

# Fueling purpose



An individual's actions and thoughts are often products of one's nurture and experiences. These can provide a path to one's destiny. In his novel *The Wars*, Timothy Findley explores the origin of Robert Ross's incentives and investigates his actions as the protagonist strives to preserve life. An individual's course of action is often determined by a strong motivation of finding fulfillment to their purpose. These motives behind him or her are the driving factors that are vital to their success.

In many people's early lives, individuals often experience perspective changing epiphanies and every event of their primal life counts. Robert Ross's loss of his sister, Rowena, results in his grudgeful guilt. He blames himself because of his ignorance in taking care of his sister and "making love with the pillows" during her time of need. Rowena's death plagues Robert's life and decides he has to make up for it. Despite his mother's silent protest and outcry against his decision to join the war efforts, his motivation to find relief from this guilt out powers her. Despite the luxuries he and his family live with because of their wealth, Robert pays no attention to this and ultimately decides to obey his conscience. His disillusionment with his present life also results from seeing how cruel and indifferent his siblings are. His brother, Stuart, taunts their horse for his sadistic pleasure enjoying seeing its "ears drop low" every time he swings a bat over its head. Not even slightly aghast to Robert's decision to conscript into the war, Stuart wishes that he could show medals to his schoolmates-medals of honor and glory that are awarded to soldiers who lose their lives. Moreover, Robert Ross's departure to the training grounds allows him to witness the strict and unforgiving fashion his life will endure for the duration of the war.

Unhindered, Robert becomes a successful artillery officer and proceeds through his progression in the ranks. His life drastically changes within a couple of months because of his pursuit of finding how to fulfill his purpose. An individual in the adolescent stages of life often seek purpose and meaning to their life-exactly what Robert intends to discover.

Despite the countless hardships one may face in their quest to fulfill their purpose, their motivation may remain unhindered and perseverance is achieved. On Robert's cruise to France, he is outraged by the horrific conditions the horses endure. He takes the initiative to provide better conditions for the wretched creatures and finds affinity with these creatures. His love of animals aligns Robert Ross to discover that he will fulfill his purpose by serving life. Upon meeting Rodwell at the "Glass Dugout", he is further inspired by the miniature animal hospital Rodwell manages. This alike kinship they share with animals draws them close together. Robert is constantly pounded with the news of deaths of his fellow officers and friends. Despite this, he is always motivated to never give up and continue serving life. Upon Rodwell's death, Robert immortalizes the deceased man's legacy by releasing the healed toad into the wild. Other than the daily horrors of seeing "mangled bodies" torn up by the relentless and unforgiving nature of warfare, Robert faces similar abomination. He is taken advantage of in his most vulnerable moment and is brutally raped by possibly his own fellow officers. Regardless of this barbarism, he composes himself rather quickly as compared to a typical person who would have undergone a similar experience. He is unabated. An individual's motivation to fulfill their purpose is always put to the test.

Throughout many individuals' lives, many give up their dreams and their inspirations and decide to live within the constraints of circumstance. However, only few really possess the persistence and determination to make it to the end. Robert is well aware of the unnecessary sterilization of life war brings about. Nevertheless, he heeds to his duty while ironically preserving life. Robert believes that all life should be preserved: whether it is human life, or beast, all life is precious. After climbing out of the crater following the dissipation of the chlorine gas, they spot and are spotted by a German sniper. However, the sniper allows the men to leave safely as they are not in a combat situation. However, one of them spots movement and the German is shot dead. Robert feels immense guilt despite having gotten rid of one more enemy soldier because he is guilt-ridden from wasting life. The man finally finds a turning point where he ultimately receives fulfillment to his purpose. After being reassigned to Captain Leather, the German shells begin landing in the courtyard. Instead of making the sane decision of setting the horses free to fend for themselves, the duty-bound and blind Captain Leather threatens Robert of his life if he ever should do so. However, Robert disobeys direct command because he finds it is an obstruction to his cause and becomes criminalized as a deserter. Finally, Robert's siding with the preservation of life is proven when he maroons with the horses inside the hay barn declaring to the officers outside " we shall not be taken". Robert faithful upkeep of his purpose costs him his hopes of ever returning to normal life. However, Robert has now fulfilled his purpose and regardless of what he has lost, his legacy became immortalized just like he strived for.

The initiative to persevere with one's motivation is key to finding purpose in one's life. Destitution and misery are nothing but symptoms of one's persistence to find meaning to their life. The path an individual proceeds with are guided by the strength of their motivation and their willingness to discover their purpose. Robert Ross successfully persevered through his troubles and found contentment in fulfilling his purpose by preserving life.