

The meaning of work and life for conservationists

Thu 4 November 09:00-10:00 GMT



This session provides a framework to understand the purpose and meaning we find in work and life.

Conservationists typically have a very deep sense of purpose to their work, but what happens when our work goes up in smoke?

This is an interactive workshop facilitated by Ross Rowe.



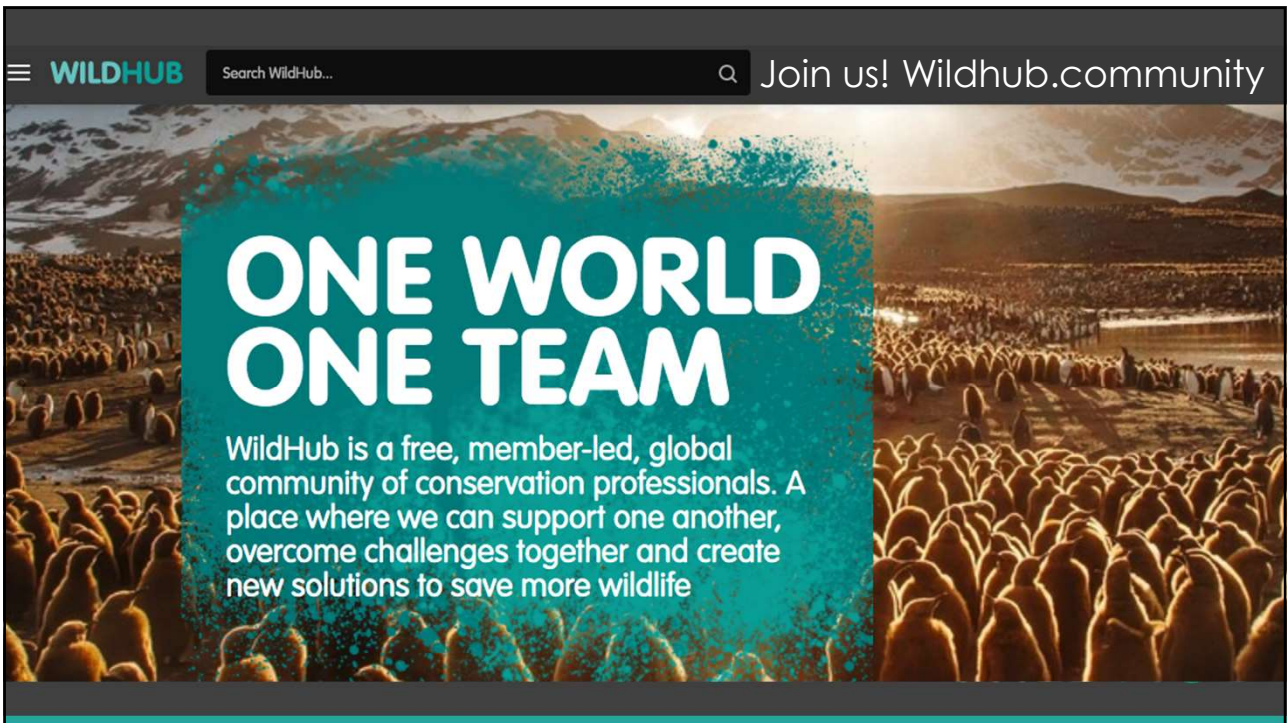
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1

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2



3

About Ross

I coach people and teams to be REAL.
That is, Responsible, Empowered, Authentic and Liberated.
I coach for the beauty of life, wonder of diversity and rewards of exploring.





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Australian Council for Educational Research
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4

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5

Introduction

Structure of this workshop:

1. Expectations
2. Why purpose and meaning are important
3. How we choose purpose and meaning
4. When it all goes up in smoke



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6

Your hopes for this workshop

What would you like to get from this workshop on the meaning of work and life?



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7

Why purpose and meaning is important

When did you last think seriously about the meaning of work or life?

Why might this be an important question to ask ourselves at different stages in life?

People with a clear or strong sense of meaning or purpose, experience a high quality of life and sense of well-being.



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8

Common statements

the meaning of work is:

- pay the bills
- get money to do things
- power and influence
- be responsible adult
- make society/the world better

the meaning of life is:

- 42 (Douglas Adams, *Hitchhikers Guide to the Galaxy*, 1979)
- survival of the fittest
- play to win
- end suffering
- Nothing
- fear/worship God, do his will
- prepare for an after-life



'Meaningless! Meaningless!' says the Teacher.
'Everything is meaningless!' Ecclesiastes ch1

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9

The meaning of work and life for me...

Complete these sentences:

I go to work to...

The purpose of my life is to...



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10

Quick review of how we actually live

Thinking of a typical week (7 days, 168 hours), how many hours do you spend?

- Sleeping
- Eating
- Home duties
- Work
- Exercise
- Hobbies
- Relaxation
- Social media
- Relationships
- Community service
- Spirituality

Which of these get more or less time than you might expect? (compared with your statements about your purpose of work and meaning of life.)

Actions and time spent consistent with our values and purpose in life leads to success, happiness and wellbeing.

Actions and time spent inconsistent with our values and purpose, leads to unease, discomfort, frustration and low self respect.



11

Why we choose one meaning over another

Our values:

- What energises me?
- What gets me angry?
- What do I want said at my funeral?
- Who/what am I accountable to?

Our core human needs:

- Food
- Shelter
- Sex
- Certainty
- Variety
- Autonomy
- Belonging
- Growth
- Contribution

	Gains	Pains
Accept		
Reject		

Emotional comfort

What do I get to:

- Do or not-do?
- Say or not-say?
- Believe or not-believe?



12

Up in smoke - 2019-20 Australian bushfires



Kangaroo <https://time.com/longform/australia-bushfires-photos/>
 Koala <https://now.tufts.edu/articles/sos-australian-wildlife>

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13

Up in smoke - 2019-20 Australian bushfires

- 33 deaths (9 firefighters)
- 3,094 houses
- >17 million hectares (>42 million acres) burnt (99% habitat to at least one threatened species)
- 37% of the New South Wales (NSW) National Parks Estate
- 144 NSW Parks or reserves >50% burned, (55 with >99% burned)
- > 1 billion animals died (>800 million NSW)
- 'hundreds of billions' of insects
- 49 listed threatened species lost 80% of known or likely distribution (70 species lost >50%)



https://www.aph.gov.au/About_Parliament/Parliamentary_Departments/Parliamentary_Library/pubs/rp/rp1920/Quick_Guides/AustralianBushfires

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14

Up in smoke

We ask or think:

- What's the point?
- is it all meaningless?
- It's all too much
- It's unfair
- all is doom and gloom

We need to know:

- Emotions are normal and healthy
- Thoughts need not define the future
- Work is part of, not the totality of life
- We can choose the meaning of events
- We get more of what we focus on
- Measures of success in life that are within our control.



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15

Wrap up

Anything that would make this session more complete for you?

What's been helpful?

What will you take away to apply for the benefit of others and your organisation?



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16

Feedback

Please take just a couple of minutes to provide myself and WildHub with your feedback

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdeSifHw43_ahd37GUMS33wNAXsfK0u1h7Mxd

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17

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18