

Sense of Life Purpose, Week 1

5/6/24

6 Characteristics of Passion Development

1. Passion often develops accidentally.

It begins as an interest or inclination. You have an unintended experience that triggers intrigue, whether it's a science fair experiment in elementary school, a guest speaker in high school, or an enthusiastic college professor who made an otherwise uninteresting topic suddenly appealing.

Once this interest is triggered, you follow the impulse and look into it. Sometimes the interest quickly fades and other times you continue to seek to learn more or to experience it again.

2. Passion takes encouragement and exposure.

In most cases, the initial encounter with the object of interest isn't enough to seal the deal of passion. It takes multiple events and experiences that retrigger the interest over time. Having a mentor or parent encourage further exploration or future exposure is often the catalyst needed to anchor a stronger interest in the topic.

3. Passion isn't always enjoyable.

Passion begins by following interests that are intrinsically enjoyable. You continue to follow an interest because you enjoy what you're doing. However, as your interest begins to develop into a passion and you get more involved, it becomes more challenging. There may even be aspects of this activity that

you don't like or that feel like a chore. But as the level of passion develops, the benefits outweigh the costs.

4. Passion doesn't require talent or skill, at first.

By definition, when we are first beginning at anything, it starts out as something we're NOT good at. Passion has to start with play—a willingness to explore for curiosity's sake, not for the reward of being good at it. This is one of the things that holds people back from developing their passion—they're unwilling to do something they're bad at. Even in the situations where some level of natural ability may be required, true skill and talent are developed over time.

5. Passion takes practice.

In order for proficiency to develop, which invites a deeper level of exploration and further develops passion, time and effort must be applied. For an interest to develop into a passion, the knowledge or activity have to become second nature. A skill or expertise must be developed. This ability allows the activity to reach a higher level of enjoyment, when it leads to a state of flow.

And in order to reach this level of mastery, it takes deliberate practice. Not simply exposure or repetition, but commitment to improving through hours a day spent dedicated to the endeavor.

6. Purpose amplifies passion.

When passion is directed toward a higher purpose, a higher level of meaning and fulfillment can be achieved. Purpose is the conviction that what you are doing matters because it's integrally connected to the wellbeing of others. When you can see the impact your passionate efforts make, you feel even more strongly about what you do.