

Passion Workbook



"Passion is the fire that drives us to express who we really are. Never deny passion, for that is to deny Who You Are and Who you Truly Want To Be"

- Neal Walsch, author of Conversations with God





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Summary

"All we need to make us really happy is something to be enthusiastic about."

- Charles Kingsley

Passion is to humans as water is to plants – it is fundamental to our growth, happiness and well-being. It is an expression of who we are at our deepest level.

Many people think that they are not passionate about anything. Yet the truth is that everyone is passionate – they may just need help taking their passion out of the drawer. The difference between those who live their passions and those who don't varies. Some people are more aware of what they are passionate about than others. Some people have more determination, courage and perseverance than others. Sometimes a big dose of courage and self-belief is often what it takes to live a more passionate life.

It was recently noted that less than 10% of people are visibly pursuing their passions, whilst over 43% of people are dissatisfied by what they do.

This workbook will give you some tools and strategies to help you to discover and tap into your passion.

Passion is a key ingredient in helping people make positive life transitions, for passion can give the confidence, tenacity, inspiration and courage to make positive choices in our lives.

"Love's journey would be terrifying if we didn't have passion to give us courage – the blind courage of lovers, it is often called. It would be truer to call it the blind wisdom of lovers, because uncertainty is the basis of life."

-Deepak Chopra, Author

Discovering your passion is a key part of helping your discover who you are, who you want to be and what makes you tick.

What does passion look like?



Passion is not an intellectual thought. It is a feeling, an emotion. Whilst both thoughts and feeling are critically important, western society tends to value thoughts, reason, logic, and clear thinking more highly than feelings, intuition and soul.

If it is our desire to be the best that we can be, then the integration of mind, body and spirit is essential. However passion can be difficult to find – and many adults fail to find it altogether. In the absence of any encouragement they give up searching for it, or at least rediscovering it.

"Passionate people exude energy, power, excitement, drive and commitment. Their eyes sparkle, they are fully alive. They have an impact on others. They are the people who often become our leaders, or become the achievers on this planet. They achieve what they want, and most of us talk about them and often envy them. Yet less than 10% of people are visibly pursuing their passion."

- Charles Kovess

Consequences of ignoring your passion

The price for remaining stuck in an unrewarding job or a passionless life is a gnawing, tired, angry feeling of unfulfillment, a sense that you could be *doing* more with your life and that you could be *feeling* better about what you do and how you contribute to others. Doing what you really want to do, even partially, isn't easy. I've met numerous individuals who give up at the halfway point or do not try at all. They choose to hear and believe "work is something to be endured not enjoyed", or "only lucky people can pursue their passion". People buy into the majority voice before exploring alternatives. They bury their passion under yet another layer of fear or scepticism, or mask it with alcohol or anti-depressants. Yet the gnawing, tired, angry feeling of unfulfillment remains.

The consequences of not doing the things we love to do are too costly to ignore. An unfulfilling life ultimately robs us of serenity, sense of excitement, purpose, and wellness. This dis-ease is also contagious and can eat away into the other key areas of our lives such as our relationships with loved ones, family, friends, communities and career.



The impact on other areas of life may be so intense that the original issue can become masked, or the person may be diagnosed as clinically depressed (resulting in medication being prescribed and intensive psychotherapy). Life should be lived, not endured, and you owe it to yourself and those you love to be true to yourself and follow your bliss.

Being true to yourself can be the biggest passion of all.

Moving forward - a path with a purpose

Identifying what you want to do and then developing strategies to achieve it begins with self-analysis and increasing your self-awareness of your passion criteria. The challenge is to then put into action what you have learned. Often this take courage to follow your heart, and to not let you head, or the heads of others, burden you with Self-doubt or reasons why you should not pursue your passion.

Discovering and rekindling passion

Many people say they do not know what they are passionate about or will simply declare: "I'm not passionate about anything". Frequently people will say they do not know what it is that they want to do, or they do not know what they love doing.

Recent Australian research suggests that less than 10% of people are visibly pursuing their passions.¹

So how can you discover what you are passionate about? Many people report that they didn't actively set out to discover their passion – it just found them.

Jane was a disillusioned journalist. One day she walked into a bookstore and felt an overwhelming sense of being in love. Her heart rate quickened, she became breathless, and her eyes sparkled. The object of her affection? A book on colour! She just knew at this time that she had to write a book about colour!

¹ Charles Kovess, Passionate People Produce



Tapping into your passion means paying greater attention to the signs. Judge not what you are passionate about; just see whether it serves you and who you want to be.

In this workbook you will find some exercises that many people have found helped them both identify and find ways to integrate their passion into their life.

For further strategies about creative ways to generate career options you may like to purchase a Passion Pack from our website www.worklifesolutions.co.nz



1 What is Passion?

Many people have narrow ideas about what passion is. For example some people think that only extroverted people can be passionate. This is simply not true. Passion is for everyone. Some common definitions of passion include: Intensity, fervour, fervidness, ardour, zeal, vehemence, mania, fire, emotion, feeling, zest, enthusiasm, eagerness, preoccupation, excitement, animation, fixation, heart's desire, fascination, craze, obsession.

In the space below write down what passion means to you. You may even prefer to draw "passion."

When you are inspired by some great purpose, some extraordinary project, all your thoughts break their bonds. Your mind transcends limitations, your consciousness expands in every direction, and you find yourself in a new, great and wonderful world. Dormant forces, faculties and talents become alive, and you discover yourself to be a greater person by far than you ever dreamed yourself to be.

-Patanjali



2 Clues to passion

"Passion is a lot like 'love'. It is difficult, probably impossible, to define in precise terms, but easy to see and feel when it is present."

- Charles Kovess, Writer

How will you know if you are passionate about something? Look out for some of passion's common clues such as:

- ▷ A burning desire or hunger
- ▷ A feeling of inspiration
- ▷ A feeling in the pit of the stomach
- ▷ A sense of excitement
- ▷ A state of arousal
- ▷ A feeling of limitless energy
- ▷ A clarity of vision
- ▷ A feeling that nothing is too much trouble
- ▷ A sense of caring deeply
- ▷ A feeling of contentment

Passion is also about:

- ▷ Emotion, feeling, zest and enthusiasm
- ▷ Eagerness and preoccupation
- ▷ Excitement and animation
- ▷ Determination and self-belief
- ▷ Being willing to change
- ▷ Following your heart's desire
- ▷ Doing something you love



3 Keep a Passion Journal

"Keeping a journal gives you a sense of your own story. In a sense you create a script for your own life as you go along."

-Anon

Somewhere in the business of life we can forget what it is that makes us happy, and struggle to find the time to do the things we love. Sometimes these moments of insight are so fleeting that people can forget that they ever occurred. Listening to and recording these moments in some way is an essential part of discovering and integrating more passion into our lives. The purpose of your journal is to act as a central, easily retrievable, place to collect and store sources of inspiration, insights and clues related to your passion criteria and your preferred future. It is also an inspirational and motivational tool to be updated regularly and looked at frequently – ideally daily. Motivational Guru Tony Robbins has been keeping a journal for years and says, by focusing on what he wants more of in his life, that it is one the keys to his success.

To be effective choose one which has a colour, or images which symbolises how you want to feel and that symbolises the more passionate you. These colours and images will reinforce optimism and purpose on a sub-conscious level. For example, Mary chose a journal that was red because that was the colour she associated with being passionate. Andrew chose yellow, because that was the colour he associated with being happy and excited about life. Andrea chose a journal with butterflies because for her they symbolised "new beginnings".

Write down or draw any insights you gain. Record the observations of others and the times you feel or notice clues to your passion such as, feelings of excitement, inspiration, or limitless energy. Even feelings of anger and frustration can provide valuable clues to how your purpose could be fulfilled. Begin to make conscious evaluations of the things that you are most passionate about.

Eg. *"I love writing because I love to share knowledge and help people realise their potential and lead more fulfilled lives. I love the feedback that I get and knowing that I made a difference. I could do more of this by writing articles for magazines."*

So that they may easily retrieve information you may want to divide your journal into areas such as:

- ▷ Positive feedback you have received from people (other people often recognise what you are passionate about before you do!)
- ▷ Inspirational quotes related to passion
- ▷ Positive affirmations that reinforce your passion
- ▷ Goals related to your passion
- ▷ Anything that matches or provides clues to your passion criteria i.e. clippings, articles, job advertisements, pictures of inspirational role models, and any other inspirational information that provides a clue to things you are passionate about.

Hadyn initially resisted the idea of keeping a career journal. He was a very private person and kept most of his ideas in his head. He now loves the fact that he can keep all his ideas in one central place where they won't get forgotten, and he can flick through his journal like a photograph album, only this time he is recording the memories he wants to have.

4 Focus on your strengths

"Where talent, motivation and interest intersect expect a masterpiece."

- John Ruskin, Painter

People often take their 'natural knacks' or gifts for granted; however the skills that are easiest for us can provide a good clue to areas we are most passionate about. People have a tendency to assume that just because something is easy for them, that it is easy for se! Others may find the same tasks difficult – largely because their heart is not in it or they do not have the same strengths and skills.

What skills and talents come easily/most naturally to you? Which ones give you a buzz or a huge sense of personal satisfaction?

What strengths do others notice and admire?

Write these insights in their passion journal. Add to it and review it regularly.

Writer, Michael Cunningham, won a Pulitzer Prize for his novel (and now a hit movie), *The Hours*. When asked how a man managed to write a story that captured the feelings of three very different women, his friends reply: "He's an unusually empathetic guy. He has this uncanny ability to know how other people experience the world. That's such a handy skill – and a blessing for a writer."



5 What do others notice?

"Although men are accused of not knowing their own weaknesses, yet perhaps few know their own strength. It is in men as in soils, where sometimes there is a vein of gold which the owner never knows of."

- Satirist Jonathon Swift

Collecting positive feedback that others have said about you provides an objective way to record and confirm your skills, passions and areas of strength. Many people, including the best author of "What Colour is Your Parachute", Richard Bolles, believe that we are unable to truly realise our strengths without the objective insight provided by others. Through the eyes of others, it becomes possible to confirm our passions and to recognise those that we may have overlooked or discounted. The power of collecting feedback is powerfully summed up below:

"I realized that I had been collecting evidence of failures, telling myself "I can't do this because..." and sometimes they were old failure messages from the past.

To overcome my doubts and fears I started to look for and collect evidence of my success...sometimes people would come up to me and say, "you really spoke to me. That touched me," and I'd go home and write that down. So I started to think that I was worthwhile because I had proof of it. And once I could shore myself up with the external proof I got better at not needing it."

- Business Woman, Barbara Koziarski

Mary was considering an internal promotion within the HR department, but was experiencing some self-doubt. The comments of a friend who said: "your eyes light up when you talk to people. You have a real gift for encouraging people." Mary went home and recorded these comments in a special inspirational book she kept just for recording feedback. Later, when the time came to apply for the position, referring to these comments helped confirm both her passion for helping people and her ability in this area.



6 What are you proud of?

Take pride in your accomplishments and focus on your strengths. Often the things that we are most proud of, reinforce and mirror our passions and the things that give our lives meaning and purpose. The past is a good predictor of the future and the things that we are most proud of can provide a good clue to future areas we will be most passionate about and inspired to do. The more you can focus on your past achievements, skills and talents the stronger they'll become and the more others will benefit from your unique talents.

Looking back over your past what are you most proud of? When did you feel a sense of achievement? Why?

7 What is the most frustrating or annoying part of your present or past work?

Whilst we can have many minor upsets, it is the major upsets that will give us the best clues to our spirit. List the aspects that you find most frustrating in either your current role or previous roles. Then explore: "why?" keeping asking the why question until they have got to the core, or essence of the annoyance. This increased awareness may be the only catalyst you need to begin a re-evaluation process within your organisation, and to initiate some changes at work.

Frustrating/annoying things about work

Why they frustrate me



What changes could you make to bring about constructive changes?

Robert, a senior lawyer, was annoyed at the lack of recognition for contributions other than meeting revenue targets. Asking "why" several times helped him discover his key drivers were making a difference and being appreciated. Robert realised that the times he felt most appreciated was when he worked as a volunteer for Youth Social Services. Consequently he identified an opportunity to assist in his firm's induction process and his role has been tailored to include mentoring new legal graduates. Now not only does he gets to do more of what he loves doing – helping people, but his commitment, enthusiasm and contribution to work have increased dramatically.



8 What pushes your buttons?

Passionate anger, constructively used, could become the fuel that drives you, the fuel that drives your passion.

What presses your buttons? It may be specific things going on in your life now or wider issues about life in general, such as injustice, racism, etc. Gain greater awareness by exploring why your buttons are being pushed.

Are there any ways you could use your anger to benefit others and bring about positive change?



10 What do you value?

"Values are a matter of what guides you through every day, every task, every encounter with another human being. Yet we are often unaware of what our values are."

- Richard Bolles, author

Determining the values which give direction and meaning to your life. These are your deep, personal needs that motivate you to truly love your work day after day, ie helping people, creative expression, excitement, precision work, etc.

What do you need to do to feel fulfilled?

11 What fascinates you?

Passion goes in all directions. It can be as tangible as a job or a car or a house, or as intangible as a dream or an idea. You could be passionate about anything.

- | | |
|------------------|-------------------|
| Work | Hobby |
| Sport or pastime | Family |
| An idea | A cause |
| A belief | The environment |
| Travel | Other cultures |
| The past | The future |
| Films | Books |
| Music | Collecting things |
| Gardening | Making money |

What captures your interest and attention? List as many things as you can that you could be/are passionate about.

12 Begin with the end in mind

Standing forward and looking backward to today, what are the key actions and dates that you have to put in place to realise your future goals of a more passionate you? Identify any training, experiences and/or stepping stone activities that will help you achieve your goal. Break down your goals into mini goals which will help you achieve your major goal. Set dates for their achievement and plot these on an action line. Do something everyday that you feel passionate about.





13 Take your foot off the brakes

You may benefit from asking yourself the following questions: “What is stopping you from doing more of what you enjoy?” or “what could stop you?” Often our need for acceptance and approval from others may be a barrier to following our passions or pursuing our destiny. Fear of failure, procrastination or other impediments may also create obstacles. One of the keys to working on ways to remove these barriers is to become more consciously aware of the power of self-limiting thoughts, beliefs or habits. Once you have named your passion barriers you can start fixing them so they don’t keep the hand-brake on realising the real you.

Passion barriers:

Ways I can minimise these barriers and build on things that will help me pursue my passion:

Amongst the most common passion barriers we see at Worklife Solutions are people who have low self-esteem, and lack confidence and belief in their ability to make positive changes and have their needs met. Just as in love, where we are told that to love another we must first love and accept ourselves unconditionally - to be passionate about something we must first be passionate about ourselves and in our capacity to make a difference. Fundamental to this is believing that we deserve the best.