

10 THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT PASSION (AND HOW TO FIND YOURS)

By Singyin Lee. Filed in Web 2.0

‘Passion’ is a word so excessively used and almost always blindly paired with work, that if you actually ask around you may find that not everyone really *gets* what [Passion](#) is. At the root of it all, it points to that strong [emotion](#) you have inside of you, for someone, or some thing. And anyone who has ever succeeded in making a name for themselves would probably state their passion for the work / craft / industry as a reason for their success, but do *you* know *yours*?



(Image Source: [firsttoknow](#))

I asked around, compiled some questions, got some answers, had a few headaches trying to decipher why everyone is telling me different things about what passion is to them. For example, some equate a passion (for something) to a hobby or a dream, but just because you love to sing (in the shower), that doesn't necessarily mean that your passion is the act of singing.

Here are 10 things you should know about passion, which can perhaps help you find what your real passion is.

1. IT'S NOT A HOBBY OR A DREAM

There should be a purposeful word choice in what you use in a sentence. With this logic in mind, ‘Passion’ is as far from a ‘hobby’ as a ‘hobby’ is to a ‘dream’. One special ingredient separates passion from the two. In the 2004 movie, *National Treasure*, treasure hunter Benjamin Gates asks his sidekick, Riley, this simple question: *"We don't need someone crazy. But one step short of crazy, what do you get?"*

His sidekick says "*Obsessed*" but he corrects him with "*Passionate.*"

When you do what you love to do at a moderate level, you can call it a hobby. It could be cooking, gardening, singing in the shower, [disassembling gadgets](#), playing with action figures; the mix. But when you go [all out with it](#), to the point that someone deems you a step short from crazy, that's passion for you.

2. BEING HAPPY WITH YOUR PASSION

And you do it for a few reasons, one of which is because of how it makes you feel. Passion is engrained in your body and soul. For me, when you are really happy doing something, there's a hint of what you are passionate about right there.

From that, add a level of obsession to it, a lot of man-hours, a devotion second only to a dog's love for its master, and that's just about as close as you can get to pinpointing what your passion is.



(Image Source: [My Modern Met](#))

One of the reasons defining passion is so different from one man to another, is because sometimes it is hard to pin down what your real passion is.

3. YOU MIGHT NOT SEE IT

It's not true that passion has to be something that you can feel (as in touch, in physical form). Sometimes it is an effect of what you do. Believe it or not, some people really like to [help other people](#), and that is really [important in some professions](#) e.g. a nurse in a child's hospital, a social welfare worker, a flight attendant, a special needs teacher etc.

That effect not only pushes them to get out of bed and face all kinds of things that would cause you and me to break down on a daily basis (see #4) but they also do it because their passion is to make a difference in someone's life.

4. ROUGH IT OUT

To be passionate about something is to weather the storm no matter how hard it is. If practising for hours on the guitar makes the skin of your fingers break, or dancing the ballet to the tune of the nutcracker gives you ugly toes, passion says 'so be it'.



(Image Source: [philosophyforchange](#))

You cease to care because at the end of the day you just want to be known as the person who can play *Stairway to Heaven* in your sleep or still dance even [without all your limbs attached](#) (go ahead, click it. It's beautiful).

5. CHILDHOOD CRUSH

A probable source for what we are passionate about may come from what we were exposed to during our childhood. Many simple things such as sketching, music, collecting action figures or airplane models that we did when we were young evolve to become what we are passionate about when we are adults.

Have you seen what they can do with [LEGO bricks](#)? With just [pen and paper](#)? With [wooden blocks](#)? With [trash and light](#)? They may have the talent to do those things but passion is what brings those things from thought to reality, even when they are well into adulthood. For them, growing up doesn't mean the same thing as letting go of what you love doing.

6. BEING PASSIONATE IS BEING INVESTED

Invested here refers to how much of you, you put inside your passion. The time, the effort, the costs, the blood and sweat – it's not always positive energy or good news all the way (see #4). Passionate people may be angry almost all the time – passion is a combination of love and hatred – because along with the obsession, comes a need for perfection.



(Image Source: [stephenwiltshire](#))

"Good enough" is never good enough because the passion does not allow it. And it has to do with #7.

7. YOU DON'T MIND GOING FULL NERD

No one can describe passion better than geeks and nerds. It probably began as a hobby, then it became a favorite pastime, then a partime unpaid job (because of the hours you spend on it), then you start collecting and learning the jargon, and joining communities of fellow fans.

This is where you shut out almost everything else and fully devote yourself into pursuing and elevating what you love so that it is out in the limelight, looked at by the rest of the world. And the irony of it is, the world probably don't and won't 'get it'. But you do and you don't care.

8. YOU CAN'T STOP IT

Say you don't want to go full nerd on it; well, here's the bad news, you can't stop it or refrain from doing it. It's always there in your heart and up there at the back of your mind. You can't switch it off or tone it down. And you won't stop until you have let it all out or satisfy your craving – be it to draw your next masterpiece, or to write your breakthrough novel, or to redefine an industry. Follow it far enough in your career and your life and something big may come of it.

9. RAW PASSION, AMBITIONS & LIMITS

At least the one thing that everyone could agree on about passion is that it is closely associated with drive, enthusiasm, limitless energy, motivation, the push, etc. Passion can be transformed into raw enthusiasm which is then processed into an internal drive that keeps you going.

Passionate people are almost always ambitious. They want to have a say in the field that they love. They read about it, study it, embrace it and never really escape from it. It is a gift and a curse. And I don't think everyone has it.

10. EMBRACING PASSION

"It is obvious that we can no more explain a passion to a person who has never experienced it than we can explain light to the blind." – T.S. Elliot

I think about passion the same way that I think about talent. Not everyone is gifted with it. Even if they are, not everyone has the bravery or the opportunity to embrace their passion. In order to survive, most of us prefer to be practical rather than passionate.

"Get a steady [job](#), buy a car, pay your bills, sign checks, manage accounts." Don't get me wrong, it is necessary to have a steady income to pursue your dreams but I don't believe it when people say, "I am passionate about my work". Are you working for the money or for what you love? It's a fine line between the two, but to be technical about it, it's still a line.

CONCLUSION

When it comes to passion – a strong emotion of desire – there is a need to be brave enough to both acknowledge and embrace it. Some let their passion take over the wheel and do things that challenge the status quo, push boundaries, wreck tradition and ultimately reshape the world as we knew it. To strive for your passion is to be different from the rest. Take it from astronaut Chris Hadfield who has some pretty [good advice](#) to share with youngsters who want to one day go to space like how he did.

Do you have the same level of bravery to embrace your passion?