who have a sense of purpose, though, look at every moment through its lens. Every moment, every goal, every interaction, and every activity is important because it contributes or detracts from the ultimate meaning in our lives.

### 3. *Wherever purpose isn’t clear, entropy is inevitable.*

Entropy is the tendency toward randomness. When you throw a hundred pennies into the air, the pattern they form on the ground is fairly random. But if you intentionally place the pennies in a particular pattern, they can spell words, form a portrait, or create a design. In the same way, our lives don’t have to look like pennies have been thrown into the air. We have the privilege and responsibility to define the direction and pattern of our futures.

### 4. *Purpose is the key to fulfillment.*

Purpose drives performance, which then produces satisfaction. When we have a sense of purpose, we can measure the value and impact of our lives. When we see our vision fulfilled, we are

**Brenda Chand’s Life Purpose Statement is “My life’s purpose is to live a gracious and generous life that reflects Christ’s nature to those around me. When I become aware of truth I will share through teaching, coaching, mentoring, and modeling.”**

ecstatic; and when we fall short, we can make adjustments. A deep, wonderful sense of satisfaction never just happens. It's the product of living according to a definite purpose. Apart from purpose, life often seems fatalistic. In essence, you will never experience true fulfillment until you are executing the purpose you were born to accomplish.<sup>13</sup>

### **Benefits of Purpose**

We enjoy several specific benefits of defining our purpose in life and living to achieve it, including:

1. *Purpose gives confidence.*

It assures us that what we are on the right track. When we discover our purpose for our lives, we can be confident we will succeed.

2. *Purpose provides protection.*

A sense of purpose keeps us from drifting into self-destructive behaviors and meaningless pursuits.

3. *Purpose empowers perseverance.*

When we know we're going in the right direction for the right reasons, we have the strength to face obstacles and the patience to wait for our vision to become a reality.

4. *Purpose produces and maintains objectivity.*

It's easy to live in a dreamland of hopes and possibilities, but a clear sense of purpose causes us to be ruthlessly honest. We can't afford to be blind to the opportunities or the obstacles. Too much is at stake!

5. *Purpose sustains contentment.*

Inevitably, we experience ups and downs on the road to our destiny. If our purpose isn't clear, we become anxious and angry. When it remains clear, however, we have a strong foundation of courage and hope. No matter what, we can be content.<sup>14</sup>

**Take time to reflect.**

**Consider the principles in this section, and draft your life purpose statement.**

**To acknowledge you were wrong yesterday is to acknowledge you are wiser today.**

*—Charles H. Spurgeon*

My life purpose is as a progressive Child of God, Healer and Change Agent with the heart, discernment and gift of giving. My life purpose is to live loved among those who walk with me and to live loved by God through human acts of kindness by sharing his love. My purpose is to be a motivator for courage and perseverance, an inspiration for hope with faith, and be a Christ-like model of servitude, sacrifice and success.

## Faith and Coaching: Upside Down

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The kingdom of God is very different from the values and goals of the people around us. We might even say that God's kingdom is upside down. We gain by losing, those who are the best leaders are those who are the most dedicated servants, suffering has value, and the humble receive honor from God. That sounds ridiculous to many people, but it's God's way for every follower of Christ.

On the night Jesus was arrested, he spent time with his disciples. They still thought power and prestige were most important, and they jockeyed for top positions in Christ's coming kingdom. Jesus explained that in his kingdom, things are very different: "The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them; and those who exercise authority over them call themselves Benefactors. But you are not to be like that. Instead, the greatest among you should be like the youngest, and the one who rules like the one who serves. For who is greater, the one who is at the table or the one who serves? Is it not the one who is at the table? But I am among you as one who serves" (Luke 22:25-27).

Everyone around us may be stepping on people to climb to the next rung up the corporate ladder, but our destiny is different. Our goal, our passion, and our efforts are under the guidance of God and for the purposes of God. We live to serve, not to be served. Our desire isn't to acquire power, but to use it to help others.

When Paul was on his way back to Jerusalem after one of his journeys to take the gospel to the world, some friends begged him not to go because he would be persecuted there. Personal comfort and affluence had been Paul's goals before he met Christ, but no longer. Now his goals were God's goals. He explained to his friends, "I only know that in every city the Holy Spirit warns me that prison and hardships are facing me. However, I consider my life worth nothing to me, if only I may finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me--the task of testifying to the gospel of God's grace" (Acts 20:23-24).

People all around us are trying desperately to hold onto their lives and control their destinies. Those who understand God's upside down kingdom give themselves first to God and then to people around them. In giving themselves away to love, give, and serve, they experience true happiness, contentment, and meaning.

## Next Steps

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- » Save this PDF to your desktop after you've completed the lesson.
- » [Click here](#) to watch the video by Brenda Chand on vision, mission, and life purpose.

**[Click here to go to the Next Steps, Track 2, Lesson 6 assignment page.](#)**

When you've completed the assignments, email the forms to your coach.

## Endnotes

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- 1 Janet O. Hagberg, and Robert A. Guelich, *The Critical Journey: Stages in the Life of Faith*, 2nd ed., (Salem, WI: Sheffield Publishing Co., 2004), 5.
- 2 Merriam-Webster Online, "Mission," <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/mission> (14 October 2012).
- 3 For more on this topic, go to E. R. Hass and Kent C. Madson, *Success on Purpose: The Starting Point for Purpose-Driven Success*, (TQ Smart, 2007-2010), 10.
- 4 For more on this topic, go to Laurie Beth Jones, *The Path: Creating Your Mission Statement for Work and for Life*, (New York, NY: Hyperion, 1996), 11.
- 5 Jones, 3, 5-6, ix.
- 6 Hass and Madson, 183
- 7 For more on this topic, go to Myles Munroe, *The Principles and Power of Vision*, (New Kensington, PA: Whitaker House, 2003), 17.

- 8 Merriam-Webster Online, "Vision," <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/vision> (14 October 2012).
- 9 Munroe, *The Principles and Power of Vision*, 11.
- 10 For more on this topic, go to Myles Munroe, *In Pursuit of Purpose*, (Shippensburg, PA: Destiny Image, 1992), foreword, preface.
- 11 Adapted from Rick Warren, *The Purpose Driven Life*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan 2002), 17.
- 12 Adapted from Warren, 30-33.
- 13 Adapted from Munroe, *In Pursuit of Purpose*, 8, 27-29, 31, 38.
- 14 Adapted from Munroe, *In Pursuit of Purpose*, 95-96, 98-99, 102, 103.