

It's about what it will mean for your health and other community commitments. In short, the decision must take into account the whole of your life. God does not ask us to separate out the elements of our life. God invites us to lay the pieces of our life on the altar and then listen.

“*The revelation of God is whole and pulls our lives together.*” (Psalm 19:7, *The Message*)

3. You will have MORE GOOD FRIENDS

One of the things that creates friendship is common interest. When we are doing what we do from a sense of calling, we find others who have that same passion. A bond develops. Friendships form. And form they must, because if we are going to live our call, we will need the support of friends. Companions can help us when following our call gets challenging. Whether it is the joy of working side by side with others hearing the same call or the deep connection that develops when we walk with each other in painful times, the result is more good friends.

“*One of the ways we know the call to be God's call is when a feeling of awe-filled dread is combined with one of being companioned.*”
(Elizabeth O'Connor, *Cry Pain, Cry Hope*)

2. You will do LESS SLEEPWALKING THROUGH LIFE

Call is not a one-time thing...it is the ongoing process of placing the events of life in the context of conversation with God. Therefore it requires that we pay attention to what is going on outside us and inside us. Having children or aging parents, losing a job or experiencing a change in health, and what is going on in the world—globally and locally—may affect our call. At the same time, we pay attention to what is going on inside of us. Feelings of joy, sadness, anxiety or energy may be clues to a changing call. Listening for call requires attentiveness to our own lives and to God's presence in the midst of it. It is impossible to sleep walk through life if we are living our call.

“*God comes to us disguised as our life.*”
(Paula D'Arcy)

1. The world begins to LOOK MORE THE WAY GOD INTENDS

Call is all about us—and it's more than that. Call is about our gifts, experiences, passions, burdens, and dreams; but it is also about something bigger, greater, and more important than any one individual. Simply put, the world gets better the more people are listening to and following their call in all aspects of life. It can't help but get better because people are more energized by what they are doing, they can do it longer, and they do it better. It also gets better because part of the definition of call is that it has to do with a greater good than we can imagine. The Caller invites us into action that is not just for our benefit. The Caller invites us into action that will make the world more into what God envisions. The more we listen for and follow God's call, the more the world will begin to look the way God created it to look.

“*The place God calls you to is the place where your deep gladness and the world's deep hunger meet.*”
(Frederick Buechner, *Wishful Thinking*)

For more information about Lumunos, go to www.lumunos.org, or call 1-800-245-7378.



P.O. Box 307 • Marlborough, NH 03455

www.lumunos.org



TOP TEN REASONS

THE TOP TEN REASONS TO LISTEN FOR AND FOLLOW YOUR CALL

As you probably noticed, we here at Lumunos are excited about helping people follow their call. You might even say that your calling is our calling. Why do we think listening for and following your call is such a great idea? Here are 10 reasons (more or less) to get you started...

10. You will be LESS BUSY

Pretty much everyone complains of being too busy. A few people are comfortably busy—the right kind of busy. But most of us are too busy. Our calendars could easily fill to overflowing with invitations and obligations. Many of these invitations are important, even noble undertakings. But should we accept them all, even if our schedules permit? Do they contribute in any small way to God's reign? Are they "just" good causes? In short, are they a part of our call? Listening for God's call means saying "no" to many things so that we can say "yes" to the things we are called to do. And that makes us less busy.

“Here the word call becomes important. We are not called to save the world, solve all problems, and help all people. But we each have our own unique call, in our families, in our work, in our world. We have to keep asking God to help us see clearly what our call is and to give us the strength to live out that call with trust. Then we will discover that our faithfulness to a small task is the most healing response to the illnesses of our time.” (Henri Nouwen)

9. You will have MORE ENERGY

I know it sounds like we are selling vitamins here. But when we do what we do from a sense of call, we will have more energy. This only makes sense because call emerges from our passion and values, two places that generate energy. When we are living our call, we are drawing from deep wells that are renewed by God, the "Caller."

“The LORD will guide you continually, and satisfy your needs in parched places, and make your bones strong;

and you shall be like a watered garden, like a spring of water, whose waters never fail.” (Isaiah 58:11)

8. There will be LESS CHANCE OF BURNING OUT

People living out of a sense of call have their bad days, no question about it. But they don't have weeks and months of bad days. The difference is in the renewal. We get tired or discouraged, but the energy comes back. In the words of the Psalmist, "they are like trees planted by streams of water, which yield their fruit in its season, and their leaves do not wither." (Psalm 1:3, NRSV)

“God does not want you to destroy yourself. Exhaustion, burnout, and depression are not signs that you are doing God's will. God is gentle and loving... Once you have allowed yourself to experience that love fully, you will be better able to discern who you are being sent to in God's name.” (Henri Nouwen, *The Inner Voice of Love*)

7. You will be MORE FUN to be around

People who feel called to what they are doing are more fun to be around. Called people get grumpy just like anyone else. But on the whole, when you care about what you are doing, and when it flows from your values, you tend to be more positive. Parker Palmer writes, "Our deepest calling is to grow into our own authentic self-hood, whether or not it conforms to some image of who we ought to be. As we do so, we will not only find the joy that every human being seeks—we will also find our path of authentic service in the world."

“Those who trust God's action in them find that God's Spirit is in them—living and breathing God! Obsession with self in these matters is a dead end; attention to God leads us out into the open, into a spacious, free life.” (Romans 8:6, *The Message*)

6. You will feel LESS STRESS

Sometimes we can feel like everything is riding on our shoulders. We care about the things we are called to; and if it isn't going well, it feels like a burden. But following call

invites us to trust that we are not the "saviors" of the world. We work hard in our various callings, but then we let it go. There are greater forces at work, far beyond what we will accomplish in our lifetimes. As we embrace that truth, we feel less pressure to be perfect or to do it all.

“The hand must ache, the face must sweat. And yet no leaf or grain is filled By work of ours; the field is tilled And left to grace. That we may reap, Great work is done while we're asleep.” (Wendell Berry, *Sabbaths*)

5. You will be MORE CREATIVE

When the creativity is flowing, it is often a sign of call. This should not surprise us, because often we are called to tasks that use our gifts. When we are using our gifts or strengths, we are more creative. Because we care about what we are doing, we have a healthy sense of urgency as well. This stuff matters! Finally, because we are not as stressed and are more energized, the conditions are ripe for greater creativity.

“It's the faithful doing of the thing, the willingness to work hard at the craft without worry too much about outcomes, that makes you a writer. The paradox is that you are more likely to get outcomes when you let go of getting outcomes: it frees you from the ego's grip. There is a parallel here to the faith journey: seek your life and you will lose it, lose your life and you will find it.” (Parker Palmer, *Christian Century*)

4. You will be LESS FRAGMENTED

Call is about the whole of our lives, and it brings the pieces together. When we listen for God's call, we take into consideration all the aspects of our life. If you are wrestling with a decision about whether or not to take a certain job, you know that you must consider more than just the work itself. The decision is also about the financial and time implications. It's about how your acceptance of this job will impact others around you.