

An African approach to the meaning of life

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What, if anything, makes life meaningful according to African perspectives? In this article, I attempt to answer the question of how characteristically African approaches would define and explain the meaning of life and to pick out the best one. I look at the meaning of life in terms of purpose, value, and coherence of the life as a whole, focusing on the meaning of individual lives, rather than of human life in general. I look at three different African approaches to such meaning of life, namely *life*, *love* and *destiny*. I evaluate the three theories of meaning in terms of their ability to account for intuitions about the meaningfulness of relations, work, self-actualisation, upholding tradition and partaking in rituals. Finally, I show that the destiny view is the most plausible African account of life's meaning, compared to its two major competitors.

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