



The UK: The place to find your purpose and passion

Living an expat life can be a wonderful adventure but can sometimes also feel very challenging.

Moving to a new country can mean saying goodbye to your personal and professional support network. If you're single, you may worry about feeling lonely. If you have a family, you may be concerned about how they will settle into this new life and you may be nervous about making new friends. Stress and pressure can affect your mental health, you might experience unhappiness or even question if you should be going home for good.

All these feelings can provide the perfect opportunity for you to really think about what you want, your life purpose and how you can achieve it.

It's your life and you can choose what to do with it

If you're feeling like there must be more to life, at a subconscious level you might be running and living your life based on what you were brought up to believe. As a child, you internalised a set of rules – what you can, can't and should do – and it may be that these rules are behind many of the career decisions that you're still making.

If you were brought up to believe that your value lay in performing well at school, university and beyond then it's not uncommon to feel unhappy as an older adult, when you've achieved your goals but still feel empty and unfulfilled. This could be because you are no longer fulfilled by your work life.

What's your purpose?

Finding your purpose is often the intersection of a number of factors. If you're no longer feeling motivated by work, it's useful to reflect on this. When you think about the work you do right now, how many of these can you tick off?

- ▶ "I love it"
- ▶ "The world needs it"
- ▶ "I am paid for it"
- ▶ "I am great at it"

If you don't have as many ticks as you were hoping, it's time for you to have a think about how you can get your work life back on track.

It's time to make new rules

There are tools and techniques which will help you break through and discover what you really want and what's right for you. This can feel challenging, but scary is good; it shows you're stepping out of your conditioning and doing what's right for you. Fear holds you back. But it's just the limbic part of your brain, the amygdala, keeping you in your comfort zone to keep you safe. Living an expat life opens all sorts of opportunities to other ways of living. Which life will you end up living? It's up to you.

Here are a couple of ways you can start thinking about what you want now:

Be your own coach

Chopping and changing jobs, and frequently moving countries or cities is great if each change gets you closer to your goal and helps you live your purpose. However, it may be that all this change is signalling that it's time for you to spend some time working on yourself.

Help can be useful when it comes to mapping out your life and purpose, especially if you've been suppressing emotions for many years, and there are many resources available to help you be your own coach. For example, to get started, you could think

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about the answers to the following questions before you make your next big career decision:

- ▶ “How is this serving me in my life?”
- ▶ “Is this truly what I want to do?” (not should do, have to do, must do)
- ▶ If I was being really brave, would I do this?

Take the time to think

It can be hard to find the time to think about what you want, when you’re busy doing what you’ve always done. Doing a guided inner journey can be very revealing. All you need to do is get comfortable, read the instructions and spend some time reflecting on the answers. Here are three guided inner journeys to get you started.

Guided Inner Journey #1

- ▶ Turn the clock back and look at a time in your life when you felt your full power – a time when your spine, arms and fingertips were tingling with excitement, a time when you simply didn’t care what anyone thought of you, a time you were absolutely alive!
- ▶ Ask yourself: Where were you? What were you doing? Who was around you? What was occurring with them at that time? What was your impact on them?

Guided Inner Journey #2

- ▶ You’ve been given a billboard and can put any message you like on it. Thousands of people will drive by and see your billboard each day. What does it say?

Guided Inner Journey #3

- ▶ You’re in a space ship, on your way to an undeveloped planet in the universe. It’s a fine planet in every way but it’s uninhabited. This means you can create this planet however you want it to be created. When you land, what will you do? What’s the impact you want to have? How will you create the planet the way you want it to be? The ship lands on the planet and the door opens. You touch the planet and say, “it’s going to be this way”. What is “this way”?
- ▶ Notice the themes and values that come out of all three exercises and start working on your life mission statement using this as a template: “I am the... (metaphor) so that people... (impact)”.

Being an expat can offer you the time and space to create the life of your dreams. There are so many paths in front of you... Which one will you choose to follow?



Sue Belton is an executive coach and life coach and founder of www.suebelton.com. She specialises in helping ambitious, high-achieving professionals discover, plan and follow a new path without fear or self-sabotage getting in the way. Contact her to learn more about finding your purpose while you’re in the UK.