

Mindfulness: finding your purpose and vision in a changing world

Welcome everybody to today's webinar on finding your purpose of vision in a changing world. Just a little bit about myself, I have been here for many years here at Magellan. I am a licensed clinical social worker and also a certified employee and I am really excited to be presenting this. It really touches my heart, let's begin. Our objectives today are to define mindfulness, identify your unique gifts, talents and interests and discuss techniques to maintain your life purpose. There is a gentleman, his name is Jon Kabat-Zinn. He was finding a lot of patients were coming in and feeling very stressed and having a lot of issues and uncertain about things. He developed a mindfulness-based stress reduction program and a stress reduction clinic in Massachusetts. His definition of mindfulness is as you see here, awareness that arises through paying attention on purpose in the present moment, none judgmentally. Many of us have multiple stressors and a lot of distractions and reaches get caught up in the busyness of life. Mindfulness is really a way to try to slow down and focus on the present. During that purposefully. Not worrying so much about what may happen down the road because that is unknown. Really let go of the past. I know it can be incredibly challenging, it is often easier said than done. I do want to clarify is mindfulness is not walking around with rose-colored glasses, that is not realistic. What mindfulness can do is gives us the opportunity when we are distracted and stressed to kind of reflect on what is happening right now. That can help to reduce stress. You might wonder how mindfulness or stress reducing activity can help with purpose. Mindfulness is for the presence of purpose in life. It helps evaluate the thoughts that we are thinking are accurate. It helps us to evaluate situations and make good decisions. They can be used to focus on promoting a sense of purpose and encouraging involvement in meaningful activities. Someone asked me, what is life purpose, what does that mean, there can be a lot of different interpretations. I like to look at it as, it is using her gifts and talents to make a positive impact in the world and help create the world we wish to see. Be the change you want to be in the world. It is about using those talents to create positivity to really help other people. Why is it important for people to have a purpose. It is really going to benefit you and make you feel good about how you are contributing and one of the best stress relievers is to be able to put things in better perspective by helping others. When you help other people, you will be amazed how people and resources and opportunities gravitate to you. Everybody benefits from this. We have a poll question, Melanie if you can pull that forward.

The question is, I can easily name five personal strengths. Is that true, false or no vote.

It looks like we are around 70/30. Looks like 70% say they can and 30% say we can't. That is good news.

Sometimes it can be hard and sometimes is tough to come up with strengths. It is good to know that so many of you can do that. For the people of that kind of struggle, that is okay too. This is going to help everybody really get a purpose and some meaning.

Next we are going to talk about some character strengths. There is an online resource through character.org. It really looks at 24 character strengths. It is an online tool that can help you identify your strengths more and how to capitalize on it. It takes about 10 minutes to do the survey and it is free. It doesn't cost anything. It is very personalized. It gives you action tips on how to find your purpose and well-being. I'm going to give it a brief overview. I'm not going to go over all of these because there are so many.

Sorry, I just wanted to be sure to tell everyone, this is active learning. In your handout where it says the try to character page, you can go there and pull that out. There may be some portions of the survey you can do later. You can take the survey completely free without any charge whatsoever. You don't have to pay for.

I'm going to go over some things, one of them is creativity. When you're talking about creativity, it is a new way of looking at things in a new way of viewing things. Producing ideas or behaviors that are original. Having something that is just original is not the whole picture, it is not really enough. Whatever it is that you are creating, whether an idea or product, anything like that, it has to be useful when it comes to creativity. The other one that is important is perspective. That is really seeing the bigger picture in life. Being able to see the forest as well as the trees. To avoid getting wrapped up in all the small details. Courage is also important, to have courage and be brave, whether physical difficulties. Having a goal or conviction and acting on it. You know, whether it is positive or not. It involves facing, rather than avoiding your fears. People who have high health regulation ability to manage their reaction of disappointment and so forth, it really helps them to keep a sense of balance or their own progress in life. Spirituality is one of those terms that goes beyond what most people think of spirituality. That is religion. It really has a lot of different dimensions. Character strength involves the belief that there is a dimension in life that is beyond our understanding. Some people connect to religion as some prefer to think of it as a sense of meaning. It really can be anything that brings you meaning, it doesn't have to be religious based. It can be, but it is not required. In the classification system, spirituality is considered universal. The specific content of spiritual beliefs varies, all cultures have a content of an old troll. You can have spirituality as a personal meaning to you. I believe we have another poll question.

We do, I'm going to pull this down. Which of these do you think are your top character strengths? We realize there are more, but these are some of the top ones. Okay, we are pretty spread out. There is quite a bit of love and kindness.

Love and learning is also coming up strong.

Definitely.

And we are only asking for your top strength. We know you can have many of these.

Thank you. Next we will get into more about how do you determine or where do you start when it comes to determining purpose? The first one, I want to stress here that you don't have to create a new identity or make up something, purpose has always been inside of you. It has been inside of you from early on when you are first born. You go through childhood and other things start happening. It is always been inside of you just 20 to come to the surface. It is not something you have to develop we are always looking for ways to define purpose. First one, explore what you love to do. Mindfulness can be really helpful in the situation because defining purpose is becoming fully conscious of what you want and what is most alive in you and has the most meaning, and acting on that. You can start by asking yourself a couple of questions. One is, what do I love to do? What is it that excites you so much? What is something you can do without a lot of effort? Sometimes you can reflect back and say, what did I love doing as a child? When you watch children play and they are just playing and as a start to get older as school gets in there and work gets in there and sometimes that kind of gets forgotten. I really liked doing this as a child, maybe this is something I want to explore again.

I think this is a good time when we want people to think about this for a moment and use this time to take a few minutes to write this down. I put the questions out there for everyone that you just asked but if you would like to just raise your hand. We recognize this isn't going to be the end-all be-all. This is just starting out today. Once you have written down a few notes, just raise your hand. Most people are pretty well set.

The next question that is on their is, what qualities do I want to express? What do I enjoy expressing the most? So, questions that you can ask yourself's, what qualities do you enjoy expressing most in the world? Is it joy, love, compassion, loyalty, kindness, whatever it is, what qualities do you love expressing? What two ways do you enjoy expressing these qualities? Those are just a couple of questions that you can be thinking about and writing down.

Okay, I went ahead and added those to the Q&A pot as well.

Once you're done if you can raise your hand please.

We have people sharing with us as well, thank you so much. Creative writing, compassion, humor, being carefree, honesty, spirituality, excellent. Let me see where we are with time. We will give you a little bit more time and then we will move forward. Okay, it looks like a good amount of people are done with that.

All right, we will move on to the next activity. It is about creating a life purpose statement. What a life purpose statement does come it describes your purpose in life and the way you might try to lift it out. Why do I get up in the morning? What motivates me to get up? For example, some people might say that my life purpose is to approach those around me with kindness and compassion, encouraging and inspiring others. What it is that really moves you. You can write a few sentences about your life purpose.

Yes, if you can write down what your purpose is, that would be wonderful. I already have some people sharing. That's beautiful. Again, if you can raise your hand once you have a quick sentence or two about your purpose, that way we can move on. We have people sharing again.

What if you don't know? It is whatever you feel that guides you. It is an evolving process of don't worry right now if you can't come up with that.

That is part of being mindful. As we look at things, we don't necessarily judge it because some people came today to figure that out. You may not know that. Some other people may already have things that come to mind easily. Hopefully after you leave today you will have some resources to start to think about the purpose you have or if your changing of what your purpose might be. You may have sitting pulling you in a different direction. I just want to let people know and read a few of these responses that we've got. I love to be creative and explore new things. Being a kind person. Faith, my son, spreading joy, being an amazing mom, provided better life for my family that I imagined for myself, inspire and motivate others, leaving my footsteps by sharing with the world, especially for future generations. Always try to learn and accept life, a purpose that gets me up is to better myself in my life by working on my job and working towards my future, my finances and my retirement. Being fiscally responsible. Not all of us can do that. Creating a better person, starting with me.

It doesn't always have to be just the feeling or emotion but if your son is what inspires you, that is awesome, that is great too.

All right, thanks for answering. Make sure you write down yours as well so you can have this to start off with. The next thing to think about is, decide where you want to go. In order to keep you on track with your life purpose, I encourage you to use some mindset tools like resetting. The easiest way, some of you may have heard this, the easiest way to go about goalsetting is to use something called smart. SMART is a technique that is really helpful when you're thinking about a goal that you want to achieve or purpose, it makes it specific enough as opposed to something general. Someone may say come I want to be more kind. How does that look for me? It should be measurable, it should be attainable, relevant and time sensitive. Sometimes what happens is people get a goal like, I want to lose 50 pounds in a week. It needs to be something realistic and attainable, otherwise people can't end up getting frustrated and not want to keep pushing for it. Also, aligning your goals with your purpose. Make sure that your personal and professional goals, whatever they are, are in alignment with your purpose. As you write

down your goals, make sure that your words and actions are an expression of your purpose and that they are fully aligned with your values. It is really important to keep this in mind. You can also conduct a passion test. Your purpose is really based on things that you care most about. If you're still finding it difficult to clarify exactly what your purposes, you may want to complete a passion test. What you would do is write down the following statement and complete it. The statement is, when my life is ideal, I am blank. You can fill that in however you want. It is a good way to start and focus on that. When my life is ideal, I am blank. You can fill in the blank with an action oriented word. For example, my life is ideal when I'm helping others reach their goals. My life is ideal when I'm learning new skills or practicing my faith. Ultimately with this kind of exercise, you want to come up with about 15 statements. Once you're done coming up with those statements, then you can narrow it down to your top five passions in life. Then you are going to explore those top five passions in greater detail and determine how well you're currently pursuing them in your life. It is a good technique to get more narrow on coming up with a purpose. You don't want it so large, you want something that will be attainable. You can also conduct a joint review. We are going to pull up a pole in regards to this.

Yes, this is a short answer pole. At the very bottom you can type your answer. Make sure to click the arrow to the right side and that will broadcast your answer. We are sharing today so people can see. They are coming in fast and furious.

That is good.

I am spending time with family, making others laugh and smile, earning my PhD, became a mother, definitely a life change. When I am laughing with others, I am self-confident, when I am experiencing flow. Lots of people talking about family, whether it be your own children or grandchildren or their spouse, whatever it may be, they're talking a lot about that. You can use the scrollbar to go up and down to look at those if you like. They will be in the recording as well. It gives everyone a good idea that everyone is able to think about, what is it in life that has brought me the most joy up to this point? Thank you so much for sharing that.

You can go ahead and remove that. I have to add, somebody said my cat on my laptop. That is joy for you.

Thank you, everyone. As Melanie mentioned, by doing this exercise by looking out what you love most about those experiences, they can help you realize what you need most in your life, what is fulfilling to you. That way you can really experience true joy when it comes to purpose and meaning. The next one is taking time for yourself. Self-care is so important. Taking care of yourself allows you to be healthy and be able to do your job and care for others. You can do the things you really want to accomplish in a day. For instance, eating healthy, exercising, getting enough sleep for managing stress, and I can't emphasize this enough. We live in a society that is just crazy busy most of the time. Really it is a society that

rewards people for doing more and more. They want people to achieve more and more. I think a lot of us feel that at work. All of that means you will need to be really purposeful in doing what you need to do to take care of yourself as much as possible. Okay, this next few points is about searching for purpose and the different things you can do when you're still trying to search for your purpose. Donating time, money or talents. When you are showing altruistic behaviors, a selfish concern for other people, doing thing out of a desire to help and not because you feel obligated to do it but just because you really want to help someone, that is a great way to live your purpose. Maybe there is something in your community or helping people that are close to you. Listen to feedback. Sometimes it can be hard to recognize that the things you feel passionate about, you probably like to do a lot of different times. The things you like to do may have been so ingrained in your life that you don't realize how important those things are. Fortunately, other people might be able to give you some insight on that. There is a good chance that you are already displaying your passion and purpose to those around you without even realizing it. Asking others for feedback and suggestions on how to further explore your purpose, that can really be helpful. Surrounding yourself with positive people, that is important also so that you can get encouragement from them or be inspired by them. We've all situations where you come up with an idea or project or something you really want to do and somebody says, you know, don't think that is a good idea or, who do you think you are? It doesn't seem like something you would be able to do or doesn't fit in with who I know or you will never have time to do it. All of those derailing things that people do and say. It is important to try to surround yourself with more positive and more supportive people that are going to support you on your path. Starting conversations with new people. I can be challenging sometimes but even just asking people, are you working on any projects, what is that you like to do for fun. Talking to them about organizations they are involved in or if they like to donate to a particular cause. Even though this may be awkward at first just striking up a conversation with strangers, talking to people outside of your immediate social circle can really open your eyes to activities or career opportunities may be that you had not thought of or even new existed. Exploring your interests. Our their pictures, for example social media, are there pictures of you engaging in a particular activity over and over? Maybe it is gardening or performing. You like talking about history or do you prefer some other topic, do you like sharing the latest money savings technique you discovered? Things that you enjoy sharing on social media and other places may reveal things that give you purpose in life. Now we are going to look at, give done all of these activities, how do you maintain incentives and keep going on track? These are a few tips. This is probably just making sure that what you are doing is following your journey. Make sure it is not someone else's journey. It is easy to kind of fall into that. How many times have you thought to yourself, I would like to do it but what will others think? What if people stop talking to me? What if they don't like me anymore? What if I do this and it turns out badly and I should have listened to the other person? Maybe I should've just done that. Kind of letting go of ego. If you say, I don't think I'm good enough, it is not going to work out, nothing works out, I am not that good, then you are really derailing things quite a bit. Leaning into joy is important. It is really important to be flexible. Sometimes things change, you have to go with the flow. Don't be too discouraged. Go easy on yourself. If you have tried something and it doesn't work out, that doesn't mean that it wasn't a good thing. Trying is always important. Don't beat yourself up if it didn't work out. Don't discourage yourself. There are some techniques that we will go over that might be able to help you find purpose. Journaling can be very effective. You can ask things like, when do I feel like I am pursuing my purpose? What did I like doing as a child? What brings me joy? What do I do when time seems to fly by? Another thing some people do is a vision board or it can be called a goal or a dream board. It is just a collection that can be

pictures, magazine clippings, words, quotes, that visually confirm your goals in life. It acts as a compass to keep you moving in the direction of your dreams, no matter what is happening in the world around you. By creating this visual representation of your dreams and putting it somewhere where you see it every day, you can make it easier to remember your goals and prioritize your actions accordingly. Meditation and visualization, that is part of mindfulness that can be used to figure out what your purpose is. It helps you to quiet the mind and helps you to attain clarity. That is really important. When it comes to meditation, some people will say that I can't sit still for long periods of time to meditate. I don't have time to do that. Meditation does not have to be one thing. It can be as quick as five minutes. It is amazing that even five minutes of just visualizing or breathing can be so effective and so relaxing and help clear the mind. There is a meditation, Melanie, do you think we have time to do that?

I think we do. Actually I am going to share with everyone where they can find the recording. I will put that in the Q&A just in case people have to leave. I think they might enjoy actually hearing the meditation. I want to remind everyone that this is not a religious meditation. We encourage you to participate. Allison, you can go ahead.

Okay, this is what we call a guided meditation. The meditation, there is a woman named Sarah Bremen who has guided meditations to help you discover your values and vision. The full version is on her website, I think it is called mindful movement. It is also in your handout I believe as well. It will help you establish vision of your ideal self. Once you understand your purpose, your path will be based on your vision for your life. Let's just walk through them. If everybody could just make yourself comfortable, if you have to adjust your seating, listening your close is good. Everyone can make yourself comfortable. If you can go ahead, just close your eyes. Bring attention to your breath. Just notice your breath in and out. Just breathe normally. Really focus on how it feels when you inhale and exhale. Now, I would like you to take a few slow deep breaths. With every XL, just let your body sink into your chair and just relax more and more. As your deep breathing, just take a -- just scan your body. Scan from the top of your head, your shoulders, just work your way around your body and see if you have any tension. Just take a deep in and just exhale and let go of that tension. Just do that a few times. As you are relaxing into that moment, I want you to use your minds eye to remember and imagine and visualize yourself on may be a grassy path through a forest or maybe sitting at the ocean, anywhere that makes you feel peaceful and calm. If you are in a forest you can imagine that the beautiful Greentree in the rays of sunshine coming through the leaves. If you're on the ocean, just notice the sounds above you, maybe there are seagulls and the waves coming in. Just notice the sounds that are around you, are there birds chirping, believes that are blowing cracks maybe you can envision yourself laying down on the grass or on the sand. You can feel the warm rays of sunshine beating down on you. We are going to slowly move towards a place of exploration where you can start to examine your ideal life. Continue to breathe, notice any tension, let it go. Just sit in this beautiful place and know that you are safe. Don't worry if negative thoughts start to creep in, that is normal. Just be aware that they are there and let them drift away without judgment. Just keep breathing into the moment. Allow yourself to relax more and more. Allow yourself to explore your purpose. Think to yourself that if you knew you could not fail, what would your ideal self look like? If nothing could get in your way, what would your most desirable goals and dreams look like? This can be how you would like to live or how you would like to be or feel or maybe something you would like to

accomplish. As you envision this ideal version of yourself, consider how you will feel when you're living that purpose. Feel the emotions. As you continue to visualize your best self, consider your personal values. Ask yourself what and who are most important to you. What would it look like for you to give more value doing what you love. Lastly, imagine starting your day full of purpose and ending your day knowing that you lift it fully. Just keep breathing for just a little bit. Just relax into the moment. You are very slowly starting to become aware of your present surroundings. Start to move in your chair, wiggle your fingers and hands. You can start to move your body and be aware of where you are sitting. When you are ready, you can open your eyes. Thank you so much.

Thank you for that peaceful time and for those of you who stuck around. We thank you for that. I know we are over our time. I want to let you know that the certificate of completion is found in the handouts pod. Go ahead and download that. You should be able to click on the down arrow and print out the handout. I am just bringing up the last poll question as well. Please give us feedback if you would like. We are so appreciative of you coming today. If you have questions and we weren't able to get to them, you can click on the link in the Q&A pod. That will take you to your benefits page. If you cannot get to your website, please reach out to either your human resources department or leadership and let them note you would like further information on your benefits related to the employee program through Magellan. Again, this recording will be located on the website in 2 to 3 business days. Again, we thank you so much for coming. Allison, thank you for the wonderful presentation, it was very relaxing.

You are welcome, thank you. All right, this does and our session today has a thank you. [Event Concluded]