

5 Steps to Finding Your Passion by Cheryl Richardson

Passion is a rich, soulful emotion. Whether it makes you feel angry, excited, inspired or tearful, passion is something that moves you in a very powerful way. Passion is an internal experience not an external event. Finding your passion means connecting your head with your heart, engaging that part of yourself that "feels" in a big, bold, spiritual way. For many of us, this is a challenge. Our busy, chaotic lives disconnect us from our feelings. And, when we act from this "numbed out" place, it's impossible to connect with our passions.

Step One: Get Quiet

For most people, the road to connecting with passion begins with practicing good self care. This means slowing down, spending time with yourself, taking good care of your body and mind, nurturing your spirit, and engaging in activities that will move you out of your head and into your body. Once you become passionate about your self-care, you'll know you're on the right track.

Step Two: Become Sensitive to Your Environment

Once you're more connected to your feelings, you'll be ready to do a little exploring to discover the specific, personal things that best ignite your passions. Spend one week paying close attention to what excites you, touches you, inspires you to think in a whole new way, or even frustrates you. Watch for clues. Stories in newspapers, programs on television, or conversations with friends may give you an indication of those things that will lead you to your passions. As you make new discoveries write about them in your journal.

Step Three: Answer a Series of Questions

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1. What interest, passion or desire are you most afraid of admitting to yourself and others? What would you do if you knew you could not fail?
2. What do you love about yourself?
3. What one thing do you dream about doing that you've never told anyone?
4. What would you do if money was not a concern in your life?
5. What do you fantasize about doing while driving your car or taking a shower?

6. Who do you know that's doing something you'd like to do? Describe yourself doing it.
7. How could you make the world a better place for yourself and others?
8. Who do you think you are? Have you labeled yourself a mother, student, caregiver? What are the other parts of you?
9. What did you love when you were a child?
10. What's stopping you from moving forward with exploring your passion?
11. List five things that you want. List five things that you're good at. Do you know the difference between them?
12. What drives you, and what gives you satisfaction?
13. When you were young, what did you know you would do when you grew up?
14. How would you like the world to be?
15. What would you regret not having done if your life was ending? "This is BIG!"
— Oprah

After answering these questions, read through the answers. Do you see any patterns?

Step Four: Go on a Treasure Hunt

Go on a 'treasure hunt' in your own home. The things you hold on to can provide clues to your interests and passions.

Step Five: Take A Risk

Stop "thinking" about your passions and start doing something. Take a risk, and step out to try something new. By challenging your fear with action, you'll not only raise your self-esteem, you'll expand your comfort zone. If you're not sure of what to do, ask a trusted friend or partner for ideas. Remember that good luck happens when you're in action. And, if you try something new (even if you're not sure of the outcome), you may discover a passionate interest by accident!