

## **DOES EXISTENTIAL WELLBEING PROMOTE POSITIVE ATTITUDES ABOUT ENTREPRENEURS?**

Clay Routledge, Ph.D.  
North Dakota State University

Taylor A. FioRito, Ph.D.  
Chandler-Gilbert Community College

John D. Bitzan, Ph.D.  
North Dakota State University

Andrew A. Abeyta, Ph.D.  
Rutgers University - Camden

### **ABSTRACT**

*Entrepreneurs play a vital role in creating and sustaining the type of dynamic and competitive marketplace that supports consumer satisfaction and broader wellbeing. However, wellbeing may also play an important role in promoting a culture of entrepreneurship. In the current study (N = 1,269), we focus specifically on existential wellbeing and explore the potential for existential wellbeing to positively influence attitudes about entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurship involves agentic, goal-direction action. Meaning in life is an indicator of existential wellbeing and has been shown to support agentic thinking and goal-pursuit. Thus, meaning in life may promote the type of agentic mindset that encourages people to have positive attitudes about the role of entrepreneurs in society. We tested this proposal by measuring perceptions of meaning in life, feelings of agency associated with meaning (existential agency), and attitudes about entrepreneurs. We found support for a model linking meaning in life to positive attitudes about entrepreneurs via existential agency.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

Entrepreneurs play an important role in increasing consumer choice, in facilitating economic growth, and in enhancing overall societal well-being. As pointed out by Kirzner (1973), entrepreneurs identify profit opportunities and shift resources to locations or activities that satisfy consumer wants. Schumpeter (1942) identifies the role that entrepreneurs play in the process of “creative destruction,” where innovations create new products, services, and production techniques that replace those currently in place. Not only do these entrepreneurial activities increase the variety and quality of choices available to consumers, they also increase the efficiency with which resources are used, enabling the production of more goods and services and overall higher standards of living.

In recognizing the important role entrepreneurs play in consumer satisfaction, business dynamism, and overall societal well-being, a number of researchers have examined influences of country-level political, economic, and cultural institutions in enabling this positive role for entrepreneurs (e.g. Baumol 1990, Sobel 2008, Nikolaev et. al 2018, and Bennett 2021).<sup>1</sup> For

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<sup>1</sup> For a summary of comparative international entrepreneurship studies examining individual-level, firm-level, and country-level characteristics, see Terjesen (2016).

example, Sobel (2008) finds that individuals are more likely to engage in productive entrepreneurship in societies with “secure property rights, a fair and balanced judicial system, contract enforcement, and effective constitutional limits on government’s ability to transfer wealth through taxation and regulation.” While studies have also examined the characteristics of individuals (including psychological characteristics) that influence their likelihood of becoming entrepreneurs (see Terjesen, 2016 for international comparison studies), we’re not aware of any that examine individual characteristics that influence support for entrepreneurship and the systems that make entrepreneurship more successful.

We propose that the psychology of wellbeing plays an important role in cultivating a culture of entrepreneurship. Given the social and cultural nature of human beings (Baumeister, 2005), entrepreneurship is more likely to thrive not just as the result of market-friendly economic policy, but also if the broader society believes entrepreneurs make valuable contributions to the world. Moreover, a society that believes entrepreneurs make valuable contributions to the world is also more likely to enact market –friendly economic policies.

To date, social and behavioral scientists have not studied what psychological characteristics influence attitudes about the role entrepreneurs play in society. We propose that psychological wellbeing, and more specifically, existential wellbeing contributes to positive attitudes about entrepreneurship. This proposal is based on a motivational approach to existential wellbeing that identifies meaning in life as a psychological resource that inspires the type of individual agency that promotes societal flourishing (Routledge & FioRito, 2021). The more people view their lives as meaningful, the more they view themselves as having the personal agency required to find, maintain, and restore meaning (existential agency). Given the agentic nature of entrepreneurship, we predict that meaning in life will positively influence attitudes about entrepreneurship via existential agency. If people view themselves as existentially agentic, they should be more inclined to believe people in general are able to make important contributions to society through the agentic activity of entrepreneurship. In the present study, we test this proposed model in a national sample of adults living in the United States.

## **THE EXISTENTIAL DIMENSION OF PSYCHOLOGICAL WELLBEING**

Psychological wellbeing concerns optimal psychological functioning and is a complex concept that can be divided into a number of different components relevant to mental and physical health, self-regulation, self-determination, and psychological growth (Ryan & Deci, 2001). Existential wellbeing involves the human capacity to grapple with questions and concerns about meaning in life and related issues (Hicks & Routledge, 2013). A number of theoretical perspectives have asserted that humans have a strong need to attain and maintain a sense of meaning in life (e.g., Frankl, 1959; Yalom, 1980; Ryff & Singer, 1998). Meaning in life reflects the sense that one’s existence and life experience is coherent, significant, and purposeful (King, Heintzelman, & Ward, 2016). Numerous studies have documented that meaning in life is an important component of overall psychological wellbeing (Heintzelman & King, 2014; Steger & Frazier, 2005). Meaning is strongly associated with life satisfaction (e.g., Steger & Kashdan, 2007) and life satisfaction is an overall indicator of wellbeing that is determined by satisfaction across the different life domains that influence wellbeing (Sirgy et al., 1998). Meaning also serves as a critical resource for coping with life stressors and trauma (Park, 2010). And deficits in meaning contribute to a range of psychological problems such as depression (Mascaro & Rosen, 2005), addiction (Kinnier, Metha, Keim, & Okey, 1994), and suicidal ideation (Edwards & Holden, 2001). In addition, meaning in life is associated with physical health (Steger, Mann, Michels, & Cooper, 2009) and longevity

(e.g., Hill & Turiano, 2014). In sum, existential wellbeing is a critical component of optimal human functioning.

## **A MOTIVATIONAL MODEL OF MEANING**

Indicators of psychological wellbeing are typically viewed as outcome variables. For example, in the case of existential wellbeing, researchers usually focus on the experiences, identities, goals, and accomplishments that increase or decrease perceptions of meaning in life (see Hicks & Routledge, 2013; Vail & Routledge, 2020). In other words, meaning is considered a desired outcome because it is viewed as a fundamental human need that must be met for humans to be psychologically healthy. However, consistent with Victor Frankl's (1959) observations that maintaining a sense of meaning in life is key for sustaining the motivation to persist and overcome life's most difficult trials, a growing body of research indicates that meaning in life has self-regulatory and motivational power with important implications for individual and societal flourishing (Routledge & FioRito, 2021). In fact, the reason meaning in life is associated with good psychological and physical health might be because of its self-regulatory and motivational properties. That is, meaning inspires the types of attitudes, goals, and behaviors that improve people's lives. For instance, when people's attention is focused on meaning in life, they exercise more frequently and for longer intervals (Hooker & Masters, 2016; 2018), and physical exercise positively contributes to physical and mental health.

More broadly, meaning in life inspires an agentic and goal-directed mindset. For example, after reflecting on meaningful memories, people report a stronger motivation to pursue goals (Abeyta, Routledge, & Juhl, 2015; Sedikides et al., 2018) and confidence in achieving goals (Abeyta et al., 2015). Other studies find that encouraging college students to view education as contributing to meaning in life promotes the belief that they can succeed in college (Abeyta & Collier, 2021), increases persistence on tedious academic tasks, and contributes to higher grades (Yeager et al., 2014). Similarly, working adults who view their work as meaningful show stronger job commitment and job performance (Steger, Dik, & Duffy, 2012). In addition, meaning in life is associated with self-control (Li, Salcuni, Delvecchio, 2019) and predicts longitudinally the personality trait of grit (Hill, Burrow, & Bronk, 2014). Grit is an action tendency that describes an intense perseverance for accomplishing goals and overcoming challenges (von Culin, Tsukayama, & Duckworth, 2014).

Given that a number of correlational, longitudinal, and experimental studies indicate that meaning inspires agency, Abeyta, FioRito, and Routledge (2021) developed a measure of existential agency to explicitly capture this motivational dimension of meaning. Other meaning in life measures focus on overall perceptions of meaning (presence of meaning) or the extent to which people are looking for meaning (search for meaning), but do not assess the extent to which people view themselves as active agents in the pursuit and maintenance of a meaningful life. Abeyta and colleagues (2021) find that existential agency uniquely predicts goal-oriented motivation when controlling for the presence of meaning in life and related wellbeing measures.

## **CURRENT RESEARCH: EXISTENTIAL WELLBEING, EXISTENTIAL AGENCY, AND ATTITUDES ABOUT ENTREPRENEURSHIP**

Past research has explored how economic and consumer-related variables influence overall wellbeing (e.g., life satisfaction; Wright & Larsen, 1993) and existential wellbeing (e.g., meaning in life; Abeyta et al., 2016; Abeyta, Routledge, & Sedikides, 2017). In the present study, we are interested in how wellbeing potentially contributes to attitudes that may ultimately increase

consumer satisfaction by promoting the type of entrepreneurial culture that increases business dynamism and consumer choice. Specifically, the current research focuses on attitudes about entrepreneurs. Humans are social and ultimately cultural organisms and thus societal attitudes can dramatically impact people's interests, goals, and behaviors. As a result, the more people view entrepreneurs as playing a positive and important role in society, the more individuals may be inspired to pursue entrepreneurship, help others pursue their entrepreneurial aspirations, or support policies that encourage and support entrepreneurship and innovation.

To our knowledge, there is no research considering how psychological characteristics relate to attitudes about the role entrepreneurs play in a society. Given that entrepreneurship is characterized by high levels of agency (e.g., motivation, risk-taking, persistence, and resilience) and meaning in life promotes an agentic mindset, we propose that meaning in life will be positively associated with positive attitudes about the role entrepreneurs play in society. We further propose that existential agency will mediate the relationship between meaning in life and attitudes about entrepreneurs. If people view themselves as existentially agentic, they may be more likely to believe that people in general can contribute to society through agentic activity such as entrepreneurship. Such a finding would provide evidence that it is the agentic nature of existential wellbeing that relates to attitudes about entrepreneurs, and not just a general positivity bias. That is, perhaps when people feel meaningful they are more generally positive in their outlook, which could lead to them having a more positive view of entrepreneurs. If it is the agency associated with meaning that accounts for the proposed relationship between meaning in life and positive attitudes about entrepreneurs then existential agency should mediate the relationship between meaning in life and attitudes about entrepreneurs. In addition, since meaning in life is correlated with a range of other variables that could influence attitudes about entrepreneurs such as political ideology (Newman et al., 2018), religiosity (e.g., Routledge, Abeyta, & Roylance, 2017), social connectedness (e.g., Lambert et al., 2013), employment (Abeyta et al., 2016), and income (Ward & King, 2016), we control for these variables in our analyses. Finally, as a further way to test that it is the agency associated with meaning and not people's current desire to find meaning in life that explains our predicted findings, we also control for the search for meaning in our analyses.

## **METHOD**

### *Participants*

Our sample includes 1,269 adults (718 females; 56.6 percent,  $M_{age} = 45.36$ ,  $SD_{age} = 16.02$ ) living in the United States recruited using the Cloud Research panel service. The majority of the sample identified as White/non-Hispanic (73.9%), while 11.5% identified as African American, 5.5% were Latino/Hispanic, 3.4% were Asian American, 0.1% were West Indian, and 5.6% identified as an "Other" ethnicity. We also collected demographic information on the participants' schooling and income. 2.7% of the sample have some high school, but no degree, 19.6% are high school graduates, 24.4% received some college credit but no degree, 5% attended trade school, 11.6% received an Associate's degree, 25.1% have a Bachelor's degree, 7.9% received a Master's degree, 1.8% report a Professional degree, and 1.8% have a Doctorate degree. When reporting income, 16.8% reported an income level less than \$20,000, 19.6% earn \$20,000 to \$34,000, 17.6% earn \$35,000 to \$49,000, 19.4% earn \$50,000 to \$74,999, 12% earn \$75,000 to \$99,000, and 14.5% earn over \$100,000.

### *Measures*

***Presence of meaning and search for meaning.*** To measure the extent to which people perceive their lives as meaningful and are actively searching for meaning in life, we administered the Meaning in Life Questionnaire (MILQ; Steger, Frazier, Oishi, & Kaler, 2006), which features two subscales: Presence of Meaning (“I understand my life’s meaning”, 1 = *Absolutely untrue*, 7 = *Absolutely true*;  $\alpha = .83$ ,  $M = 5.03$ ,  $SD = 1.30$ ) and Search for Meaning (“I am seeking a purpose or mission for my life”;  $\alpha = .89$ ,  $M = 5.27$ ,  $SD = 1.31$ ).

***Existential Agency.*** To measure the agentic dimension of meaning, we administered the Existential Agency Scale, a 7-item measure that examines one’s belief in her or his ability to pursue, achieve, maintain, and restore meaning (Example items: “When life feels meaningless, I am capable of restoring a sense of meaning in life”; “I have the ability to pursue a meaningful life”, 1 = *Strongly disagree*, 7 = *Strongly agree*;  $\alpha = .83$ ,  $M = 5.37$ ,  $SD = 1.02$ ; Abeyta et al., 2021).

***Employment status.*** Participants were asked to indicate their current employment situation (e.g., currently working full-time, currently working part-time, unemployed and looking for work, currently unemployed and not looking for work). We categorize those that work full-time or part-time as “employed” and those that were “unemployed”, regardless if they were looking for work, as “unemployed.” For analyses, we dummy-code this variable such that employed = 1 and unemployed = 0.

***Social Support from Family and Friends.*** Social support was measured with 6-items concerning participants’ family and friends, such as “I have a loving and supportive family” ( $\alpha = .94$ ,  $M = 5.32$ ,  $SD = 1.75$ ) and “If I ever need help, I know I can count on my friends” ( $\alpha = .94$ ,  $M = 5.04$ ,  $SD = 1.61$ ).

***Religiosity.*** To measure religiosity we administered the Duke University Religion Index (DUREL; Koenig & Büssing, 2010). A sample item is “In my life, I experience the presence of the Divine (i.e., God)” (1 = *Definitely not true*, 5 = *Definitely true of me*;  $\alpha = .90$ ,  $M = 2.57$ ,  $SD = 1.34$ ).

***Other Demographics.*** Political ideology was measured with a single item in which participants indicated how conservative or liberal they are (1 = very conservative to 9 = very liberal). For income, participants had six options to select from with higher numbers reflecting higher income (e.g., 1 = less than \$20,000 and 6 = over \$100,000).

***Attitudes about Entrepreneurs.*** To measure the extent to which participants believe entrepreneurs positively contribute to societal flourishing, we created a 5-item questionnaire. The five items are as follows: “Entrepreneurs have an important role to play in solving national and global problems”, “Entrepreneurs can have a powerful positive impact on the quality of our lives”, “Entrepreneurs can help provide solutions to the big problems we face in our society”, “Entrepreneurs help themselves, not society” (reversed), and “In order to develop innovative and creative solutions to current and future societal problems, we need more entrepreneurs” (1 = *Strongly disagree*, 7 = *Strongly agree*;  $\alpha = .79$ ,  $M = 5.05$ ,  $SD = 1.05$ ).

## **RESULTS**

First, we report the zero-order correlations of the variables of interest (see *Table 1*). As predicted, presence of meaning in life was associated with positive attitudes about entrepreneurs and was positively associated with existential agency. Existential agency was also associated with positive attitudes about entrepreneurs.

**Table 1**

*Zero order correlations (N = 1,269)*

Factor	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1 Attitudes about Entrepreneurs	.37**	.22**	.11**	.17**	.20**	.03	.17**	.13**	-.001	.08**
2 Existential agency	-	.67**	-.06*	.34**	.38**	-.04	.15**	.27**	-.14**	.22**
3 Presence of meaning		-	-.07*	.41**	.46**	-.01	.19**	.34**	-.15**	.16**
4 Search for meaning			-	-.03	-.01	.19**	-.03	.07*	.08**	-.30**
5 Family social support				-	.52**	.01	.24**	.16**	-.08**	.09**
6 Friend social support					-	.06**	.20**	.16**	-.02	.06**
7 Employment <sup>a</sup>						-	.25**	-.09**	.09**	-.37**
8 Income							-	-.03	.01	.04
9 Religiosity								-	-.28**	.19*
10 Political identity									-	-.20**
11 Age										-

Note. <sup>a</sup>employed = 1, unemployed = 0.  $p < .05^*$ ,  $p < .01^{**}$ ,  $p < .001^{***}$

**Table 2**

*Predictors of Attitudes about Entrepreneurs.*

Variable	Model 1				Model 2			
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	$\beta$	95% CI	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	$\beta$	95% CI
Constant	2.94**	.21		[2.53, 3.35]	1.95	.22		[1.52, 2.38]
Presence of meaning	.10**	.03	.13	[0.05, 0.15]	-.07*	.03	-.09	[-0.13, -0.02]
Existential agency					.40**	.04	.38	[0.33, 0.47]
Search for meaning	.11**	.02	.15	[0.07, .15]	.10**	.02	.14	[0.06, 0.14]
Family social support	.02	.02	.03	[-0.02, 0.06]	.01	.02	.02	[-0.03, 0.05]
Friend social support	.06*	.02	.09	[0.01, 0.10]	.04	.02	.05	[-0.01, 0.08]
Employment status <sup>a</sup>	-.01	.06	-.006	[-0.14, 0.11]	-.01	.06	-.01	[-0.13, 0.11]
Income	.08**	.02	.12	[0.04, 0.11]	.08**	.02	.04	[0.04, 0.11]
Religiosity	.04	.02	.05	[-0.01, 0.09]	.03	.02	.04	[-0.01, 0.08]
Political identity	.02	.01	.04	[-0.01, 0.04]	.02	.01	.05	[-0.001, 0.04]
Age	.005*	.002	.08	[0.001, 0.01]	.002	.002	.04	[-0.001, 0.01]
<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	.10				.18			

*Note.* *N* = 1,268. CI = confidence interval. In Model 1 we regressed attitudes about entrepreneurs on presence of meaning and the control variables (search for meaning, family support, friend support, employment status, income, religiosity, political identity, and age). In Model 2 we added existential agency as a predictor. <sup>a</sup>employed = 1, unemployed = 0.

\**p* < .05. \*\**p* < .001

To address our hypothesis that the presence of meaning will contribute to positive attitudes about entrepreneurs because of its positive association with existential agency, we conducted a mediation analysis. First, we regressed attitudes about entrepreneurs on the presence of meaning in life and included search for meaning, social support (from family and friends), employment status, income, religiosity, political identity, and age as control variables (see Model 1 in *Table 2*). Presence of meaning positively predicted attitudes about entrepreneurs independently of the control variables. Next, we added existential agency as a predictor in the regression model. When we regressed attitudes about entrepreneurs on presence of meaning, existential agency, and the control variables, presence of meaning negatively predicted attitudes about entrepreneurs, whereas existential agency positively predicted attitudes about entrepreneurs (see Model 2 in *Table 2*). Thus, if it were not for existential agency, presence of meaning would be associated with less positive attitudes about entrepreneurs. We used a bootstrapping technique (Hayes, 2017; PROCESS Model 4; 5,000 bootstraps) to verify the statistical significance of the indirect effect that presence of meaning predicts more positive attitudes for entrepreneurs via existential agency. Supporting the significance of the indirect pathway, the 95% confidence intervals for the indirect effect did not include 0,  $b = .17$ ,  $SE = 0.02$ , 95%  $CI[0.14, 0.21]$ .

## DISCUSSION

The present research offers the first analysis of how psychological wellbeing, and existential wellbeing in particular, potentially influences people's attitudes about entrepreneurs. Entrepreneurship is an increasingly popular topic in the behavioral and social sciences. Though there is a considerable amount of research focused on how psychological characteristics influence entrepreneurial motivation (see Gorgievski & Stephan, 2016), researchers have not investigated the psychology of attitudes about entrepreneurs. National surveys indicate that Americans generally value entrepreneurs. For instance, a 2017 survey found that 75% of U.S. adults believe entrepreneurs receive high status in society and positive media attention (Lange et al., 2017). Research shows that entrepreneurs positively contribute to society in a number of ways such as job creation, economic growth, and innovations (Van Praag & Versloot, 2008), all of which have the potential to increase wellbeing for consumers. Based on a motivational approach to existential wellbeing that positions meaning in life as a self-regulatory and motivational resource that contributes to individual and societal flourishing by inspiring an agentic mindset (Routledge & FioRito, 2021), we tested and found support for a model linking meaning in life to positive attitudes about the importance of entrepreneurs to society via existential agency.

Our findings have implications for research on psychological wellbeing, entrepreneurship, and consumer satisfaction. As previously noted, much of the existing theory and research treats wellbeing as an outcome variable, not a predictor variable. However, there is a more recent and growing body of research specifically focused on existential wellbeing as a motivational resource. The current research further supports this view that meaning in life has motivational power. The present research is novel, but also preliminary, and future research is needed to more broadly consider how psychological wellbeing might inspire the types of attitudes and ultimately behaviors that support the type

of vibrant and healthy economy that leads to greater consumer satisfaction, life satisfaction, and societal flourishing.

Though the present research focused on attitudes about entrepreneurs, it also has implications for entrepreneurial motivation and the institutional environment affecting entrepreneurs. Cultural messages and institutions that promote meaning in life and existential agency may help promote a culture that values and encourages entrepreneurship. That is, if individuals view entrepreneurship as highly valued within their culture and believe that entrepreneurs play a significant role in solving major societal challenges and increasing societal wellbeing and flourishing, they may be more inclined to pursue entrepreneurship themselves. Moreover, a culture that values entrepreneurship is also likely to create and shape institutions in ways that allow entrepreneurs to flourish (e.g. by ensuring a fair and independent judicial system).

### **LIMITATIONS**

Our research also has a number of limitations. One important limitation is that our sample included only adults in the United States. Some variables that drive entrepreneurship may differ by country and factors that vary across countries (e.g. Friedman & Aziz, 2012; Williams, 2008; Terjesen, 2018). Thus, future research should consider how our findings translate to other countries. Since meaning in life is considered a fundamental psychological need across cultures (see Hicks & Routledge, 2013), we suspect that our basic findings would be similar in other countries. However, additional research is needed to examine how meaning in life connects to attitudes about entrepreneurs in different countries. In addition, even though our study controls for a range of variables and, critically, builds on previous laboratory experimental research demonstrating that meaning in life increases agency and related outcomes, our study is correlational in nature. Since the current study provides initial support for a model linking meaning to attitudes about entrepreneurship via existential agency, future studies should test these relationships experimentally. Our study is the first to explore the impact of existential wellbeing on how people view the role of entrepreneurs in society and thus provides a critical first step towards a broader research program that examines the motivational power of psychological wellbeing.

### **CORRESPONDING AUTHOR:**

Clay Routledge, Ph.D.

Arden & Donna Hetland Distinguished Professor of Business

Department of Management and Marketing

North Dakota State University

Dept. 2420, P.O. Box 6050

Fargo, ND, 58108-6050, USA

E-mail: [clay.routledge@ndsu.edu](mailto:clay.routledge@ndsu.edu)

Phone: +1-701-231-1728

[www.clayroutledge.com](http://www.clayroutledge.com)

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## LIST OF MATERIALS

### (Presence and Search for Meaning)

**Instructions:** Please take a moment to think about what makes your life and existence feel important and significant to you. Respond to the following statements as truthfully and accurately as you can.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Absolutely Untrue	Mostly Untrue	Somewhat Untrue	Can't Say True or False	Somewhat True	Mostly True	Absolutely True

- I understand my life's meaning.
- I am looking for something that makes my life feel meaningful.
- I am always looking to find my life's purpose.
- My life has a clear sense of purpose.
- I have a good sense of what makes my life meaningful.
- I have discovered a satisfying life purpose.
- I am always searching for something that makes my life feel significant.
- I am seeking a purpose or mission for my life.
- My life has no clear purpose.
- I am searching for meaning in my life.

### (Existential Agency)

The following items concern your perceived ability to maintain a sense of meaning or purpose in life. Please respond to each statement using the scale provided.

- 1 – Strongly disagree
- 2 – Disagree
- 3 – Somewhat disagree
- 4 – Neither agree nor disagree
- 5 – Somewhat agree
- 6 – Agree
- 7 – Strongly agree

- I have the ability to pursue a meaningful life.
- I am confident that I can find meaning even when life gets difficult.
- When life feels meaningless, I am capable of restoring a sense of meaning in life.
- I don't really have control over the meaningfulness of my life.

I can handle the stressors and uncertainties that challenge the meaningfulness of life.  
I have the power to make my life meaningful.  
I feel helpless when it comes to figuring out how to find a meaningful life.  
I am responsible for discovering my life's purpose.

**(Current employment questions)**

Which of the following best describes your current employment situation?

- I am currently working full-time
- I am currently working part-time
- I am currently unemployed and looking for work
- I am currently unemployed and not looking for work

**(Family Social Support)**

Please respond to each statement using the scale provided.

- 1 – Strongly disagree
- 2 – Disagree
- 3 – Somewhat disagree
- 4 – Neither agree nor disagree
- 5 – Somewhat agree
- 6 – Agree
- 7 – Strongly agree

I have a loving and supportive family.  
I feel strongly connected to my family.  
If I ever need help, I know I can count on my family.

**(Friend Social Support)**

Please respond to each statement using the scale provided.

- 1 – Strongly disagree
- 2 – Disagree
- 3 – Somewhat disagree
- 4 – Neither agree nor disagree
- 5 – Somewhat agree
- 6 – Agree
- 7 – Strongly agree

I have loving and supportive friends.  
I feel strongly connected to my friends.  
If I ever need help, I know I can count on my friends.

**(Duke University Religion Index)**

The following section contains 3 statements about religious belief or experience. Please indicate the extent to which each statement is true or not for you (1 = *Definitely not true*, 5 = *Definitely true of me*).

In my life, I experience the presence of the Divine (i.e., God).  
My religious beliefs are what really lie behind my whole approach to life.  
I try hard to carry my religion over into all other dealings in life.

**(Attitudes about Entrepreneurs)**

Entrepreneurs are people who start new businesses. Often, they create new products and services. The following statements concern your attitudes about the role of entrepreneurs in society. Please respond to each statement using the scale provided.

- 1 – Strongly disagree
- 2 – Disagree
- 3 – Somewhat disagree
- 4 – Neither agree nor disagree
- 5 – Somewhat agree
- 6 – Agree
- 7 – Strongly agree

Entrepreneurs have an important role to play in solving national and global problems.  
Entrepreneurs can have a powerful positive impact on the quality of our lives.  
Entrepreneurship can help provide solutions to the big problems we face in our society.  
Entrepreneurs help themselves, not society.  
In order to develop innovative and creative solutions to current and future societal problems, we need more entrepreneurs.

**(Other Demographics)**

Please indicate your political orientation using the scale provided.

- |                   |   |   |   |          |   |   |   |              |
|-------------------|---|---|---|----------|---|---|---|--------------|
| 1                 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5        | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9            |
| Very Conservative |   |   |   | Moderate |   |   |   | Very Liberal |

Please indicate your household gross annual income (i.e., before taxes)?

- Less than \$20,000
- \$20,000 to \$34,999
- \$35,000 to \$49,999
- \$50,000 to \$74,999
- \$75,000 to \$99,999
- Over \$100,000