

The Development of Purpose: An International Perspective

William Damon and Heather Malin

The Oxford Handbook of Moral Development: An Interdisciplinary Perspective

Edited by Lene Arnett Jensen

Print Publication Date: Apr 2020 Subject: Psychology, Social Psychology

Online Publication Date: Feb 2020 DOI: 10.1093/oxfordhb/9780190676049.013.8

Abstract and Keywords

Purpose is a unique character strength that develops over the life span, beginning with the formulation of personal, family, and vocational goals in early adolescence. A growing body of research has produced a clear picture, international and multicultural in scope, of how purpose is acquired and sustained, how purpose functions, how new purposes evolve over the life span, and how purpose relates to other character strengths and psychological capacities. The chapter presents a psychological definition of purpose, describes the dynamics of purpose development, and reviews studies of purpose across a variety of cultural contexts. The chapter also discusses education for purpose in secular and religious schools.

Keywords: purpose, character, culture, identity development, self understanding, religious faith, moral commitment

The developmental study of purpose has flourished in the early years of the 21st century (see Bronk, 2013; Bundick, 2011; Burrow, O'Dell, & Hill, 2010; Damon, 2008; Damon & Bundick, 2017; Malin, Reilly, Quinn, & Moran, 2014). Building on writings about purpose in adulthood (Frankl, 1959; Ryff, 1989), our research team at Stanford has explored the acquisition of purpose among adolescents and young adults living in several parts of the United States (see <https://coa.stanford.edu/publications/journal-articles>). Colleagues in other universities in many parts of the world have studied the development of purpose among populations of adolescents and emerging adults from an array of social and cultural backgrounds. From this growing body of research has emerged a clear picture, international and multicultural in scope, of how purpose is acquired and sustained, how it functions, how the capacity for purpose develops over the life span, and how it relates to other psychological capacities. We also are gaining knowledge about why many individuals do not acquire full (or even partial) capacities for dedicating themselves to purposes and of the consequences of a lack of purpose for personal well-being and moral commitment. In this chapter, we review findings that have contributed to this knowledge, and we present our views on what is known at this time and what is yet to be discovered.

The Development of Purpose: An International Perspective

Prior to the growing wave of 21st-century research, a barrier to progress on the empirical (p. 111) study of purpose was a lack of an operational definition of purpose that distinguished the term from other related concepts. In particular, prior literature had conflated “purpose” with the closely associated concept of “meaning,” which psychologists such as Frankl (1959) and Ryff (1989) had used interchangeably with purpose. In our view, “purpose” required its own special definition—first, because science does not need (or do well with) two terms for the same concept, and second, because there are qualities that people often refer to when using the word “purpose” that are not conveyed by the term “meaning” alone. Baumeister and Vohs (2002) recognized this when they identified “purposiveness” as one of four distinct “needs of meaning” (along with value, efficacy, and self-worth), each of which makes its own *specific* contribution to what Frankl (1959) called “man’s search for meaning.” But Baumeister and Vohs did not elaborate further on what the distinguishing qualities of purpose are in relation to other types of meaning. We agreed with Baumeister and Vohs that purpose is one subset of meaning. The question is, what additional qualities define the semantic boundaries of the subset “purpose”?

Drawing on the way the term “purpose” has been used in popular discourse, as well as in many philosophical and theological writings (Barth, 1957; Warren, 2002), we determined that purpose, in addition to having the component of meaningfulness, also must have the component of *engagement in the world beyond the self*. Such an engagement in the world is often, though not always, oriented to serving other people. Certain purposes do reflect desires to help others, whereas other purposes are driven by discovery, aesthetic, and/or cosmic motives that are not necessarily pro-social. We constructed a definition of purpose designed to capture *both* its status as a subset of meaning *and* its additional component of active engagement in the world beyond the self (Damon, Menon, & Bronk, 2003).

Defined this way, purpose is a particular type of long-term goal that combines two essential elements: (1) it is meaningful to the self, and (2) it comprises an intention to accomplish something of consequence to the world beyond the self. Thus purpose is not a goal forced on a person without the person’s assent (as in “get your math homework done even if you don’t see why it’s important!”), and purpose is not a goal directed solely at self-gratification (going to a movie for entertainment’s sake, enjoying a glass of wine, and so on). Purposeful goals aim to accomplish something meaningful both *to* the self and *beyond* the self. Such goals feel important to the person, and, at the same time, they bear the potential of contributing to the external world.

As noted, our confidence in this definition originally sprang from philosophical and theological writings on the subject as well as from our sense of how the word has been used in common discourse. It now has been further bolstered by a general acceptance of this definition in recent development science studies (see Bronk, 2013; Damon & Bundick, 2017). But it must be noted that the readings on purpose that we accessed came from sources in the Western traditions, and the common discourse that we were familiar with was conducted in the English language. What does purpose look like in non-Western cultures? How do people living in societies other than the United States think and speak about it? Is purpose even signified by a similar word or phrase in languages other than

The Development of Purpose: An International Perspective

English? These are some of the questions that we address in this chapter as we explore existing international data on the development of purpose.

Fortunately, because of recent studies in several countries around the world, international data on the development of [\(p. 112\)](#) purpose is just now emerging. In addition, the preponderance of present-day international research on the development of purpose has adopted the definition that we presented earlier. This gives us further confidence in the validity of that definition (both within and across cultures), and it also makes possible meaningful comparisons of datasets from the disparate international studies. As we discuss later, the emerging international research also offers insight into the ways that the sources of purpose, and the processes for attaining purpose, in some ways vary and in some ways remain constant across cultures.

A Case of Cultural Awakening

One author of this chapter, William Damon, was trained as a developmental psychologist in the Piagetian tradition. At the time (the 1970s), this meant searching for general patterns of cognitive and social-cognitive growth that describe universal developmental sequences. His early work along these lines, presented in *The Social World of the Child* (Damon, 1977), formulated developmental sequences in children's reasoning about justice, authority, and other social and moral concepts.

As a follow-up to that work, Damon, working with Daniel Hart, began an investigation into the development of children's self-understanding, long considered by social theorists to be the key reciprocal concept to social understanding (Cooley, 1902; Mead, 1934). This study led to a developmental model of self-understanding in childhood and adolescence based on a sample of children living in Worcester, Massachusetts (Damon & Hart, 1982, 1988). This developmental model, it turned out, held enough intuitive appeal for American psychologists to cause it to become widely cited in textbooks and used as a basis for further self-concept research (Cole & Cole, 1990).

Yet soon after we published the model and empirical findings from our Massachusetts sample, two memorable things occurred. The first was an informal communication we received from researchers in Iceland who were trying to use our self-understanding interview with a sample of Icelandic children. They were interested in possible cultural differences in response, and they were prepared to contrast Icelandic developmental patterns against those we observed in Worcester, Massachusetts. What they were not prepared for was the general lack of response that they received from the children they were interviewing. Our interview, they told us, was practically useless with most Icelandic children who were younger than about age 14. Their hypothesis about what was going wrong was that the Icelandic children had been socialized to be adverse to self-promotion, and thus they were indisposed to answering probing questions from the interview about their distinguishing qualities. This hypothesis, of course, was untestable: it may or may not have had some truth to it. But what was incontrovertible was that our research methodology,

The Development of Purpose: An International Perspective

and by implication our developmental model, had bumped up against a cultural complication.

The second event occurred during a visiting professor appointment that Damon had at the University of Puerto Rico. During his stay, he spent time in an isolated fishing village called La Playa on the south side of the island and visited the local school. The students seemed bright and eager to learn, and the teachers were highly engaged and interested in their students' futures. We became curious about how the village children's ideas about themselves and their futures would compare with those of our mainland sample. Accordingly, in collaboration with Nydia Lucca, a leading developmental psychologist at the University, we gave our self-understanding interview (p. 113) to a sample of 48 children aged 6–15 from La Playa. In this study, unlike in the Icelandic case, the interview worked: children gave robust responses to the questions, and the age patterns found in our mainland sample were closely replicated. But there were some striking differences in the way the Puerto Rican children spoke about their present and future aspirations. At the time, we interpreted these differences as cross-cultural variations in self-understanding (see Hart, Lucca-Irizarry, & Damon, 1986). Now, in retrospect, I see them also as differences in the particular purposes that inspired many of the children from La Playa.

The Puerto Rican children's responses were loaded heavily toward what we called "the construal of self through behaviors that elicit positive or negative reactions from others" (Damon & Hart, 1988, p. 165). While we had found mainland children who emphasized the "social self" in terms of how they compared themselves with others or whether others liked them or not (i.e., popularity), we had not found mainland children who "were concerned with their behaviors (whether they had done something good or bad) in light of others' evaluative reactions, rather than with their skills talents and abilities" (Damon & Hart, 1988, p. 165). In other words, the Puerto Rican children considered their social selves to be defined by their contribution to others in their community, whereas the mainland children referred rather to how they ranked in comparison to others in terms of ability or esteem.

One example of a statement by a 12-year-old from La Playa (in response to the question "What are you like?") that was unparalleled in our mainland sample was: "I'm a nice kid. I help the people. Cleaning the yard, taking care of the animals." Another was, "I'm good. I lend my toys. I play with the guys, and I enjoy playing with the guys." Another said, "I behave nice with my mother. I'm obedient." These children spoke about themselves in terms of close relations with parents, grandparents, siblings, and friends. For many, their most hopeful plans for the future were to follow in their parents' footsteps, as fishermen, as parents themselves, as homemakers, teachers, or whatever roles had been marked out by the elders in their community.

We believe that it was correct to posit that such views on the social self were shaping the identities of these children in distinct ways. But what we were missing at the time was the way such self-statements reflected deep moral purposes that these children were discovering, and it was these purposes that would drive the direction of these children's

The Development of Purpose: An International Perspective

self-identities, *at least as much as the other way around*. These children were learning how to dedicate themselves to the people, needs, and traditions of their tight-knit community. They clearly believed in what they were doing: they were proud of their community contributions in ways that were becoming truly purposeful. At the time, we were unaware of this developmental dynamic because we had yet not ourselves discovered the importance of purpose in guiding major life decisions. Looking back, our Puerto Rican study, in combination with the failed Icelandic data collection, powerfully made the point that cultural beliefs are an intrinsic component of all psychological development, notably in this case with respect to capacities such as self-understanding and purpose that can shape the personal, social, and moral direction of an individual's life

The Development of Purpose Across the Life Span

The capacity for finding and sustaining purposes, similar to other key character strengths, draws on a cluster of cognitive, emotional, interpersonal, and intrapersonal skills that develop in social and cultural (p. 114) contexts (Malin, Liauw, & Damon, 2017). Compared with most other skills and character strengths, however, purposefulness is a relatively late-developing capacity. Only a minority of adolescents and emerging adults have been assessed as fully purposeful according to the criteria in the definition noted earlier (Bronk, 2012; Damon, 2008; Malin et al., 2017). Most adolescents and emerging adults are still searching for purposes to which they can actively commit. Preliminary data from longitudinal follow-ups suggest that young adults in their late 20s become more likely to demonstrate full purpose. By age 30, somewhere between 40% and 50% of the young adults have become purposeful (Damon & Bundick, 2017). The precise prevalence of purposefulness among adults in later years of life remains to be determined, but it is clear from all our studies that purposefulness is a challenging capacity to acquire and sustain at any age (see also Colby, this volume, Chapter 24).

A consistent pattern of developmental steps in the path to purpose has emerged in a series of recent studies across several labs (Bronk, 2012; Damon, 2008; Damon & Bundick, 2017; Hill, Sumner, & Burrow, 2014; Malin, 2015; Malin, Ballard, & Damon, 2015; Malin et al., 2017; Malin et al., 2014; Moran, 2009; Tirri & Quinn, 2010; Yeager & Bundick, 2009). As noted earlier, only a minority of US adolescents and emerging adults (20–25% in most studies) exhibit full purpose in the definitional sense of demonstrating high aspirations, activity, and a “beyond-the self” orientation (Damon, 2008; Moran, 2009). A large minority (ranging between 25% and 40% in US samples) shows no signs of any of these components of purpose, but rather are drifting through life without long-term aspirations, goals, or constructive activities that are leading them toward lasting commitments.

Developmentally situated between the extreme groups of fully purposeful and wholly disengaged youth are sizable portions of the youth population who *either* are high on activity and low on aspiration *or* low on activity and high on aspiration. The former are youngsters who have engaged in activities that are potentially purposeful but who have shown

The Development of Purpose: An International Perspective

few if any signs of committing themselves to any particular pursuit from one day to the next. Such youngsters may apply themselves to their schoolwork, sports, music lessons, or other activities in a responsible way, but they have not yet developed a sense of what they wish to accomplish or even why they are engaging in their daily program of obligations. The latter group (high aspiration/low activity) express ideas—sometimes stirring and imaginative ideas—about purposes that they would like to pursue, but they have done nothing to do something about, or to prepare to do something about, any of their ideas. Neither of these groups include purposeful young people who have found something meaningful to dedicate themselves to, who have sustained this interest over a period of time, and who have a clear sense of what they are trying to accomplish and why (i.e., the fully purposeful youth). But both groups demonstrate certain precursory elements of purpose that, with favorable developmental conditions, may grow into commitments to purposes over time. This is not the case with the disengaged youth, for whom the idea of long-term goals seems unappealing, unattainable, or too remote to focus on at this time in their lives.

Compared to those with full purpose or precursory elements of purpose, the disengaged are not active in any endeavor that could turn into a purposeful pursuit—nor do they show signs that they are looking to find such pursuits. Young people in the (p. 115) high-activity, low-aspiration group have tried out a number of activities—in some cases too many to keep track of—but they have yet to find a compelling reason to sustain a commitment to any of them. Their interests are too tentative and too fleeting to become an enduring purpose. Young people in the high-aspiration, low-activity group have idealistic dreams and can imagine doing great things in the world. Yet, thus far in their lives, they have done little to put their ideas to the test of action. As a result, these young people have not developed the practical plans needed for pursuing purpose in a realistic manner. Purposeful young people have found causes, goals, or “ultimate concerns” (see Emmons, 1999) that inspire their efforts from day to day and help them fashion a stable future agenda for themselves. They know what they want to accomplish and why, and they have taken concerted steps to achieve their ambitions.

In samples of purposeful adolescents, young adults, and later-life adults from the United States, we have identified a wide range of purposes that inspire their efforts and direct their daily and future choices. The purposes observed in our US samples include building and supporting a family, pursuing a vocation, serving God or other faith-related cause, implementing artistic aims, doing charitable work in one’s community, contributing to the broader civic society, preserving the planet and its resources, and caring for pets and other animals.

Conditions Supporting the Development of Purpose

The precursory signs of purpose appear in early or mid-childhood, with the expression of “sparks” of interest in school, recreational, or household activities (Benson, 2008). When a child is encouraged to identify and sustain interest in sparks that he or she expresses, the child has an opportunity to develop skills that can deepen those interests into endur-

The Development of Purpose: An International Perspective

ing fascinations. Children with such deep interests may then match those interests to problems in the world that need to be addressed or ways that the world could be improved (Bronk, 2012; Malin et al., 2014). For example, a child with an interest in biology may connect that interest with the need for new medical solutions to diseases, or a child with an interest in music may see ways that a new musical scale could add to the beauty of song and dance. In such a way, purpose is spurred by two realizations on the part of the child: (1) I can contribute something to the world related to my special interests and skills, and (2) there is something in the world that needs to be improved. Children often discover needs for improvements in the world through experience in their families or community, such as an aunt's cancer diagnosis or a news report about a local disaster (Malin et al., 2015). When children have chances to observe how respected adults pursue purposes they believe in, this can be an especially strong facilitator of the children's capacities to pursue the purposes that they have discovered (Damon, 2008).

A passionate interest or meaningful experience develops into purpose when young people have opportunities to act on their concerns and to reflect on their own futures as they respond to conditions that upset or energize them. As identity formation takes center stage during early and mid-adolescence, young people build on their emerging purposes by envisioning future activities and exploring roles they might take in society that will strengthen their commitments and extend the scope of their contributions (Malin et al., 2014).

Social and environmental factors (family, peers, and mentors, and institutions that young people engage with, such as church groups, school, and community centers) play (p. 116) important roles in purpose development. Parents support their children's purpose by modeling prosocial activity and encouraging their children's prosocial interests (Moran, Bundick, Malin, & Reilly, 2013). Adolescents with purpose often have parents who provide encouragement and material support for their prosocial activities, such as transportation to volunteer jobs and books for learning about a purpose-related interest. Friends and peers also provide some support for purpose. Institutions (such as school, church, and community organizations) support the development of purpose by providing opportunities for adolescents to engage in meaningful sustained activity in pursuit of beyond-the-self concerns and interests. The most supportive opportunities are those that integrate multiple types of support for prosocial goal pursuit, such as social, informational, and material support (Moran et al., 2013).

Purpose as a Character Strength

Psychologists in recent years have turned to the ancient notion of character strengths as a way of explaining moral commitment and consistency in moral behavior over time (Peterson & Seligman, 2004). Purpose is a character strength in that it is a sustained commitment to goals that are meaningful and make a positive contribution to the world. To better understand purpose as a character strength, we collaborated with Angela Duckworth and her team at the University of Pennsylvania on a longitudinal study of character

The Development of Purpose: An International Perspective

strengths that develop in early adolescence. Our goal was to understand how different character strengths develop in early adolescence and how they relate to one another in this early phase of development. In that work, we explored the character strengths of gratitude, compassion, and grit and examined their empirical associations with purpose. We also were interested in the important ways in which purpose is distinct from other character strengths (Malin et al., 2017).

We considered gratitude and compassion to be *moral* character strengths since they have strong implications for the benevolent treatment of other people. Grit, in contrast, is more of an *instrumental* character strength since it serves both personal and moral purposes to an equivalent degree.

Purpose was significantly, but not highly, correlated with gratitude, compassion, and grit among our young adolescent sample, suggesting that these character strengths are related though distinguishable early in development. This finding confirms our conceptual framing of purpose as a distinct moral strength: specifically, it is more future-oriented and agentic than other moral character strengths. In our interviews, we found that adolescents with full purpose had qualitatively different gratitude and compassion when compared with those who were not purposeful. Those who were not fully demonstrating purpose showed conditional forms of gratitude and compassion (“I would care enough to do this if ...”), whereas those with purpose described their gratitude and compassion as universal and unconditional.

Although there is some correlation between grit and purpose in our survey data, among our in-depth interview cases grit showed little relevance for pursuing purpose. Interviewees who were purposeful often showed grit, but not in relation to their purposeful goals. It appears that the goal commitment demonstrated through grit and the goal commitment demonstrated through purpose are not the same. Grit is an inner resource tapped for goal commitment, whereas purpose is an inner drive that may be pursued without the need for grit.

The low but significant correlation among the different character strengths suggests that they are related but do not have a strong developmental relationship. We know from (p. 117) the previous research discussed earlier that purpose does not follow a linear developmental trajectory but is shaped by life experiences and opportunities and by a person’s responses to those opportunities (Damon, 2008; Malin et al., 2014). Our study of gratitude, compassion, and grit reinforced the idea that purpose, like other character strengths, develops according to both the readiness of the individual and the developmental opportunities afforded by life circumstances. Moreover, we believe that the developmental relationship among these character strengths is multidirectional. Young people may have grit that supports later purpose development, or they may acquire purposes that encourage the subsequent development of grit.

While our study of character strengths demonstrated the distinct yet related nature of the association between purpose and other key character strengths, the study’s limited scope did not allow for a thorough investigation of how different character strengths might in-

The Development of Purpose: An International Perspective

teract and co-evolve over the course of development. However, our findings about the relationship between lesser and more developed forms of purpose, gratitude, and compassion echo previous research that examined the bidirectional relationship between character strengths, such as Froh, Bono, and Emmons's (2010) study showing that gratitude and prosocial motivation enhance each other over time in a mutually causal relationship over the developmental course. Further research is needed to examine how gratitude in its fullest form interacts with, is supported by, and promotes purpose as they both develop.

Our findings also suggest that the study of youth purpose development would benefit from further research on the interaction between purpose and instrumental character strengths such as grit. Young adolescents in our study did not seek purpose through activities that required grit and instead found paths to purpose that did not require challenge and effort. These purposeful youth demonstrated that commitment to a goal does not necessarily mean that major obstacles are encountered and overcome. The small amount of research that does look at the relationship between grit and purpose-related constructs found that gritty pursuit of challenging goals provided a sense of fulfillment and meaning, but these studies were conducted only with adults (see Colby & Damon, 1992; Von Culin, Tsukayama, & Duckworth, 2014). It may be that young adolescents are less likely to look for purpose in beyond-the-self activities that require significant effort or personal sacrifice, perhaps because they find meaning in activities that enact their values and support their movement toward identity achievement regardless of the effort, or perhaps because their priorities are dispersed at this age and the majority of their time and effort is spent on school work.

Purpose Across Countries and Cultures: An International Perspective

In addition to the ongoing study of youth purpose development occurring in the United States, there is a growing interest in adolescent purpose and related constructs among researchers around the globe. In this section, we provide an overview of the emerging research on adolescent purpose being conducted internationally, specifically in Finland, Spain, Brazil, South Africa, Iran, Mongolia, China, and Korea (arranged here to be grouped by world region when possible). At the time of writing, the international research on purpose is being examined at greater depth by a collaborative project spearheaded by Seana Moran at Clark University and Jenni Mariano at the University of South Florida. In this chapter, we introduce this body of work, (p. 118) first describing how purpose is defined across different cultures and what is known about the state of youth purpose internationally. We then discuss some of the emergent themes in this research that reveal how culture and context might impact purpose development. The direction that purpose research is currently taking varies from country to country, and therefore the following discussion will not include parallel findings across cultures but will instead describe the findings that are currently available in each country.

The Development of Purpose: An International Perspective

Finland

Finnish researchers translate purpose as “hopeful future” and define purpose as one’s meaning in life and most important goals in life (Tirri & Kuusito, 2014). In Finland, purpose is strongly related to national educational priorities, and the research focuses on the role of purpose in teaching and teacher education. The public schools in Finland are religious, with a religious education program that emphasizes learning about world religions as well as moral and ethical development, and the priorities of education are equality and whole child development; therefore there is significant emphasis on moral values development in schools. Moreover, about 90% of Finnish children complete Evangelical Lutheran confirmation school, which is based on the catechism but includes opportunity for students to discuss purpose in terms of developing ethical values (Tirri & Kuusito, 2014). Education researchers who study purpose in Finland examine it as an aspect of the moral and ethical aspects of public education, focusing on teachers’ sense of their own competence to develop student purpose, how teachers convey the purpose of education to students, and the role of purpose in the Finnish goal of educating the whole child across all areas of the curriculum (Bundick & Tirri, 2014; Kuusito, Gholami, & Tirri, 2016; Tirri & Kuusito, 2016; Tirri & Ubani, 2012).

Spain

Spanish researchers define purpose as a “life project” and as an objective that you want to fulfill in life (Luna, Folgueiras, Biglia, & Palou, 2014; Mariano et al., 2015). They describe two paths that young people in Spain can take to pursue purpose in life. The first is the traditional path of getting an education, having a family, finding work, and buying a house. The second is to take an alternate route to a purposeful life by charting one’s own course in search of meaning. Because of the recent economic crisis in Spain, researchers argue that both paths to purpose are closed for most young people, and purpose is being delayed by many (Luna et al., 2014). In Spanish schools, guidance counselors support students in making decisions and creating a path that will lead to their purposeful life. Because family plays an important role in deciding what course young people will follow, schools work with families to ensure that students are receiving appropriate support for future planning at home. Some researchers in Spain focus on service learning in schools and found that service learning can support students in developing altruistic values and beyond-the-self purpose as they plan their life course (Mariano et al., 2015).

Brazil

Researchers studying youth purpose in Brazil translate purpose as “*Proyecto vital*” or life project. The word “*proyecto*” implies both the verb *project* (projecting into the future) and *plan* (a plan for a project), and this dual meaning is used in the study of youth purpose in Brazil (Araújo, Arantes, Danza, Pinheiro, & Garbin, 2016). The research examines youth purpose both in terms of adolescents projecting or planning (p. 119) their life along a trajectory and in terms of the projects that young people can engage in to contribute something positive to the world and develop their purpose. This research shows that family

The Development of Purpose: An International Perspective

and work are the two most important domains of future-projected purpose for 15- to 25-year-olds in various regions of Brazil, as is the case in most countries where youth purpose research is conducted (Araújo et al., 2014; Pinheiro & Arantes, 2015). Specifically, adolescents in Brazil emphasize the importance of meaningful relationships and the well-being of others when describing their purpose in life and found opportunities for fulfilling this purpose in their families and through labor (whether through their career or in working with the church or other social organizations) (Arantes, Pinheiro, & Araújo, 2014; Pátaro & Arantes, 2014). In this study, adolescents said that having people around them who model ethical living helped them develop their purpose. It also found that values and emotions were vital to purpose development among Brazilian youth because they influence how young people organize their life decisions, plans, and actions.

Unlike in Finland, the education system in Brazil is not designed to support purpose and has generally neglected students' social and moral education (Araújo & Arantes, 2009). One current area of research in Brazil involves an effort to learn how education can be changed to support adolescents in developing beyond-the-self purpose (Araújo, et al., 2016). Araújo and his colleagues have been testing a program in Brazilian teacher training programs that prepares teachers to engage students in prosocial, problem-based design challenges, in which they collaborate to develop solutions for real problems in their communities. Students in this program are believed to develop moral values by learning directly from people in a community about the problems that affect them and then develop beyond-the-self purpose by engaging in collaborative efforts to solve those problems.

South Africa

In South Africa, a study of meaning in life among college students provides insight about the important role that culture plays in shaping young people's purpose (Mason, 2013). Although participants in this study were asked about meaning in life rather than purpose, their responses indicate in two ways that they define meaning in much the same way that we defined purpose earlier. First, when asked about what makes life meaningful, respondents emphasized the importance of contributing to others and the world and taking care of family. In particular, those who scored highest on a survey measure of meaning in life were most likely to say that contributing to others gave their life meaning. Some of these high-scoring respondents used African metaphors to describe culture-specific ideas about connecting with and caring for others. Second, those who scored lowest on meaning in life described their inability to fulfill their goals, suggesting that their experience of a meaningful life depends on having and pursuing future-oriented goals. Goal-orientation and beyond-the-self concerns are associated with a conception of purpose and, according to the definition we use in this chapter, distinguish purpose from the more general sense of having meaning in life.

The Development of Purpose: An International Perspective

Iran

A recent study conducted in Iran sought to examine the life purposes of adolescents using the definition of purpose outlined earlier in this chapter (Hedayati, Kuusisto, Gholami, & Tirri, 2017). The authors found that about 18% of Iranian adolescents aged 12–16 were fully purposeful, which is about the same percentage as seen (p. 120) among adolescents in that age range in the United States. Iranian schools prioritize religious education, specifically Islamic values and preparing students for “a ‘pure life’: a life full of divine closeness to God, which ultimately will bring about a pure ‘society’” (Hedayati et al., 2017). Despite a strong religious education that emphasizes preparation for a life of religious and social purpose, Iranian adolescents scored low on religious life aspirations and aspirations to contribute to improving society relative to hedonistic, material, and family obligation life goals.

Mongolia

The research on youth purpose in Mongolia focuses on the role of values and how cultural differences in values impact how young people develop purpose. Bespalov and colleagues (2014) asked young adolescents in two different regions of Western Mongolia what they felt were the most widespread sources of purpose among their peers. These two different regions represented different cultural groups, with one largely made up of Kazakh (Muslim) youth and one comprised of different Mongol ethnic groups. In both regions, family and self-realization through professional achievement were seen as the most prevalent values and life goals. In contrast to their adolescent peers in other countries on the Asia continent, Mongolian youth in both regions ranked pleasure and leisure lowest on their list of life priorities. In looking at differences between the regions, Kazakh youth were more likely to value religion, tradition, and self-expression, compared to Mongolian youth who value secularism, rational thinking, and survivalism, likely due to both the secular Buddhist culture that dominates in the Mongol region, as well as living conditions caused by the harsh landscape. The differences in purpose seen between these two groups echoed their different values orientations. Kazakh youth rated serving society, family, religion, personal economic gain, and professional achievement all as very widespread purpose goals among their peers, whereas most Mongol youth felt that only family and professional achievement were very widespread purpose goals among their peers. The authors argued that the heterogeneity of values seen in Western Mongolia echoes the heterogeneity seen in studies of European values, where political, economic, and cultural forces are seen to shape individuals’ values (Magun & Rudnev, 2012).

China

Education for purpose is compulsory in China and therefore Chinese researchers have a clear understanding of what purpose means in the national context. In China, “purpose” refers to the pursuit of one’s future. It is a realistic and achievable goal based on one’s ideology that guides young people in setting their life course (Jiang, Lin, & Mariano, 2016). In China, purpose takes on two forms: the common (national) purpose and person-

The Development of Purpose: An International Perspective

al purpose. The content of personal purpose is broadly categorized into living purpose, professional purpose, social purpose, and moral purpose.

Personal purpose is developed in school directly, through field experiences, practical experiences, and interactions with teachers, as well as indirectly through reading about role models (Mariano et al., 2014). Common purpose is taught through mandatory courses on ideology and politics, which teach that the common purpose is to build a nation that is prosperous, strong, democratic, modern, civilized, and socialist (Jiang et al., 2016). Schools aim to shape students' personal purpose to align with common purpose. However, research shows that Chinese students' personal purposes are not well-aligned with the national common purpose but instead reflect their aspirations (p. 121) for personal success through professional pursuits and their basic need to support their family. Asked to rank their most important life goals, more ranked "live life to the fullest" higher than any other goal, followed by "support my friends and family" and "have a good career" (Jiang et al., 2016). When compared with college students in the United States, Chinese college students' purpose is more influenced by demographic factors than their US peers. Among Chinese students, males and rural-born are more likely than female and urban-born students to have altruistic purpose (Jiang & Lin, 2014).

Korea

In Korea, as in China, purpose is understood to have different forms, including social purpose, family purpose, and material purpose. Purpose researchers in Korea define social purpose in Korea as "a life goal that is motivated by a deep, moral sense of social values, influenced by social obligation and expectation to contribute to society and by the willingness to sacrifice one's personal needs to dedicate one's merits for the betterment of society" (Shin, Hwang, Cho, & McCarthy-Donovan, 2014). It refers to purpose driven by commitment to Confucianism and the collectivist values prevalent in Korean culture, which suggest that the role of the individual is to serve the community. Young people fulfill this purpose by achieving in school so that they can be a benefit to their family and uphold their responsibilities to society.

Shin and colleagues' (2014) study of adolescent purpose in Korea found that young people increasingly prioritize leisure, individualism, and self-indulgence over the collectivist values favored by previous generations. Among college students, they found that the most prevalent source of purpose was family and interpersonal relationships, followed by material wealth and fame, and the least common source of purpose was the social form. However, of the three, social purpose was the greatest predictor of a sense of having a meaningful life, and wealth and fame purpose did not correlate with sense of meaning in life.

Themes in the Cross-Cultural Study of Youth Purpose

Overall, the emerging study of youth purpose in different countries confirms that culture matters. We know from an extensive body of research on life goal planning that adolescents generally follow a “cultural prototype” in which they expect to fulfill educational goals, family and work goals, and material acquisition goals, but the content and trajectory of these life goals varies based on sociodemographic factors, social context, and family values (Massey, Gebhardt, & Garnefski, 2008). Prior research also shows that prosocial motivation and behavior vary by cultural background (e.g., Carlo et al., 2010). These relevant findings provide some insight into why and how we might see differences in purpose across cultures, and some of the purpose research from different countries further illuminates these differences. In the following section, we describe some themes in the recent international youth purpose research that explain how culture can impact purpose development.

Cultural Variation in Family, Work, and Religion as Sources of Purpose

Consistent with the research on adolescent life goals, the international research on youth purpose suggests that family and work are the two areas of life where adolescents are universally most likely to seek purpose. In our research with adolescents in the United States, family was described by most of our participants as one of the most important things in their life (Damon, 2008; Mariano & Damon, 2008). (p. 122) They valued the support and encouragement their parents provided and many sought to build the financial stability that would allow them to provide for their future family (Moran et al., 2013). In the United States, young people also rated future career goals as an important source of purpose (Mariano & Damon, 2008) and showed that their experiences in high school were shaped by whether or not their future career goals were driven by a desire to contribute to the world beyond-the-self (Yeager & Bundick, 2009).

In the international research, the relevance of family and work to purpose is a recurring theme; however, across this research there are notable cultural differences in the relationship of family and work to individuals’ purposes. In Brazil, the research on purpose reveals the importance of interpersonal relationships and an emphasis on valuing the well-being of close others (Arantes et al., 2014). In China, family purpose is distinct from social purpose, which is specifically about loyalty to the nation and contribution to nation-building (Jiang et al., 2016). In studies from China and Korea, family-oriented purpose is described more in self-fulfilling terms than beyond-the-self terms (Jiang et al., 2016; Shin et al., 2014). In Thailand, young people find meaning and life satisfaction in having close relationship with family elders, prioritizing cultural respect for tradition over generativity (Balthip & Purnell, 2014).

The Development of Purpose: An International Perspective

Unlike the domains of family and work, religion is a primary source of purpose for only a minor portion of the youth population (15% in our original study). US adolescents overall rated religion lower than family, friendship, and vocation as a source of purpose, and money, looking good, and happiness rated higher than religion and spirituality as life goals (Mariano & Damon, 2008). Brazilian youth likewise rated family, having fun, and earning money as more important to their life goals than religion (Araújo et al., 2014), even though only 8% of Brazilians report having no religious affiliation (Pew Research Center, 2014). In Finland, where at least 90% of students participate in religious education programs both in and out of school, students scored lower than US students on all dimensions of purpose (Bundick & Tirri, 2014). These findings suggest that the relationship between religion and purpose is not as direct as might be assumed, especially among adolescents.

In the United States, some of the “purpose exemplars” that we studied described religious faith and spiritual beliefs as central to their life purpose in diverse ways (Mariano & Damon, 2008; Tirri & Quinn, 2010). A model developed by Mariano and Damon (2008) described four fundamental ways that religious faith can lead youth to purpose: (1) faith inspires them to contribute to the lives of others, (2) their faith gives meaning and value to their goals, (3) faith inspires them to develop moral character, and (4) religious involvement provides them with a community of shared purpose.

Similarly, in Brazil, God and church came up frequently in purpose interviews with many Brazilian adolescents, even though religion was not scored high as a source of purpose (Arantes et al., 2014). But the relationship between religion and youth purpose in Brazil varied. Some adolescents described the church as a source of work, whereas for others the church offered opportunity to make meaningful contributions to the community. Still others found inspiration or solace in their relationship with God. Such findings are intriguing, but further study across many different countries and cultures will be essential for fully understanding the connection between religion and purpose.

(p. 123) National Context Shapes Purpose

National factors can have an impact on how young people develop purpose. Here we describe three ways that the national context shaped youth purpose development: collectivist versus individualistic societies, economic circumstances the nation is facing, and the education system.

Collectivism versus individualism. A common national difference discussed in the international purpose research is whether a society favors collectivism or individualism and the impact it has on how young people think about and pursue purpose. The findings suggest that there is not a direct relationship between youth purpose development and a nation’s position on the individualism–collectivism spectrum, but rather it varies by country. In some countries typically considered collectivist, such as Korea and China, the influx of Western individualism in recent years has changed how young people think about future goals and life purpose (Jiang & Lin, 2014; Shin et al., 2014). On the other hand, in South

The Development of Purpose: An International Perspective

Africa, with less influence from the West, and where young people are still strongly attached to African cultural symbols, purpose is strongly shaped by collectivist ideas like contributing to the community (Mason, 2013).

Economic circumstances. In Spain, the national context has had a significant and worrying impact on youth purpose development. Due to the economic crisis that has afflicted Spain in recent years, the traditional path of life purpose—namely, creating a family and finding a satisfying career—has been disrupted for many adolescents, and young adults are putting off pursuing these important life goals (Luna et al., 2014; Mariano et al., 2015). While some adolescents have found alternative paths to purpose, this approach is also impacted by the economic circumstances in Spain and is only open to those who have the social capital necessary to find opportunities. Also as a result of the national economic crisis, schools have recently reduced their guidance offerings, meaning students have fewer support resources for establishing and pursuing their life objectives.

Education system. Schooling, as determined by the national context, has some impact on how young people think about and pursue purpose in life, but not to the extent that might be expected. As discussed earlier, religious education should play a significant role in shaping student purpose based on research and theory about the relationship between religion and purpose (Mariano & Damon, 2008), yet recent findings from the international research shows that this is an inconsistent relationship. This is true despite the type of religious education provided. For example, Finland has religious public schools, yet the religious education does not seem to have the expected impact on student purpose. In Finland, religious education emphasizes an outcome called *bildung*, which means to be passionate in developing oneself and contributing to human kind, and in practice is taught as “ethically responsible citizenship” (Kuusisto et al., 2016, p. 7). Despite this ethical training, cross-cultural research finds that Finnish youth are less purposeful and less beyond-the-self-oriented than their peers in countries where most schools are secular (Brazil and the United States) (Araújo et al., 2009; Bundick & Tirri, 2014). There appears to be a similar effect in China. Although schools there are not religious, they teach a national curriculum aimed at instilling a common, socially oriented purpose in young citizens, yet research finds that students’ personal purpose does not align with these national goals (Jiang et al., 2016).

At least one study shows that education in different countries can differently impact youth purpose development. A study that (p. 124) compared teaching styles in Finland and the United States found that teaching students how to plan for the future promotes purpose identification among Finnish students but does not have the same impact on student purpose in the United States (Bundick & Tirri, 2014). This may be due to the schooling context in Finland, in which adolescents track themselves into vocational or academic paths in high school, with both paths having equal potential for career and financial success, and future planning skills are relevant to their education. By comparison, students in the United States receive the message that college is the only path to success. In that

The Development of Purpose: An International Perspective

context, future planning is devoid of personal meaning and not made relevant for non-college-bound students.

This overview of recent international research provides an early glimpse of what remains to be learned about how purpose development is influenced by the cultural context. Not only is this a promising start to greater understanding of purpose development throughout the world, but it also informs the understanding of how cultural context within any society can shape how young people think about and pursue purpose in life. While many differences are seen, there are some interesting echoes across these international studies. For example, our research in the United States indicates that role models and interpersonal relationships are critical to purpose development, perhaps more so than direct or didactic efforts to instill students with purpose, and this appears to hold true across cultures.

Future research on recent efforts to make education more purpose-oriented, such as those seen in Brazil and Spain, may show that directly engaging young people in prosocial projects can promote purpose development. We also see in these international studies that although purpose is sometimes thought of as transcendent, young people around the world are most likely to find purpose in their relationship with their family and community.

The meaning of purpose varies across cultures, but the differences appear to be a matter of emphasis rather than lack of an equivalent idea. In some countries, such as Brazil and Spain, emphasis is on the idea of purpose being a *project*, generally future-oriented, and therefore educators support purpose by engaging students in activities that approximate purposeful projects. In China and Korea, on the other hand, emphasis is on purpose as contributing to something larger than the self, which is reflected in education systems that seek to instill a collectivist spirit through the curriculum. Because the idea of purpose is largely translatable across cultures, the task of creating a shared understanding of purpose and how it develops around the world is both manageable and useful. The commonalities illuminate what is universal about human purpose, and the differences provide insights that inform our understanding of how young people develop purpose in our own culture, as well as about meaningful cultural differences and how people engage with their world to find purpose in life.

References

- Arantes, V. A., Pinheiro, V. P. G., & Araújo, U. F. (2014). Feelings and emotions in youth's purpose. *Journal of Youth Development, 9*(4), 101–109. doi:101-109. 10.5195/JYD.2014.43
- Araújo, U. F., & Arantes, V. A. (2009). The Ethics and Citizenship Program: a Brazilian experience in moral education. *Journal of Moral Education, 38*(4), 489–511.
- Araújo, U. F., Arantes, V. A., Danza, H. C., Pinheiro, V. P. G., & Garbin, M. (2016). Principles and methods to guide education for purpose: a Brazilian experience. *Journal of Education for Teaching, 42*(5). doi: 10.1080/02607476.2016.1226554

The Development of Purpose: An International Perspective

(p. 125) Araújo, U. F., Arantes, V. A., Klein, A. M., & Grandino, P. J. (2014). Youth purpose and life goals of students engaged in community and social activities. *Revista Internacional d'Humanitats*, 30, 119-128.

Araújo, U. F., Bundick, M. J., Csikszentmihalyi, M., Damon, W., Moran, S., & Tirri, K. (June 2009). *Finding purpose in three societies: Cultural and developmental analyses*. Symposium presented at the International Positive Psychology Association First World Congress on Positive Psychology, Philadelphia, PA.

Balthip, Q., & Purnell, M. J. (2014). Pursuing meaning and purpose in life among Thai adolescents living with HIV: A grounded theory study. *Journal of the Association of Nurses in AIDS Care*, 25(4), e27-e38.

Barth, K. (1957). *The word of God and the word of man*. New York: Harper & Bros.

Baumeister, R. F., & Vohs, K. (2002). The pursuit of meaningfulness in life. In C. R. Snyder & S. Lopez (Eds.), *Handbook of positive psychology* (pp. 608-618). New York: Oxford.

Benson, P. (2008). *Sparks: How parents can ignite the hidden strengths of children*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Bespalov, A. M., Nikitina, I. V., Vlasov, M. S., Prudnikova, M. M., Tumeer, O., & Bavuu, N. (2014). Youth value orientation: A field study in Western Mongolia. *Central Asian Journal of Basic and Applied Research*, 2, 30-47.

Bronk, K. C. (2012). A grounded theory of the development of noble youth purpose. *Journal of Adolescent Research*, 27(1), 78-109. doi:10.1177/0743558411412958

Bronk, K. C. (2013). *Purpose in life: A critical component of optimal youth development*. New York: Springer Science & Business Media.

Bundick, M. J. (2011). The benefits of reflecting on and discussing purpose in life in emerging adulthood. *New Directions for Youth Development*, 132, 89-103.

Bundick, M., & Tirri, K. (2014). Student perceptions of teacher support and competencies for fostering youth purpose and positive youth development: Perspectives from two countries. *Applied Developmental Science*, 18(3), 148-162. doi: 10.1080/10888691.2014.924357

Burrow, A. L., O'Dell, A. C., & Hill, P. L. (2010). Profiles of a developmental asset: Youth purpose as a context for hope and well-being. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 39, 1265-1273. doi: 10.1007/s10964-009-9481-1.

Carlo, G., Knight, G. P., McGinley, M., Zamboanga, B. L., & Jarvis, L. H. (2010). The multidimensionality of prosocial behaviors and evidence of measurement equivalence in Mexican American and European American early adolescents. *Journal of Research on Adolescence*, 20(2), 334-358. doi: 10.1111/j.1532-7795.2010.00637.x

The Development of Purpose: An International Perspective

Colby, A., & Damon, W. (1992). *Some do care: Contemporary lives of moral commitment*. New York: The Free Press.

Cole, M., & Cole, S. (1990). *The development of children*. New York: Worth.

Cooley, C. (1902). *Human nature and the social order*. New York: Holt.

Damon, W. (1977). *The social world of the child*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Damon, W. (2008). *The path to purpose: How young people find their calling in life*. New York: Free Press.

Damon, W., & Bundick, M. (2017). Purpose. In Marc Bornstein (Ed), *The Sage handbook of lifespan human development* (pp. 1789-1792). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Damon, W., & Hart, D. (1982). The development of self-understanding from infancy through adolescence. *Child Development*, 53, 841-864.

Damon, W., & Hart, D. (1988). *Self-understanding in childhood and adolescence*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Damon, W., Menon, J. L., & Bronk, K. C. (2003). The development of purpose during adolescence. *Journal of Applied Developmental Science*, 7(3), 119-128.

Emmons, R. (1999). *The psychology of ultimate concerns: Motivation and spirituality in personality*. New York: Guilford Press.

Frankl, V. E. (1959). *Man's search for meaning: An introduction to logotherapy*. Boston, MA: Beacon.

Froh, J. J., Bono, G., & Emmons, R. (2010). Being grateful is beyond good manners: Gratitude and motivation to contribute to society among early adolescents. *Motivation and Emotion*, 34, 144-157.

Hart, D., Lucca-Irizarry, N., & Damon, W. (1986). The development of self-understanding in Puerto Rico and the United States. *Journal of Early Adolescence*, 6, 293-304.

Hedayati, N., Kuusisto, E., Gholami, K., & Tirri, K. (2017). Life purposes of Iranian secondary school students. *Journal of Moral Education (special issue on Youth Purpose around the World, S. Moran, ed.)*, 46(3), 283-294. doi:10.1080/03057240.2017.1350148

(p. 126) Hill, P. L., Sumner, R., & Burrow, A. L. (2014). Understanding the pathways to purpose: Examining personality and well-being correlates across adulthood. *Journal of Positive Psychology*, 9, 227-234.

Jiang, F., & Lin, S. (2014). “中美大学生人理想道德属性比较研究。” [A Comparative Study on the Moral orientation of Life Purpose between Chinese and American College Students]. *Journal of Northeastern University (Social Science)*, 16 (6), 628-633.

The Development of Purpose: An International Perspective

Jiang, F., Lin, S., & Mariano, J. M. (2016). The influence of Chinese college teachers' competence for purpose support on students' purpose development. *Journal of Education for Teaching, 42*(5). doi: 10.1080/02607476.2016.1226555

Kuusisto, E., Gholami, K., & Tirri, K. (2016). Finnish and Iranian teachers' views on their competence to teach purpose. *Journal of Education for Teaching, 42*(5). doi: 10.1080/02607476.2016.1226553

Luna, E., Folgueiras, P., Biglia, B., & Palou, B. (2014, October 29). Purpose education in Spain. In J. M. Mariano & S. Moran (Producers), *Educating for youth purpose around the world* [Webinar]. Retrieved from http://youtu.be/GM_sziyLOAU

Magun, V., & Rudnev, M. (2012). Tipologiya evropeitsev po tsennostyam R. Inglekharta i mezhstranovye sravneniya [The value heterogeneity of the European countries' Population: Typology Based on R. Inglehart Indicators]. *Vestnik obshchestvennogo mneniya. Dannya. Analiz. Diskussii [The Russian Public Opinion Herald. Data. Analysis. Discussions]*, 3-4(113), 12-25.

Malin, H. (2015). *Arts Participation as a Context for Youth Purpose. Studies in Art Education, 56*(3), 268-280. doi: 10.1080/00393541.2015.11518968

Malin, H., Ballard, P. J., & Damon, W. (2015). Civic purpose: An integrated construct for understanding civic development in adolescence. *Human Development, 58*(1), 103-130.

Malin, H., Liauw, I., & Damon, W. (2017). Purpose and character development in early adolescence. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 46*(6), 1200-1215. doi: 10.1007/s10964-017-0642-3

Malin, H., Reilly, T. S., Quinn, B., & Moran, S. (2014). Adolescent purpose development: Exploring empathy, discovering roles, shifting priorities, and creating pathways. *Journal of Research on Adolescence, 24*, 186-199.

Mariano, J. M., & Damon, W. (2008). The role of spirituality and religious faith in supporting purpose in adolescence. In R. M. Lerner, R. W. Roeser & E. Phelps (Eds.), *Positive youth development and spirituality: From theory to research* (pp. 210-230). West Conshohocken, PA: Templeton Foundation Press.

Mariano, J. M., Moran, S., Aramburuzabala, P., Araújo, U. F., Biglia, B., Kuusisto, E., ... Tirri, K. (October 22, 2015). *Finding purpose in challenging times: Multinational perspectives—session 1* [Webinar transcript] Retrieved from: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6bA0c_b-D0c

Mariano, J. M., Moran, S., Araújo, U. F., Biglia, B., Folgueiras, P., Jiang, F., ... Tirri, K. (2014, October 29). *Educating for youth purpose around the world* [Webinar transcript]. Retrieved from: http://youtu.be/GM_sziyLOAU

Mason, H. D. (2013). Meaning in life within an African context: A mixed method study. *Journal of Psychology in Africa, 23*(4), 635-638.

The Development of Purpose: An International Perspective

Massey, E. K., Gebhardt, W. A., & Garnefski, N. (2008). Adolescent goal content and pursuit: A review of the literature from the past 16 years. *Developmental Review, 28*(4), 421–460. doi: 10.1016/j.dr.2008.03.002

Mead, G. (1934). *Mind, self and society*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Moran, S. (2009). Purpose: Giftedness in intrapersonal intelligence. *High Ability Studies, 20*(2) 143–159. doi:10.1080/13598130903358501

Moran, S., Bundick, M., Malin, H., & Reilly, T. (2013). How supportive of their specific purposes do youth believe their family and friends are? *Journal of Adolescent Research, 28*(3), 348–377. doi: 10.1177/0743558412457816

Pátaro, C. S. D. O., & Arantes, V. A. (2014). The affective dimension of life projects: A study of youth from Paraná, Brazil. *Psicologia em Estudo, 19*, 145–156.

Peterson, C., & Seligman, M. E. P. (2004). *Character strengths and virtues: A handbook and classification*. Oxford University Press & American Psychological Association.

Pew Research Center. (2014). *Religion in Latin America: Widespread change in a historically Catholic region*. Washington, DC: Pew Research Center.

Pinheiro, V. P. G., & Arantes, V. A. (2015). Values and feelings in young Brazilians' purposes. *Paidéia, 25*(61), 201–209. doi:10.1590/1982-43272561201508

Ryff, C. (1989). Happiness is everything, or is it? Explorations on the meaning of psychological well-being. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 57*(6), 1069–1081.

(p. 127) Shin, J., Hwang, H., Cho, E., & McCarthy-Donovan, A. (2014). Current trends in Korean adolescents' social purpose. *Journal of Youth Development, 9*(2), 16–33.

Tirri, K., & Kuusisto, E. (October 29, 2014). Purpose in Finland. In J. M. Mariano & S. Moran (Producers), *Educating for youth purpose around the world* [Webinar]. Retrieved from: http://youtu.be/GM_sziyLOAU

Tirri, K., & Kuusisto, E. (2016). Finnish student teachers' perceptions on the role of purpose in teaching. *Journal of Education for Teaching, 42*(5). doi: 10.1080/02607476.2016.1226552

Tirri, K., & Quinn, B. (2010). *Exploring the role of religion and spirituality in the development of purpose: Case studies of purposeful youth*. *British Journal of Religious Education 32*(3) 201–214. doi: 10.1080/01416200.2010.498607

Tirri, K., & Ubani, M. (2012). Education of Finnish student teachers for purposeful teaching. *Journal for the Education of Teaching, 38*(5). doi: 10.1080/02607476.2012.733188

Von Culin, K., Tsukayama, E. & Duckworth, A. L. (2014). Unpacking grit: Motivational correlates of perseverance and passion for long-term goals. *Journal of Positive Psychology, 9*(4), 1–7.

The Development of Purpose: An International Perspective

Warren, R. (2002) *The purpose-driven life*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

Yeager, D., & Bundick, M. (2009). The role of purposeful work goals in promoting meaning in life and in schoolwork during adolescence. *Journal of Adolescent Research*, 24(4), 423-452.

William Damon

Graduate School of Education, Stanford University, Stanford, CA, USA

Heather Malin

Stanford Center on Adolescence, Stanford University, Stanford, CA, USA