

# Discovering Your Passion

By Kathleen Barton, MBA

“Nothing great in this world has been accomplished without passion”. This quote by George Hegel is so true! All successful people in this world are truly passionate about what they do. I think of leaders like Martin Luther King Jr. and John F. Kennedy.

What is passion? Passion is our desires or purposes that bring us joy. Webster’s dictionary defines passion as “strong emotion or enthusiasm; fervor, ardor, desire”. Passionate people have greater exuberance, zest and zeal for life. Passion gives us that internal fire to succeed. It acts as a motivating force to help us do truly great things.

Martin Luther King Jr. was passionate about fighting for equality for all mankind. In his famous speech that he gave back in 1964 on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial, King declared “I have a dream that one day little black boys and girls will join hands with little white boys and girls and will walk together as brothers and sisters.” He was so passionate about his cause that it ultimately cost him his life.

I think of ordinary people like you and me who are passionate about their work. Mrs. Renfro, who was my daughter’s first grade teacher, was **so enthusiastic** about teaching children. She’d always greet the children with a smile or hug, and give lots of positive reinforcement. You could tell from her exuberance that she loves children and loves her job.

Maybe you’re thinking, “I’d like to feel that way about what I do!” So how do you find your passion? How do you discover what you’re called to do? Take some quiet time by yourself where you won’t be interrupted. Take time to get in touch with your deep inner self. Your passion comes from the heart. Here are some questions to ask yourself:

1. What excites and energizes you?
2. What brings you joy?
3. What activities in your professional life are most enjoyable?
4. What activities in your personal life are most enjoyable?
5. When does time seem to fly by? What are you typically doing?
6. What past experiences have been most meaningful or significant? Why?
7. If you had unlimited time and resources and knew you couldn’t fail, what would you do?
8. If you had one hour on prime time TV, what subject would you talk about?
9. What is the one problem or issue you were born to address?
10. If you had one year left to live, what would you do?

After writing your answers to these questions, review them and look for common themes. What stands out? This is an important clue to discovering your passion. What insights have you gained? Take time to ponder these things in the coming days and weeks. It may take some time to discover your true passion.

Once you discover your passion, consider how you can incorporate it into your life. Some people pursue their passion through their work, others through a hobby and still others through their volunteer work. The possibilities are endless. By finding and pursuing your passion you’ll feel more energized and excited about life!

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