

URL: <https://stvp.stanford.edu/clips/motivated-by-meaning>

Shiza Shahid, co-founder and co-CEO of Our Place, advises others to pursue meaning in their lives and careers. Whether in nonprofits or for-profit companies, when you believe in what you're doing, she says, it gives you the energy to work harder and can accelerate your success.



Transcript

- I think that it's important to do something 00:00:05,373 with your life that creates meaning.. And I think ultimately, life is a pursuit of meaning above all else.. And I think when you believe that what you're doing is fundamentally good for the world, you find that meaning and that gives you a tremendous amount of energy that makes you work harder, that helps you endure, that allows you to share your story in a way that encourages others to join and to stay when things get hard.. So I believe if done right, meaning, will accelerate your success and the absence of it will be, perhaps, one of the things that hurts you most.. I never thought that you could build a business.. I grew up in a place where I didn't see people doing that, certainly not women entrepreneurs.. Never heard the word social entrepreneur.. If anything, I thought business was icky right now.. I was a nonprofit leader, I wasn't gonna start a business, right? I was gonna working on women's rights, girls' education.. And the truth is, what I do today actually gives me more meaning..

I love, I am so proud of all the work that I've done in my past including with the Malala Fund, but I have never felt more fulfilled than I do today with Our Place.. And the reason is because I believe in the mission, I have a fantastic and diverse team, I can pay them well, I can provide good benefits, I can build a culture I'm proud of, I can scale the business much faster than I could scale a nonprofit, even one that was as visible as the one that I was building.. And so I think there are tremendous benefits to each model and there are some downsides to each model.. It's important to understand that.. But ultimately, I don't think you have to choose.. I think every person deserves meaning in work.. I don't believe in this movement of, ah, work is work, your work colleagues aren't your friends, don't work too much.. I have found tremendous meaning in belonging in work.. And I think if you can create that for yourself, you'll be very successful and you'll live a happier life...