

Man is only great when he acts from his passions

-Benjamin Disraeli-



Acting on Your Passions



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Finding passions along the way

We often realize our true passions when we are older. I'm thinking of a man who followed his two older brothers' pathway and earned a degree in engineering. He enjoyed a successful career in that field, but along the way, he discovered other passions. While in his mid-forties, his company transferred him to Virginia, where he found he could afford to buy acreage east of the Blue Ridge Mountains. There, he built a large country house and started raising livestock, chickens, ducks, and other feedstock. Now in his early 70s, he and his wife, a retiring schoolteacher, have a successful farmstead. He even operates his own small slaughterhouse. **Today, this man and his wife feel they are finally focusing on their true passion — growing their farmstead business and teaching agricultural skills to others.**

Five observations

Following your passions is often a bit of a balancing act as life offers us ideas

and opportunities in random ways. Here are five things to consider when acting on your passions.

1. Observe what stimulates you – In my 20s and 30s, I frequently attended programs where others were speaking. Interestingly, I often experienced an anxious rush at these events and felt I should be the one speaking. In my 40s, I acted on that instinct and joined Toastmasters International. Eight years later, I had earned a Distinguished Toastmaster Certification. **Are there sensations that give you such a yearning?**

2. Seek feedback and insight from others – Acting on your passions often generates compliments from associates and friends. **Pay attention to what others appreciate about you and build on it.**

3. Consider where you spend your time – The individual in my opening paragraph realized he found greater

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satisfaction working with his hands than cerebral work behind a desk. This led him to build his own home and engage in farm activities. **Consider what stimulates you when you are away from your 9-to-5 career.**

4. Take risks – I am working with a young client who is successful in sales but found greater satisfaction when he was working in a hands-on, lower-paid position. He thought his career progression into sales would bring him greater fulfillment. It did not. **Today, he is exploring another position in the company where he can use his natural skill set in technical support.**

5. Set goals and strive for them – As I progressed through a 50-plus-year career path in sales management, I learned to recognize different outlets that were attractive to me. Acting on each of these required setting achievement goals. In my 60s, I earned a Master of Ministry degree in Evangelical Christianity. Today, I am a writer, public speaker, consultant, and pastor. **When you act on your passions, they bring you peace, enjoyment, and recreation.**

Life is short

The person in the opening story is my younger

brother! My older brother also left a lucrative engineering career when he was 50 to pursue his passion. He purchased a delicatessen and became an accomplished chef. Life is short and time is valuable. **Now is always the right time to think about what brings you joy. Set goals and act on your passions.**

5 KEY TAKEAWAYS

1. Observe what stimulates you.
2. Seek feedback and insight from others.
3. Consider what interests you when you are away from your 9-to-5 career.
4. Take risks, set goals, and strive to achieve them.
5. Now is always the right time to act on your passions.