



Discovering and Exploring Personal Passions

A “passion” is defined as a “powerful or compelling emotion or feeling,” an “object of intense desire, ardent affection, or enthusiasm” (according to dictionary.reference.com). Many people define having personal passions as important to a quality life—being able to use their full talents doing some things that they enjoy.

Finding a Passion

People define passions in all sorts of different ways because of differences in personal preferences. For some, a personal passion involves self-expression through various types of art, literature, or performances. Others are inspired by filmmaking; still others write and create music. For some, a passion is a physical activity—whether it’s a team sport or an individually practiced sport. Others capture photographic images. Others collect objects. Some pursue historical research.

Passions are satisfying to people because they often enable a unique form of self-expression. It is a way for some to share their personal insights with others. Passions enable ways of engaging with the world. For still others, these enable the leaving behind of a legacy for others. Personal passions have personal meaning.

Sampling Widely

People may stumble across passions through serendipity. Those who are fortunate are able to parlay these interests into lifelong careers where their passions may spark their explorations and performance—and push them to great heights of creativity.

Some who advise people on seeking their passions will ask questions like:

- What aligns with what you spend your day doing?
- What doesn’t align with what you spend your day doing?

Those who have satisfying work lives (apparently, not the majority of people) often are tapping into specific interests and talents.

Or many people are able to pursue passions parallel to their work lives and are able to invest many decades of a life into a personal interest.

Others may find lesser passions that only last a short time. Fleeting passions may be pursued with intensity. Passions do not have to be lifelong commitments.

One way to see what is in the world is to sample widely. It helps to have a variety of friends who are active and willing to share their own interests with you. And it also helps to take some risks—and to be willing to try a variety of different activities and interests. Sampling in a variety of areas may help one choose from a broad range of possibilities.

Connoisseurs of a particular art may find themselves experimenting with creating that art (like jewelry making or glass art). Some who have appreciated wines have worked hard to open their own wineries, for example. Others pursue sky diving and flight, and they add value to their experiences by building ever more complex skill sets in these fields.

Different Phases of Life

Different life stages may enable more freedoms to pursue personal interests in ways that other time periods may not have allowed.

People also may be sparked differently in different times of their lives. An activity that may not have made sense in a prior period of life may suddenly be resonant and engaging at a different phase. People find enjoyment in a variety of ways. For many, passions seem to come naturally.

Role Models

Another way to seek personal passions is to explore one's favorite role models. Usually, people like to emulate or copy those they admire. They self-identify with some individuals. By contrast, they will dislike other personages, again, based on their own identities. The people who are heroes

to an individual may serve as effective role models.

Personal Skill Sets

People have huge capabilities in terms of developing skill sets over time. Some skills though will come more naturally based on the individual. It is said that expertise comes of at least 10,000 invested hours of learning and training (usually spread over 10 years)...and that usually requires an unusual amount of dedication. Personal passions of the individual may be sufficient to maintain that long-running interest in order to develop the skill sets and enjoyments for a particular field of study.

Sampling the Environment

It is said that people cannot develop a native talent unless they have access to certain resources. For example, many in parts of Africa without mountains have to travel to other locales in order to learn how to ski well enough to compete at a global level (say, for the Olympics).

It is important to see what possibilities there are to support one's interests and budding talents in the local environment. If the local environment cannot support the honing of that talent, people will often move to a locale which will better support their talents...in an environment with the right resources, mentorship, and reasons to practice the skill often and with expert advice.

Passions may sound like they're very high-minded, but they also have a very practical element. Each person has a responsibility to explore what sparks passions inside

themselves and ways to encourage their talents and skills.



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