
PASSION: WHAT IS IT ABOUT?

I believe defining a term is foundational for any productive discussion on any issue. So our discussion begins by defining passion. What comes to your mind when you hear the word "passion", can you really define it? Is it something mysterious to you or do you have the feeling of understanding it but not quite define it? Don't worry just use dictionaries, search in the web if you have internet access, ask resourceful people and try to find the common words used to describe the term passion.

By doing so, I found the following being the best description of passion:

"...a strong feeling of unusual excitement, enthusiasm or compelling emotion, a positive affinity or love, towards a subject." The common description being the "strong feeling" well colored by the term of being an unusual enthusiasm. Passion is hence the driving force, the deep attachment that we develop for something in life. This driving force is the pathway to excellence. Isn't that what success is excellence in every aspect of our life? When we have a strong feeling about something, we give our best and that is all what is expected from each of us.



Passion is hence a means not an end by itself. One can be passionate about different things, positive or negative. Being passionate about the negative is destructive so I believe we need to change our gears toward the positive, which is the path to successful self development. So our discussion will be about finding our passion in life in whatever is noble, dignified, right, lovely, admirable and pure.

Defining a term goes beyond talking about what it is. Seeing what it is not about gets us close to define the term fully and gives us a higher understanding. So what is passion is not about? There are many myths regarding passion:

1. *There is only one passion in life:* life is versatile and you will have your passion for each aspect of life.
2. *Only few are called to have passion:* partly true because each of us is called to live; I think the fact that we are alive shows that we are called for something called life.
3. *Our passion comes always with financial gain:* life's satisfaction is beyond financial gain; I am not denying that financial freedom is very important for success; but does not need to be stretched to the extreme because we can only use money to a certain capacity. If we have enough and we are content, and we excel and love what we do, we have found our passion.
4. *Finding your passion means life free of challenges:* life is always full of challenges and that is what makes it life. In fact our passion would give us the ability to overcome our challenges.
5. *You always have to leave your current job to find your passion:* you do not need to quit what you are doing currently to find your job; rather you can use your current job to find out what you

are passionate about. For example I work as a manager in an organization; as I was discovering my passion I found myself excelling when doing training for the staff and addressing issues through different training; I was always impressed by trainings that I receive. So I ended up being a part time lecturer and trainer, which I love doing. I am still discovering more about myself. Once you find your passion then you might need to change your job, but quitting you job is not a pre-condition to find your passion.

6. *You would not find your passion until your life is in crisis:* a crisis in life may force you to face your fears in the same way the crisis might leave you in a desperate situation. If you are a person who have stirred you passion in life, you might use crisis as an opportunity to grow. Again crisis is not a pre-condition to find your passion, in fact you find yourself in a better position of surviving the crisis if you are a passionate person in life.

7. *You must alienate yourself from the normal to find your passion;* you might need to make some changes to find your passion but it is not a necessity for you to be associated with some way which defies positive norms of your society like morality and productive way of life. Doing this will only lead you to be stereotyped nothing more. We often associate certain hairstyle with some profession, certain way of dressing with some other...Amazingly when you are passionate about what you do in your profession, home or society, you keep excelling and you tend to rise and shine; often times your positive contribution is appreciated and celebrated.

You might read more of many myths and wrong beliefs regarding passion. Keep on exploring.

“Passion rebuilds the world for the youth. It makes all things alive and significant.” *Ralph Waldo Emerson*

Finding your passion is an action task. It goes beyond knowing, thinking and identifying. It needs taking an action, because like so many literature and researches state, passion is something of your heart not of your thoughts. That is why self development is key to clearly identify your passion in different aspects of your life.

“ If you wish to achieve worthwhile things in your personal and career life, you must become a worthwhile person in your own self-development.” *Brian Tracy*

I believe that self development should take an approach encompassing the entirety of our being. This may mean in terms of our emotion, spirit, physical body as well as intellectuality. There are plenty of resources on self development, that can get you started thinking of taking a great step.

I would like to provide some steps to take in developing yourself towards identifying your passion in different aspects of your life.

1. **Dedicate time for yourself and listen to your heart:** take the habit of reflecting back on yourself and day on a daily basis. This needs to be done consciously and with honest evaluation. Get rid of the negative attitude, destructive habits, selfishness and greed.

Inventory your talents: what are you good at? If you really don't know ask your true friend. Usually you take your talents for granted and it takes others to notice and tell you to value your talents properly.

Value yourself: a good self esteem and self worth is very important to get going. You are unique and worthy that is why you are given the best gift called life. Make a good use out of it enjoy, share and live to the fullest.

2. **Identify things that you were inclined to do as a child:** the best way to do this asking your parents, siblings, family members and neighbors. This might not give you a clear answer but might help you assess your personality and life inclination. When you were a child you were with less fear, hence you were more creative, imagining and bold to pursue what you like.

What comes easy for you, what do you like, what are the things that are fun to you and sometimes hard for others, what makes you lose track of your time, what subjects matter most to you? Try to find the best possible answers for these questions and more. You will be able to see a certain trend that might lead you somewhere significant.

3. **Make a choice to live a happy,** fulfill and passionate life. Make a strong decision to change. The following is from an unknown author and I fully endorse it: "***There is no better time than right now to be happy. Happiness is a journey, not a destination. So work like you don't need money, love like you've never been hurt, and dance like no one is watching.***"

4. **Face your fears and eliminate excuses.** What are you afraid of? By just identifying the things and people that you are afraid of, and try to reason out, most of your fear are gone. Some fear is associated with bad habits, negative attitude of our own. By focusing on our self development, we built on our confidence and we minimize fear in life. There are reasons for everything happening, the danger is when we begin making excuses out of this reason and we dwell on them. Excuses always hinder us from the best that could take place in our lives.

5. **Have a learning personality and be realistic.** Nobody is perfect, but everyone can excel. Know that you excellence grows continually and there is always a room for improvement. Everyone, every event, every success and failure are opportunities to learn.

Brainstorm: make the habit of brainstorming on issues instead of being defensive and having the attitude of "Be like Me". Be open to new ideas and entertain differences among people. You will get to find more and learn more about yourself and others this way. Change the unproductive theme of socializing, brainstorm on common issues: it is the best way to benefit out of your communion.

6. **Clarity comes from engagement; not from thinking and alienating yourself. Love everything you do:** if not delegate someone who loves doing it. Engage young kids and youth in different activities so that they can find their passion at the early stage of their lives. But again regardless of your age engage in different things to explore more of what your passion is for.

During the session and interesting question came up:

Is passion something that stays forever regardless of age? Since we defines passion being as a strong feeling towards a subject, it definitely changes, when the subject changes. This is also because the subject changes with age. For example, what we do as children differs from what we engage in when we are adults. But, once we understand the importance of passion and we make a habit of finding our passion in every aspect of our life, then it becomes something close to permanent because we make a habit of excelling in what we do. I believe many activities became professions because of passionate people. For example: home maker, interior decorator, personal trainer...

Remember that there is no limit for passion because whatever we have passion for is limited by what we come across. Be passionate about being creative so that you can discover more and more. Take your passion to the next level and you will stir your creativity inside.

One listener shared a beautiful quote: ***“Passion is energy, feel the power that comes from focusing on what excites you.” Oprah Winfrey***

Now ready for the exercise to begin the journey for finding your passion... Get something to write on and with...

This is just a way that people have experimented, it will give you ideas to explore but can never be an answer by itself. Remember there is no right or wrong answer for the questions.

Question one: Who do you admire the most? Who is your role model? Who influences the most and why?

You may have many people in mind for each aspect of life. In each aspect try to analyze why and this gives you a better understanding of your passion in that area.

Question two: What would you do if you are given a million dollar right now?

Disclaimer: The above question is posed in the assumption that you have no debt, problems... and you have the total freedom to spend. *Write your answers...*

Question Three: What would you do if the world will be destroyed after three days? *Write your answers...*

Reversing the question:

Now list all of the obstacles hindering you from doing what you would have done if you had a million dollar. Most of our problem is finance, but you would also identify other obstacles that might be eliminated right now. And if you think hard, you can find the proper work around your financial problems. Instead of owning the business, why don't you consider working for or with other people who have similar passion... When you begin doing it with passion, door will open because you will excel.

Do the same thinking what is holding you from doing what you would have done if the world will be destroyed. Amazingly you will find out that much of the issues are just assumptions and procrastination. Remember: ***“...So work like you don't need money, love like you've never been hurt, and dance like no one is watching.”***

Identifying the obstacles will give us clarity in life. Please share your findings and thoughts since it will help me improve my discussions and certainly help me learn a lot more.

Passion is the driving force to excel, find it and use it: it will make your life easier and happier!

It is an honor for me to be able to share my thoughts, thank you Sofi and all.

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Live your life consciously and enjoy it to the max!