

No Experts Needed: The Meaning Of Life According To You!

Ask a hundred people a question and you will get a hundred different answers, but a consistent theme did emerge when Louise Lewis asked complete strangers, over a four-year period, “What’s the meaning of life?” Quite often she heard them mention faith, family and friends.

She met everyday folks from all walks of life and asked them to spontaneously reveal how they see life holds meaning or purpose. Her journey took her searching abroad and in her own backyard, talking to her family, meeting actor Richard Dreyfuss, strangers who may have been experiencing a hurt or loss, and people just living their ordinary lives as best as they know how.

No Experts Needed: The Meaning Of Life According To You! is a compilation of over 100 responses to Louise’s question, blended together with her own moving story. She narrates how Spirit’s words put her on a path of defining the meaning of life after she lost her job of 11 years.

Among the key lessons Louise has learned and wants to share are the following:

- Be prepared for when bad things happen to you, and they will happen.
- Think for yourself, hence *No Experts Needed*.
- Find balance in your life. Focus time on the core of your life.
- Follow Spirit, not ego.

No Experts Needed is a passionate, thought-provoking and inspiring biography that recounts the story of a 40-something professional woman who searches out the meaning of life after being ‘set free’ (laid off) from her lucrative job. Down on her luck, single, with a mortgage to pay, feeling depressed, and at a loss as to what to do next, she was sitting in an airport with panic and anguish. She suddenly receives a message; so powerful and surprising that it becomes clear to her it’s from God. The weight of her worries were released when she’s told, “This is just a new chapter in your life. You hold the pen, I’ll guide your hand, and together, we’ll write one hell of a chapter.”

Through her newfound relationship with Spirit, Louise was driven to explore and to find an answer to the burning question, “What is the meaning of life?”

Spirit not only provided encouragement and soothed Louise’s fears over what her future held, but Spirit also guided her steps to locations and people to interview. Louise found the underlying message offered by all who were talked to is: “We have been where you are now. It’s not easy. But here are the words that get us through to the next day. Let our words help you find your way.”

The Louisiana native now resides in Southern California and has traded in her 20-year career in marketing and advertising sales in the high-tech industry for a writing career and volunteering at the local children's hospital.

Louise shares with us:

- How to embrace change.
- The role of spirit in our lives.
- Scores of answers to: what is the meaning of life?
- The secret to coping with turmoil – why people never ask themselves the most basic questions of life.

“The fact is “life happens” and no one escapes,” says Louise. “We live in uncertain times and continuously walk through life feeling unnerved by the state of the world. Eventually, the ability to balance our emotions and attitudes about life and the roles we play in the world gone mad are severely compromised by the constant exposures to such extreme turmoil on a daily basis. And it does not look like it is getting better. But there is hope.”

Louise's search led her to a diverse group of people including:

- **Del**, who lost his wife of 56 years, six months prior to their meeting, says, “There isn't any meaning to life. Its all random events.”
- **Susan**, a recovering alcoholic and addict said, “Life is about living, learning, and laughing the best I can at all times.”
- **David**, an unemployed 49-something year old confessed to still not having an answer, saying, “I have been asking the same question all my life.”
- **Wesley**, a survivor of hurricane Katrina and lung cancer, says, “Each morning it's good to be alive that my heart is overwhelmed, and I cry.”
- **Dan**, who within an 18-month period, lost his son to a car accident, a father to a heart attack, and a brother to liver failure, said, “life is the preparation for the next level.”
- **Mayer**, surviving 9/11, said, “to be good and do good to others so that they can do the proper thing.”

“Do not pretend that bad times do not happen, or that they will not happen to you,” says Louise. “Rather the secret to surviving a tragedy is to hold on with all one's might to that which gives meaning to our life. Holding on to this meaning will keep us grounded, anchored in life, so when the winds of tragedy blow (and surely they will), we will not be left helplessly flapping in the wind. Of course, the key here is to actually take the time to find the meaning of your life.”

“*No Experts Needed* is a stepping stone to help encourage people to find the meaning of their life before it's too late,” says Louise.

Start now!

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Louis Lewis **Biography**

Louise Lewis is the author of a new book, *No Experts Needed: The Meaning Of Life According To You!*

She has two decades of experience in marketing and advertising, having held senior-level positions on the client, advertising agency, and ad sales sides of the business.

Louise considers herself a self-growth junkie, continuing to seek light, love, and wisdom in her daily life.

With an innate passion for spiritual growth, she has a strong desire to give back to the world. Along with the inspiration and direction received from Spirit, Louise continues to touch the lives of all she meets.

She volunteers at Children's Hospital of Orange County.

Louise earned a bachelor's degree in Communications at California State University in Fullerton.

Born and raised in Louisiana, she resided in Southern California.

Louise Lewis
Q & A
No Experts Needed

1. **Louise, when did you first begin to communicate with the one you call ‘spirit’ – and what did you make of this communication?** First, I think it’s important for you to know that the one “I call Spirit” is actually God. In the book, however, I purposely chose to refer to *Spirit* rather than *God* because I wanted to share my story with all people...of all faiths and philosophies. In doing so, I think it more accurately reflects and gives respect to the diversity of the people in the book. But to answer your question, since I was raised Christian, I’d have to say that my “communication” with God began at birth in the belief that God is always with me. However, for the longest time, this communication was unfortunately more of a one way street. You see, even though I believed that God’s word was there for the taking, I have to admit that my ears were not always open to hearing what was being said.
2. **Why do you feel you are able to tap into the power of spirit?** That’s easy...I did the work. I am able to tap into the power of Spirit today because a long time ago, I took a long journey deep inside myself to find out (for myself) what Spirit really meant to me. What is Spirit? What role did it play in my life, etc.? After a lot of soul searching, as they say, and a lot of study, I not only found my answers to these questions but I also learned how to communicate these answers using my own voice.
3. **What circumstances led you to write No Experts Needed?** Oh, God, there’s so many parts to this answer. You see, several events occurred...one after the other...that were perfectly orchestrated, perfectly timed to bring me to the point of proclaiming, “I’m writing a book.” But the main event that got the ball rolling was getting “set free” from my job; also known as getting laid off. This event led to the most powerful one of all. It was only a few minutes after getting laid off that I received a life-altering message from Spirit. Spirit told me: “This is only a new chapter in your life. You hold the pen; I’ll guide your hand. And together we’ll write one hell of a chapter.” As they say, the rest is history. Or I should say the rest of the events are given in my book!
4. **While interviewing scores of people for you book, what did you come to conclude about the state of humanity?** Based on my experience with so many wonderful people, I was reminded that no matter what their race, religion, or geography, people possess far more similarities than they do differences. When you think about it, we all eventually experience pretty much the same stuff that life dishes out: the same joys, the same pain, the same sorrow. Even though our stories may vary a bit, there are many common threads that keep us tied to the person next to us, or across the oceans.

- 5. How does one come to determine what their meaning of life is?** I believe that the process starts by asking the question with the intention of allowing the answer to reveal itself. When you're ready to receive the answer, you must first set the stage, so to speak. First, you must put the world on "mute", meaning you must get quiet. Second, open the communication channel from your head to your heart. An easy way to open this channel is to take a few slow deep breaths. Now you're ready to pose the question. Ask the question aloud and then let the question float down to your heart. Allow your thoughts gently form in your mind. Take only a few minutes to collect your thoughts and then begin to write the first thing that comes to your mind. Let your words flow freely onto the page. Do not stop the flow by editing your words or making several drafts of your answer. Simply capture your spontaneous answer.
- 6. What do you believe is the meaning of life?** I have not told anyone my answer. I strongly believe that a person must learn life's answers for themselves. Now, that may sound odd since *No Experts Needed* is chock full of answers. But I am convinced that once a person begins exploring the answers of others, that person will feel more motivated (and less intimidated) to tackle the question on their own.
- 7. How did you find people coped with severe situations, such as the death of a loved one?** I did meet several people who had recently lost a loved one. Their stories of how they're dealing with the loss still make me cry. But one man, in particular, stands out in my mind. His name is Dan. The story of meeting Dan makes me still laugh because Dan immediately turned me down when I asked him to be in my book. But within seconds, he was overcome by curiosity, and he gave in. Dan told me that the "meaning of life" question was not new to him because he'd been wrestling with it for over a year. In one breath, Dan explained that over a year and a half, his son was killed in a car accident. And his father died of a heart attack. And his brother died of liver failure. How did Dan cope? I asked him that very question. His answer was simple. He said, "I believe in God."
- 8. You lost a job after 11 years of loyal service. How did getting laid off change your outlook on life?** You've heard the expression, "to come full circle"? Well, I experienced a full-circle moment within minutes of getting "set free". You see, before I got laid off, I felt really secure in life. I worked for a great company. I loved my job and my clients. I dedicated a lot of my time and emotion to my job. I was even prepared to be at that company until I retired. Of course, getting "set free" trashed that retirement plan and my feelings of security. But within just minutes of that event, I received words from Spirit, words that delivered me back to a place of feeling secure. Only this time, I now knew that I was my own security. My feeling of security now comes from within. And I now view getting "set free" as a blessing.
- 9. You call yourself a "self growth junkie." How so?** Many years ago, I took a long hard look at myself and chose to take responsibility for how my life had turned out (so far). Mainly how my relationships with people had turned out. Ok, I'll fess up. After my divorce, I realized that my life had been shaped by the decisions I made, whether consciously or subconsciously. And no one else was to blame. From then on, I analyzed and questioned my every thought and action and sought out the answers. I became "addicted" to this process. Ask a question,

any question, and then learn the answer. It was so fun! And still is fun...because I still have a lot to learn.

- 10. If life happens – such as divorce, job loss, death— and no one escapes the unpleasant stuff, how do we confront life?** By asking yourself, “How do I choose to confront life?” Of course we can’t control everything in life, but we do have a choice on how we respond to such situations. As in my example earlier about divorce, I could have chosen to remain bitter, angry and blamed everything on my ex-husband. Fortunately for me, I *chose* to focus my energy on the role I played in the whole thing. You see, I follow a certain philosophy that states that in any given situation, It’s never about the other person. This means that before you point the finger at someone, you must first look at your own actions. It’s all about our choices.
- 11. How should we balance emotions and attitude about our life and the role we play in a world gone mad?** Your question holds the answer. Balance. Sorry if I sound like a broken record, but I do believe that balance can be achieved if you *choose* to be balanced. It’s not easy, but look at the alternative. Once you *choose* a life of balance, your eyes will begin seeing many, many ways to get you there.
- 12. Is the secret to surviving tragedy based on what one believes the meaning of life is?** In a word, yes. And I’ll take it a step further. I think the *quality* of one’s survival is definitely linked to the *quality* of one’s answer to the meaning of life. For example, let’s say someone’s answer to the meaning of life is shopping. Then, they suffer a tragedy. Let’s say, their spouse asks for a divorce. Their world is shattered; their foundation is shaken to the core. It’s in that moment that the person must grab onto their meaning of life to whether the storm. So, if shopping is the meaning of life, what do you think will be the *quality* of their survival. Sure, in the short term, it may sound like a good diversion, but the aftershocks of a tragedy last a long time and we have to be prepared for the long haul. In this case, I would strongly urge someone to peel back a few more layers to learn their true answer.
- 13. How can we deal with living in an uncertain time, where we constantly walk through life feeling unnerved by the state of the world?** You deal with it by changing the state of *your world*. Let’s face it. It is difficult for all of us to find balance when we are constantly bombarded by news of war, terrorism, murder, and rape. And don’t get me started on the constant political squabbles! Some things we just can’t change. But there are many, many things that we can change. We *can* change our world...the world we touch directly.
- 14. From the people you have met, what were some of the most interesting prospective expressed about the meaning of life?** Oh, that’s a tough one because so many answers either touched my heart or made me raise an eyebrow. But I guess the one that comes to mind is the one that I most disagreed with. It came from Del, an 80-yr-old man who had just lost his wife of 56 years. His answer to the meaning of life was: “There isn’t any. It’s random events.”
- 15. What do you tell someone who doesn’t believe life holds any great meaning for them?** Funny you should ask that because in the book, I go into detail about my conversation with Del. With Del, as with everyone else who answered my

question, I did not judge the answer he gave. I simply asked him why he thought that way, and then I told my Ego to just shut up and listen to his explanation. It's fascinating to listen to people with the intent to learn, versus listening with the intent of changing their mind. But, I admit, when Del finished his explanation, I offered my counter...in a loving and respectful manner. There's no time now, but the story of Del will tell you what happens along the way to get Del to eventually change his answer.

16. You had an unusual conversation with your dad just months before he died.

What took place? Oh, now you're going to make me cry. In the book, it's the story of my Dad's passing. My parents came out to California for a visit. When my Dad walked off the plane, for the first time in my life, I saw him as an old man. The result of a hard life had finally taken a toll on his body. In that moment, I knew he did not have much time left. Just minutes after arriving home from the airport, my Dad turned to me and said, "So, how long will it take you to get home if something happens?" That one question was all it took for us to have the "death bed" conversation, right there and then.

17. Why do people not talk about the meaning of life more openly and often?

Well, they do with me! I think the reason is because they're afraid. Afraid that they don't know the answer...or that someone will laugh at their answer. So they stay safe and not even make the attempt. That's one of the reasons I wrote *No Experts Needed*. To say to people, "hey, you're not alone. We've all been there."

18. You managed to ask actor Richard Dreyfuss about the meaning of life. What did he say and how did you come to meet him?

Yes, the story of how I became a celebrity stalker! Just kidding...I spotted him at a gift shop in the Boston Logan Airport. I overheard him ask the clerk for the closest ATM. I followed him, of course keeping a respectful distance. But once his transaction was done, I pounced on that cutie pie! I love his answer because he, too, believes in Choice. In fact, he begins his eloquent answer with the words: "It's your choice."

19. Did you interview people victimized by the hurricane Katrina, and if so what did they share with you?

Yes, I spoke with many Katrina survivors. I love the Katrina story because it makes a full-circle connection between Oprah, Jon Bon Jovi, these Katrina survivors, and my hometown in Louisiana. The Katrina survivors I met are simply amazing. They have dealt with devastation, turmoil, tragedy and loss, and yet they see it all as a blessing. Unbelievable strength.

20. A lot of people link the meaning of life to their family. Why do you think this is so?

Family is certainly the epicenter of most of our lives. No doubt about it. But as soon as someone tells me that their family is the meaning of life, I gently push the envelope a bit and ask them a few more questions like: what is your definition of family? Is family just those people who are related by blood? Do you have only one family in this life? You see I believe that one's answer to the meaning of life needs to go beyond the confines of the physical world, beyond the physical body. Because if the only meaning to our life is wrapped up in someone who will die and leave us, then what are we left with? In other words, if the meaning of life is our family, what meaning is left when our family members

die? I it's tough to think about. But inevitably, we all face answering this question one day. It is my mission to encourage people to start now searching their hearts, minds and souls for their true answer.

21. Others believe their meaning in life is linked to God. What do you make of that? Well, it's very easy for me to understand that connection because I believe in God. But to tag on to what I suggested earlier, if you agree that your answer to life's meaning must transcend the physical world, then I think your search naturally brings you to exploring higher levels of thought, of consciousness, of spirituality. Whether you call it God or not is based on your own personal belief system. Reaching these levels of thought take time and commitment, but it is here where one finds the answers to all questions.

No Experts Needed

Lessons Learned Along The Journey

And How You Can Discover The Meaning Of Life

Louise Lewis interviewed scores of people over a 4-year journey to uncover the meaning of life from regular folks from all walks of life. Over 100 answers are given in her new book, ***No Experts Needed: The Meaning of Life According To You!*** Below are some of the nuggets of wisdom gleaned from the people she met and whose lives touched her deeply.

- The meaning of life is to participate.
- Always be close to people and to be caring and loving to everyone I meet.
- Living a good life doesn't take money, power, or possessions.
- Life is putting your own wants and needs as a priority without putting others too far second.
- Life is what happens whether you want it or not.
- To serve God is the most meaningful thing in my life.
- Appreciate everything in life, even things you don't have and may wish for.
- There are people in need of love, find them and you find out about yourself.
- To do good in the eyes of the Lord.
- Life is what you make of it.
- Life is the preparation for the next level.
- Remember to celebrate the mystery of every day.
- To pass on your knowledge, joy, and love to others, to enhance their lives.
- To satisfy my curiosity.
- To live without limits.
- To know my soul, the demon, my shadow, the limit.
- Life is all about love.
- Life is learning from grief, happiness, failure, and success.
- A question without a single answer. Indeed, were there an answer, we need not take the journey.
- Doing what makes you feel great.
- To gain as much intellectual knowledge as possible.

To discover your own meaning of life, Louise suggests you sit in a quiet place where you will not be disturbed. Now, ask yourself the question aloud: What is the meaning of life? Breathe in the question, and let your thoughts gently form in your mind. Take only a few minutes to collect your thoughts and then begin to write the first thing that comes to your mind. Let your words flow freely onto the page. Do not stop the flow by editing your words or making several drafts of your answer. Simply capture your spontaneous answer.

Stop writing when what is in your heart is on the paper. Lastly, do not judge or criticize your answer. Embrace the fact that what you have written is simply a reflection of one particular spontaneous moment in your life. Let it be.

No Experts Needed

10 Steps Of Discovering Your Very Own Meaning Of Life

Louise Lewis spent four years interviewing random people to uncover the meaning of life. Her new book explores the answers of hundred people, *No Experts Needed: The Meaning Of Life According To You!* Below are 10 steps to help you uncover your meaning of life

1. Ask the question of yourself: what is the meaning of life?
2. Ask it of others. Listen to their answers; don't judge.
3. Recognize life does have a purpose, and though it may vary from person to person, you should accept that you do in fact give meaning to your life.
4. Embrace the spirit within you and let life flow freely from your heart, mind, and soul.
5. Explore your gifts and develop them.
6. Ask yourself what the meaning of life is on each of your next five birthdays. Spend each of those years seeking to fulfill your purpose.
7. Travel—whether across town, across the country, or across oceans. Gain a greater perspective and appreciation for the ideas and customs of other cultures.
8. Observe the strength and beliefs of those who've suffered significant loss, pain, or disappointment. See their strength and optimism as a model.
9. Whatever you find the meaning of life to be, it certainly is enjoyable with family, friends, lovers, humor, and nature; so fully embrace these on a regular basis.
10. Explore the possibility that life holds many mysteries, including things we can't prove, see, or know for sure, yet seem real, moving, and inspiring. Embrace the unknown and hold everything up to the possibility it can become something more or different than you ever could have imagined.

No Experts Needed

Excerpts

Random Responses To The Question: What Is The Meaning Of Life?

Kerri: For me, life itself is the miracle, meaning that I don't really believe that anything happens once you die. Life is such an amazing gift, and the odds of you being formed and born are so long that the opportunity to have a life is the whole package, not the promise of an afterlife or reincarnation, or anything else. At times, I like to think of reincarnation, but if that's true, it's more than we should expect. Life is to be loved once day at a time. Always try to be in the moment and realize that nobody can affect you in any way unless you allow it.

Sylvia: Life is doing things God's way. We were put on Earth for a purpose. Not our way, but God's way. We must take life as it was given to us and make it with what is given to us, be it rags or riches. Life is helping each other through love and kindness. Life is a test and tribulations, and if we don't pass it, we must take it over. We are all a ship passing through; enjoy the ride while we are here.

Mana: When you think you are going to die and your daughter thinks you are dead! It happened to me on 9/11. I worked, and still work, a block from the towers. 9/11 happened, and my girls thought that I was dead. And the worst part, I thought I was going to die, too. I knew right away that the meaning of my life is my children.

Wesley: I never knew how good life would be until Katrina. Then (after Katrina), I found out I have lung cancer. Right now, I try to live day by day and I ask God to spare my life a bit longer because I know there's no cure for lung cancer. I brushed hard with death, got cancer, and took chemotherapy. Each morning, it's just good to be alive that my heart is overwhelmed, and I cry. I'm so glad to see another day.

Eileen: The meaning of life is whatever I make it to mean. It really doesn't mean anything unless I make it mean something. I can make it heaven or hell. Most of the time I have chosen heaven. It's all about love when you come right down to it. Love really is the meaning of life.

Steve: To serve, learn, love, and experience as much as possible. Find out the one thing that gives you the most pleasure and satisfaction and DO IT! The blessing of life gives us the opportunity to create whatever reality we want as long as we surrender ourselves with the right people. Keeping this idea in our hearts and minds will take us a long way. If I live each day to the fullest, not taking anything for granted, and I am 100 percent honest with myself, I will always do the right thing and will enjoy a rich and bountiful life.

Farhad: To make a difference in this world in some way. To me, life is a process and not a destination. In the process, one must hope to keep on learning, giving, and moving forward. One must be brave enough to stand for the right

cause, not five up, and do his/her best to stand for the right thing and leave this world with a mark. That mark should be a positive contribution to mankind/humanity/world. In other words, the meaning of life is a life with meaning. Moving in that direction is never too late. And once someone moves in that direction, the joy, happiness, etc. of this enlightenment is so high that he/she will experience heaven!
Celebrate being alive!

Eric: Knowing that somewhere among the vast emptiness of the earth and space, there is something is someone or someone watching, planning and guiding humans towards their dreams, whether the dreams are good or bad. The faith that the human race has for that something up there makes life meaningful. So, I like to say, “Why is meaning of life?” instead of “What is the meaning of life?” because the fact is, all humans have a different meaning of life, which makes the question “what is the meaning of life?” useless. It is because all humans find life meaningful that makes breathing, talking, loving, and living meaningful enough not to ask, “What is the meaning of life?”

Lauren: The meaning of life? An age-old question with no answer. It’s quite possible that there is no meaning— that God put us here to watch us, much like children who have ant farms. It’s a possibility. However, I personally think that there is much more to life. I believe in eternal life and in reincarnations, and the meaning of life of Earth is to help the spirit grow.

Veronica: The meaning of life— is to be content with what you have.

Roberto: In life, it is very important to be sincere, respect all people, be honest, and to live life everyday thoughtfully because life is the most beautiful thing in the world.

Beth: To me, the meaning of life is to ultimately find your soul mate. When you find your soul mate, you feel whole and complete.

Eric: I have no idea what the meaning of life is. All you can do is live life the best you can, and when you die, only then will you find out what is the meaning of life.

Bobby: The meaning of life is to live it to the fullest. Enjoy every day, even when things go wrong. The meaning of life is to learn from your mistakes and guide others from your experiences, to have goals and dreams, to enjoy your friends and family, and make every day count.

Patrick: To me, the meaning of life is basic survival. That means to accomplish things that normally you don’t do, things like finding shelter during or after a storm, having food when none is available, and keeping your family safe from harm.

John: I worked and lived near the World Trade Center for more than thirty-five years. When the first tower came down, I was sixty yards away. God was with me, and I came out alive. Every day after 9/11, I met people who were very close to me; they had lost some loved ones. Then I knew what life is. After 9/11, I appreciate every day more than before and I enjoy life more!