

Jumpstart Your Dream Life

How To Get Anything You Want

**A Practical Guide to Finding
What You Want to Do and
Sticking To It**

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How to Get Anything You Want

If you know someone who would benefit from learning how to turn their interests into a career and committing to their goals, share this guide with them.

To get fresh insights on how to live better, work towards your goals, and improve your work, join the JumpstartYourDreamLife.com newsletter at <http://www.jumpstartyourdreamlife.com/welcome>.

Thanks for joining and I look forward to growing with you!

What You Will Learn

In this guide, you will learn:

- The two strategies you can use to find out which of your interests translates into a career.
- How to figure out the non-straightforward path of finding your “passion”.
- How to properly manage and mitigate risks involved with looking for new opportunities.
- The common misconceptions people have on finding their passion, and how you can steer clear of them.
- The mindset you can use to overcome obstacles and move closer to your goals.
- How to approach goals so that you don’t get overwhelmed.
- The technique you can use to ensure that you always have a plan to turn towards when things go awry.
- How to take what you’ve learned and implement them in your everyday life.

Let’s get started.

What About the Conventional Wisdom?

First, I want to ask you something. Have you ever heard the following phrases?

- “Just follow your passion!”
- “Do what you love.”
- “Just keep trying and you can achieve whatever you want.”

These pieces of advice sound reasonable, don't they?

The question is, though, how useful have any of these phrases been to helping you discover what you should do?

A lot of the advice we hear on a regular basis are well-meaning and sound nice on the surface, but they don't translate to anything actionable in reality. They're so vague that they've become generic pieces of advice sprouted out whenever someone is in need of help.

For example, have you ever tried to follow your passion? Most people don't even know what their passion is.

People are taught to believe that if they just keep going about their lives, somehow their passion will somehow fall from the sky into their laps. Someday, they'll eventually have everything figured out and things will be perfect.

When did that ever happen to you?

Never?

If not, don't worry. Contrary to what many people think, finding out what interests you and working towards is a process that takes work. It isn't something that happens spontaneously.

So, we're going to get to the truth of finding out what you want to do, and how you can commit to getting where you want to be.

Using a Formula to Find Your Passion

Back in college, I was still trying to decide what to do with my life. I did some research on the web and spoke to a number of people for ideas. Of course, I was given the usual generic advice of doing what I love, and so forth.

Then, the career counselor referred me to a website in order to solve my dilemma. The site had a link to a long questionnaire that asked all sorts of things, including personal interests, skills, aspirations, and such. It was free, so I shrugged and thought, "Why not?"

I went through this questionnaire, answering each question as truthfully as I thought I could. The entire process probably took almost half an hour. With a bit of hesitation, I pressed the Submit button, and awaited the answer to my life's true calling.

30 seconds later, the program revealed the perfect role for me: health sanitation.

"Health sanitation?!" I thought to myself. What did that even mean?! I had absolutely zero interest in health sanitation, and had no idea what kind of roles would fit into that category

Looking back, I can almost laugh at the ridiculousness of thinking that an online program could determine what I should do with my life.

Yet, the sad part of this was that I was referred to this website by a campus career counselor as the solution to a deep and complicated question.

So if a career counselor's expert advice is deferred to an online system that is supposed to sprout out your life's calling, then what are we supposed to do?

Finding Out What You Want To Do

Here's the ugly truth: finding your "passion" can be a messy, messy process.

Finding your calling is commonly touted as a smooth, linear process. We may be lost in the beginning, but sooner or later we all find what we want to do and everything ends well.

This couldn't be more wrong.

Finding what we want to achieve can be clouded by many factors, including external and internal influences. This can include peer pressure, societal expectations and just pure lack of resistance to change.

What we thought we loved turns out to be a combination of these influences, along with a fear of implementation.

So how do we cut through all of this?

Testing.

You're thinking, "What do you mean, 'testing'?"

There are two basic ways that people find out what they really want to do:

1. Turning an already established interest into a full-time career.
2. Trial and error (while minimizing the risks involved).

Let's go over each of these, beginning with the first one.

Turning an Interest into a Full-time Career

Compared to the alternative of trial and error, this is more of a natural progression. Note that I said “more”, as this can still be quite messy and you might make a couple twists and turns before things start to take flight.

For instance, let’s say you enjoy pursuing a particular hobby in your spare time, such as building and repairing gadgets and machines. Over time, you continue your craft and become known as the “computer expert.”

If something breaks, you’re the go-to person in your extended family. Perhaps some relatives or family members see that you enjoy modifying electronic devices, whatever they may be, and are willing to pay for your help.

As time passes, they refer other people who need your help. You get busier and busier, and increase the prices. You might even bring on a few extra pairs of hands to help out. Eventually your small hobby turns into a fledging business.

Of course, it doesn’t happen overnight, or at all. Many people simply keep it as a hobby on the side while they continue working at their full-time job. Some people, though, scale it up.

A real life example I know of is a fresh college graduate that starting working in finance, which was a popular choice. Even though the hours were long, the position had a high salary and there was a clear pathway.

Despite working overtime nearly everyday, she would spend the little spare time she had reading cookbooks and food magazines.

After awhile, she did more research on becoming a chef, such as speaking with people in the industry, reading about the profession and learning about the history of successful chefs. She decided to save up money to attend culinary school, and eventually quit her job to pursue a career as a culinary chef.

When she was attending culinary school, she decided that working in a restaurant wasn’t what she wanted. After speaking to restaurant and store owners, she decided that opening her own shop was what she wanted to do.

So, she specialized in making pastries and opened up her own pastry shop. Since then, her store has been featured in various publications.

Of course, your story is probably going to be very different from either of these examples, and that’s expected. But perhaps you find yourself naturally veering yourself to something in your spare time.

Maybe it's...

- Reading websites about fitness and exercise?
- Watching documentaries and books about historical figures from a certain time period?
- Giving your friends relationship advice?
- Something else?

We all fill our spare time doing something we enjoy doing that others would pay for.

By now, maybe you're thinking skeptically, "Yeah...but who would pay for _____?" or "I can't get a job in _____."

In our world today, there are numerous mediums that we can present our skills and interests. You can package your interest in a way that would be appealing to others. As for your second question, you don't need to apply to a job just to pursue your interest.

I'll give you an example. Let's pick someone named Susan.

Susan the Fashionista

Susan loves clothes. Before stepping out of the house, she carefully matches her clothing and accessories to make sure she looks fantastic before stepping out the door. People always compliment her on her clothing style, and friends come to her for fashion advice.

In her spare time, Susan looks at fashion magazines and checks out videos and pictures of her favorite celebrities, seeing what trends are popular and what would look good.

While sitting down at her desk at work, Susan starts daydreaming a bit and wonders if there is some way that she could turn this interest into a full-time gig.

I'll present two different versions of Susan here:

#1 Stubborn Susan

As Susan sips her coffee and gazes at the window, her thoughts run wild with the possibilities as she thinks of fame, fortune and clothes. Certainly, her friends flock to her for fashion advice, so they must value what she has to say about the topic.

As she fondly remembers their get-togethers, she gets all excited. But then her mental gear shifts as she imagines asking them to pay. The idea begins to dim. She knows they would never actually pay her, so she mentally crosses that off the list.

People tell her that if she loves fashion, she should go be a fashion designer. Susan thinks of all the famous fashion designers she follows and how she would love to be one of them.

But then, how would she even do that? She has no credentials, and is working in a field completely unrelated to fashion. Susan would have to brush off her resume and somehow convince someone in the fashion industry that she really has what it takes to succeed in fashion.

The thought is way too taxing on her. A stack of papers lands on her desk and she gets back to her work, tossing the whole idea out. The 5 minute daydreaming time is over.

#2 Smart Susan

Smart Susan considers the same possibilities as Stubborn Susan. She gets excited about the whole idea too. However, rather than crossing off the entire idea altogether, she decides that in her spare time she'll do some more research on the area.

Susan knows someone who was obsessed (and still is) with putting together computer parts. Now, her friend runs a computer business with a few employees. Perhaps it would be a good idea to talk to her friend.

At home, Susan does some research online about fashion design. While the usual topics come up, such as fashion designers in the industry, there are also some interesting roles that she hadn't thought of before, such as fashion contributors and personal consultants for specific niches, such as catering towards professionals in an industry.

Susan writes down the possibilities as food for thought to consider and also crafts an email to send to her friend.

What's the difference?

Stubborn Susan and Smart Susan are the same people. The difference between them is that they took two very different approaches. Stubborn Susan hit a mental roadblock, threw her hands up in the air in frustration, and crossed the idea off altogether after thinking of a few possibilities.

Smart Susan, however, doesn't just stop at thinking of the most obvious possibilities. Rather than just giving up at the first roadblock, she also looks at what other people outside of her interest currently do. Smart Susan thinks openly about a variety of topics and how they might apply to her.

Another thing Smart Susan does is look externally for answers, rather than just sit there and think. Remember how I mentioned that your passion doesn't "fall from the sky?" It doesn't just land out of thin air, either.

"Passion" requires research, such as looking at what others are doing, *talking to others*, and finding a way to reach out to all the possibilities that are available.

I like to call this the "River Strategy". When water flows through the land, it goes off and branches out to whatever space is available. A river reaches any gap possible and fills it out. Similarly, considering pursuing your interest requires exploring all avenues.

Even if a river hits an obstacle, such as an area of land that blocks it, eventually the river finds a way. It will either erode the land away over time, or choose to flow somewhere else.

By using the "River Strategy", you keep an open mind by exploring the different ways you can learn how to make something feasible. Even if you hit obstacles, you look for other ways to reach your goals, delving deeper to learn and obtain more information.

Turning something into a reality isn't about brooding thoughts in your head in a dark room until it fills with light. It requires going out into the world and doing research.

Now let's talk about the alternative, trial and error.

Trial and Error

This one is a bit trickier to navigate than the first. Most people are in this boat, likely because they're not sure of what they want to do. They think they might be interested in pursuing a goal, but they're not sure how or whether it's something they want to do for the long-term.

Now, there's a right way to go about the trial and error method and a wrong way. Let's start with the wrong way first.

Do you ever know those people who spend years jumping from one job to another with no progression at all? The person likely gets very "passionate" about something, but things don't pan out, or they lose interest. Then, the next big thing comes along and they find a different "passion."

When first hearing about someone's aspirations, everyone nods their head and says, "That's great!"

After a few more times, though, this excitement dies down. People begin to roll their eyes thinking, "Here we go again." Eventually, it gets to the point where the person just stops mentioning what they're up to.

Often, we jump headfirst into something, believing that our excitement and motivation will carry us through the troughs into success. But time and effort can take its toll on us. We don't get the results that we want, so our motivation dwindles until things get too frustrating to keep on going.

Then, a new project or interest gives us that "high" feeling we get, with all the newfound promises and rewards. So we drop what we're doing and go to pursue something else, only for the cycle to repeat itself.

How do we keep ourselves from falling into this cycle?

Let's look at the concept of risk management.

Risk management is when someone pursues something that potentially involves a high degree of risk, such as a potentially rewarding opportunity, but at the same time finds ways to reduce the risk.

How do we do this?

Let's go back to Smart Susan and explore her situation a bit further.

Smart Susan is interested in pursuing fashion consulting and wishes to target female professionals working in corporate jobs. She's really excited about helping women in her field to dress for success, as she's heard her friends' pains about clothing numerous times.

She's especially excited about bringing things to fruition after meeting up with her friend the computer entrepreneur, over coffee.

However, rather than just up and quitting her current job to dive into this area headfirst, Smart Susan is calm and has a plan. She tells her friends to spread the word about her plans and to refer anyone who is in need of her service.

After telling everyone she knows and is advertising her services online, she gets her first client after a month. On the weekend, she meets up with her client and helps to revamp her wardrobe. The client occasionally meets up with her from time to time for more service.

Fast forward a few months. Smart Susan is still at her job, but has a small, yet steady flow of clients by now.

So far, things have been alright, but Susan slowly realizes that while she enjoyed dressing herself and just giving advice to her friends, she doesn't actually like providing fashion consulting to strangers (the waiting around and finding a bunch of different clothes for strange people can be quite boring).

Perhaps this area isn't quite suited for her. After all, a hobby might not be translatable into a career.

And you know what? That's okay. Susan is still working at her job, and is free to try something else out in her spare time. She always enjoys sewing, and looks at the different ways she could pursue this interest (Hint: it doesn't mean she has to sew other people's things all day. Can you think of other possibilities?).

Meanwhile, let's head over to Stubborn Susan and see what she's up to.

One day, Stubborn Susan has had it. She was stuck in traffic for over an hour, and then got swamped with work. After getting yelled at by a client, she can't take it.

"I quit!" she exclaims.

Susan now has all the free time in the world (and a bit of money) to pursue her life-long dream of something fashion related. She spreads the message to everyone she knows that she wants to do fashion design.

Stubborn Susan dives in head-first. After all, if you do something, you should pursue it 110%.

Business is very slow at first, but after a few months, she too has a very small, yet steady stream of clients.

After six months, she realizes it was fun as a hobby, but she's not really interested in it as a career. Stubborn Susan's spinning her wheels trying to do something else as people in her life look on.

I know this example was fictional, but there have been real-life cases similar to this. In many situations, people leave their salaried positions behind to immediately start working on a new venture, only to find themselves struggling to stay afloat.

What's the point of risk management after all?

There are three benefits to mitigating your risks:

- You don't give up resources you currently have
- It's easier to pursue something else if you realize you don't really want to pursue your initial idea
- Your family and friends won't shake their heads, or watch entertainingly. People can be so cruel.

When you're trying something new, it is much better to have a plan to backtrack on in case things don't work out or go as anticipated. You'll have invested less time and effort into something, decreasing the likelihood that you'll be throwing good money after bad, so to speak.

Of course, just because something's hard doesn't mean you should give up. Remember, getting what you want isn't supposed to be easy! If it were, everyone would get everything they ever wanted.

Which brings me to the next part, where we'll delve into the "how" of getting what you want.

Goal Setting

Okay, so we just talked about knowing what you want to get, and the process to set it in stage. Remember, it can be a messy process that takes time.

But once you find something that you know you want, how do you go out and get it?

Here's where most people throw in the towel.

The reason why people give up at this point is because it's just fun to imagine what you want to be. Think of when you were a child and how fun it was to want to be an astronaut, or whatever you wanted to be.

Another reason is that people go about goal setting the wrong way. After all, this isn't a skill that is taught in school. We all *know* that we need to set goals, but we aren't given the tools to go about doing so.

Implementing is what truly separates the wheat from the chaff.

Peas in a Pod

I like to think of goals as "peas in a pod". If your goal is too big, you'll get frustrated and give up before you even begin to gain any traction.

If you've made it this far into reading and your main goal is "I want to make a billion dollars!", please call me when you do.

Although I talked a lot about pursuing an interest in your career a lot before, setting goals really applies to all aspects of your life. You can apply this to health, relationships, money, or anything you want to achieve.

Set small goals so that they are readily achievable and encourage you to keep going (after all, they are markers of progress). In order to have direction, you also need a general direction, or an overarching theme.

This is why I like to call goal setting "peas in a pod". The small, easily achievable goals are the peas, and they are within the larger pod, the theme you are aiming for.

Let's use fitness as an example. Let's say you want to lose about 30 pounds. You eat fast food on a regular basis, and only exercise once in awhile.

It would be unrealistic to start off by saying that you'll get into better shape by doing 20 push-ups each day.

What do you think will most likely happen?

You'll get to the third push-up and say to yourself, "This is way too hard. I give up." Or worse, the thought of doing 20 push-ups is too daunting, so you don't bother at all.

So start with a pea. Set a small initial change, such as, "I'll drink at least two glasses of water each day." Once you can do that regularly, set another goal.

The overarching "pod", or theme, is to lose 30 pounds, with small goals in subsequent steps.

The reason why this works so well is because there is the vision of a large accomplishment to look forward to, but also small goals that are within our reach.

Here's a technique that is incredibly useful to keep you from straying from your goals.

"If not this, then that"

I like to implement the "if not this, then that" technique. It's similar to the "river strategy" because you explore various possibilities, except the "if not this, then that" technique is more about creating back-up solutions so that you're not let down when there's an obstacle.

Let's say that you set a small goal. Even if the goal seems very easy to achieve, there are always going to be some set-backs one way or another. Once you hit a set-back, it can be very tempting to give in and call off the whole thing.

Enter the "if not this, then that" technique.

If you set a goal, it is important you also implement a back-up so that you have something to resort to.

Let's go to Joe.

How Joe Practices Guitar Regularly

Joe wants to learn how to play the guitar and has just mastered the basics. He bought a guitar about two months ago and a beginner's level songbook. His small goal is to practice for an hour each day twice a week, on the weekends.

His plan works well until two months later, when he and his family are going on a vacation. He can't bring his guitar because they can only carry a limited amount of luggage.

Joe doesn't want his skill to atrophy while he's away, so he sets up a plan for the trip and for future situations when he doesn't have his guitar. There are two things he will do.

First, Joe will watch video tutorials on playing the guitar so that he can learn from the experts on proper technique, even if he doesn't have his guitar on hand. Another way he'll keep learning and enhancing his guitar skills is by listening to audio recordings of music theory so that he understands the fundamentals of song composition.

Even though Joe couldn't bring his guitar due to travel restrictions, he thought of other ways to still keep his guitar skills fresh, using the "if not this, then this" technique.

Not having his instrument on hand wasn't a reason for him to give up or stop practicing. Like any skill, it involves finding ways of getting around obstacles or difficulties. Everyone faces challenges – it's simply a matter of how you deal with them.

Finding and getting what you want isn't a linear process like it's cut out to be. It involves navigating through the twists and turns and following a strategy that helps you to stay focused.

Where to Go From Here

Congratulations on making it to the end.

To recap, we've covered how to find ways of finding and scaling your interest into a full-time career, while mitigating the risks involved.

We've also covered various strategies you can use to overcome obstacles and stay committed to your goals. This applies for any skill and all aspects of your life.

By now, we've only just scratched the surface. In order to make any goal a reality, it's important to have accountability and know that you're taking the right steps.

I write regularly in my newsletter on what it takes to make an impact, become exceptional at a skill, and improve the way we work and live.

I enjoy connecting with my readers and seeing what they have to share. Send any questions and comments to melissa@jumpstartyourdreamlife.com. I would love to hear from you.

If you enjoyed reading this guide, share it with someone who you think it would help.

Here's a template you can use:

Hey [Name],

Check out this guide on finding out what you love to do and the committing to your goals. I think you'll find it really helpful. You can get the guide at:

<http://www.jumpstartyourdreamlife.com>

best wishes,
[Your Name]

If you haven't joined the newsletter yet, sign up at <http://www.jumpstartyourdreamlife.com/welcome> and enter your name and email address.

Thanks again and see you there.