

By Lorna Foreman



The Passion Test

Know what you want but be open to the unexpected

Most of us have had a good life. Not counting the tragedies that befall anyone who is alive, we have worked, raised families, and now are either retired or planning to be soon. Pretty good, eh?

We live in a country that allows us access to education, a good health system and freedom of choice — whether it is what to eat, wear or choice of work. If we are lucky, we have worked in a career that we have enjoyed.

It might not have been the first choice though. Remember the dreams of what you wanted to be when you grew up? I wanted to be a ballerina dancing my way around the world — but that did not materialize. I still love to dance though. Then I wanted to be a veterinarian. Didn't do that either. Why? Well my marks were horrible in high school — in fact, I did not like school at all.

I fell into my career, although it took some time and a very circuitous route and I am thankful that it worked out for me. It was definitely something I was passionate about.

Passion is, in my mind, very important. It need not turn into a career but nevertheless we all need something in our life that brings out the passion. It is wonderful to meet the people whose work *is* their passion. It seems to create an aura of joy around them.

Some time ago I picked up a book called *The Passion Test*. I was going through a period of dissatisfaction and it seemed to call to me. When I decided to write about this subject I hauled it off the shelf and went through it again. It is interesting how some of the 10 items I put down as being very important to me changed, but what was more interesting was what did *not* change — they just moved up on the importance list. It seems that my top choice was something that I just could *not* do. It has run through my life from the time I remember. Maybe it is just as well that I did not become that famous ballerina or a veterinarian because I might not have had the time to pursue my real sense of being. It is simply to create art in some form. No, I am not a famous artist and probably never will be, but the enjoyment I get is satisfaction enough.

I have achieved many of the other items on my list. While pleasurable, they are not the prime passion. I have a partner who shares many of the same interests as I; my spir-

itual life has developed and I consider myself reasonably healthy (definitely a passion for healthy food), but no matter how many times in my life I have put down the paintbrush, I always pick it up again. I feel healthier and more vibrant when I am creating. So at long last I feel I have a happy, well-balanced and passion-driven life.


There is an interesting exercise in *The Passion Test*. You are supposed to imagine that when you are 100 years of age, a friend writes what they feel you have accomplished and what kind of person you were throughout those 100 years — what your likes and dislikes were and some of your most endearing qualities. The idea, of course, is that you are writing down what you wish your life to be. It is quite an interesting exercise.

How much of mine have I accomplished? Surprisingly, quite a lot.

It is fine thinking that once you have a list that you can just check off the items as you achieve them but that is not the case. Passion should become an integral part of your life. I try very hard to keep my passion in mind in any decisions I need to make; whether it is cooking a meal, choosing clothes, buying a car or arranging my home.

However, no matter what is on your list there are times when the “aha” moment changes your path. When you allow yourself to be open to the present moment and let go of the way you think things should be happening, you are more likely to be following not only your passion but what you are meant to be doing. “Falling” into my career was one of those moments.

I get a wonderful sensation when I *know* something is right for me. It has never failed me yet. I also get a different sensation when I know that something is *not* right for me.

It is impossible to write about this subject thoroughly in this column. First of all, it is an ongoing adventure and I suggest everyone think about it. After all, we are entering the last stages of our lives, so why not make it a life filled with passion? 

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