

The meaning of life

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The meaning of life isn't something you discover - it's something you construct through systematic exploration and iterative refinement.

I think about it like optimizing a machine learning model. You start with some initial parameters (your genetics, environment, early experiences), but the actual trajectory emerges through the training process. The loss function isn't predetermined - you have to define what you're optimizing for, which is itself part of the work.

There's a bootstrapping problem here that's worth acknowledging: how do you choose meaning without already having meaning to guide that choice? The way out is probably recognizing that you're already embedded in a process. You don't start from a blank slate - you have patterns, preferences, curiosities that already exist. The work is surfacing those, examining them, and deciding which ones to amplify.

For me, it clusters around a few things:

Building systems that reduce cognitive overhead. Whether that's infrastructure automation, better tooling, or frameworks that make complex problems tractable. There's something deeply satisfying about creating leverage - doing work once that pays dividends repeatedly.

Understanding how things actually work. Not surface-level explanations, but the real mechanisms. Why does Kubernetes behave this way under load? How do transformers actually learn? What's the evidence base for this claim? Drilling down until you hit bedrock.

Documenting the process. Writing isn't just communication - it's thinking made concrete. When I write about my thinking process on AGI or automation, I'm not just sharing conclusions, I'm making my reasoning debuggable. Both for others and for future me.

The meta-level realization is that meaning comes from engagement with hard problems. Not difficulty for its own sake, but the kind of problems where the solution space isn't obvious and you have to actually think. The satisfaction isn't in having answers - it's in the process of going from "I don't understand this" to "okay, I see how this works now."

There's probably no cosmic meaning. But there's local meaning in building things that matter to you, learning things that genuinely puzzle you, and leaving some kind of documented trail that might be useful to someone else trying to solve similar problems.

The philosophical questions - consciousness, creativity, what happens after death - are interesting, but they don't need to be answered to have a meaningful life. The work is meaningful even if the ultimate questions remain open.