

---

*Topic 2. "Perhaps you have had the thought that nothing really matters, because in two hundred years we'll all be dead."*

*Thomas Nagel: What does it all mean? (1987) Oxford University Press, p. 95*

---

Does it really matter? Our life I mean. Is it something that has a meaning, a higher purpose? Are we just alive because that is the nature's way of functioning? Are we pawns in a game some 'higher' beings are playing? Are these questions even meant to be answered?

Those questions have existed in human minds since the first people started trying to find a reason in everything that is in them and around them. The lightning storms, the earth beneath their feet, the fire in their homes that seems to have so many purposes, their feelings, people that surround them etc. Why is that like that? Or simpler said, why?

We seem to rush through our lives, trying to make it as smooth and as easy it can get for us and our family and friends. But doing so tends to bring us a lot of discomfort, tough times and troubles. So, is it even worth it? Some people would say yes, in a long run, but others would say that we're all going to be dead eventually, so why bother.

If we are to compare our lives now and lives of people that lived hundreds or even thousands of years before us, we would be able to conclude that our lives come down to simple things. Growing up, learning, being a part of society, following rules set by rulers, having a job, surrounding ourselves with family and friends we care about, and in the end, dying. But through biology we've set even simpler things as stages of living. Being born, breathing, eating, drinking water, having offspring and dying. Those things are true for all living beings, animals, plants and humans. Yet, no plant or animal has ever wondered why are they alive. They just are and they just live by the rules and nature's laws. So, are we as humans meant to think that our purpose and reason for living is life itself? Many would argue that statement to be true. They would be even angry, because how could we compare our lives to lives of animals and plants when we are so much more complex beings. But, if we are to ask them what is the purpose of our lives than, most would stay quiet.

Finding a reason is such a troublesome quest. For starters, do we even know where do we, as our personalities, characteristics or simply said our soul, come from? Is it possible that a soul is simply a mix of many chemicals in our bodies? Or is a soul something non-material based that exists in everyone? Where does it go when we are dead? Does it disappear with us or keeps roaming through possibly other dimensions? If we knew what our so-called soul is, then would we even be able to find a reason in life? There seem to be more questions about the reason, than there are answers.

Taking as every philosopher has taken a different idea to determine the reason of our lives, could we also choose our reason? I would say yes, as every human has a different way of thinking and reasoning. It is true that majority of us follow the main path of biology through our lives, but we don't have to take something 'higher', something special as a reason of that path. Why wouldn't we decide for ourselves why we as human beings are living? Why would we worry about death and take it as an obstacle in having a reason, a purpose? Yes, of course we can't know what comes after death and yes that makes it hard for us to make life something special and unique when as said before everything eventually dies.

So, while being alive why not have our reason to stay alive and be satisfied with it. To me, that sounds like basic common sense. In any point of my life I can say why I am alive and why I will stay alive. Today, I'm alive because I want to write this essay. Tomorrow, I'm going to have something else I want to do. It comes down to wanting to have a reason instead of trying to find a reason. Having read about some philosophers' opinions and ideas, I have concluded that all of them seem to think the reason is already existing, that it has been created before humans. That doesn't make much sense to me, how could it exist without us? As an atheist, I dare to ask who could have set something as a purpose of life.

With that in mind, I stand strong with my opinion that we are able to choose our reason, just as we are able to choose which shoe we will first put on, left or right one. We were given the trait of reason, which separates us from animals, and then we do an unreasonable thing. We devote our lives to finding something that no one has ever found? To me that's one more fact that points me in my way of thinking. But that doesn't mean I've never wondered why. Why everything when I'm going to be dead at one point of time? So, if someone is to ask me, beside my opinion on choosing our reason, is there a higher purpose, is there something that explains it all and gives everything meaning, I wouldn't have the answer because all those times that I've questioned myself I've found a simple thing to satisfy my curiosity.

Following my ideas, to everyone that ever finds themselves in the saying of Thomas Nagel: "Perhaps you have had the thought that nothing really matters, because in two hundred years we'll all be dead." I recommend finding a new reason every day, as the key of happiness in life are simple things.

However, I dare you to keep searching.