

PASSION – Tango your way through life

Passionate dance steps

Have you ever watched a couple dancing a tango? When you think “tango” what are the words that immediately dance into your mind? I bet one of them is passion. The tango is typically hot, fiery, emotional, passionate, sexy and very dramatic. Passion can also be the intense love and drive for something – perhaps a career, a humanitarian cause, topical issue or interest of yours.

What in your life is like the tango for you? What fuels you up? What stokes your fire?

Dancing passionately in your body

How many of you are working in jobs that you hate or in relationships that are stagnant and lacking lustre and passion? Are you doing activities and attending social events that are boring, lifeless and uneventful? Are you accepting and tolerating daily life that bores you silly and makes getting up in the morning difficult? How much longer are you prepared to live a passion-less life and how does that impact your body?

Your body knows when you are not living your passion and conversely when you are living passionately. Someone lacking passion can become sluggish, de-energised and even downright depressed. Isn't depression “pressed down passion”? Perhaps we could coin a new word here – depassion! Just imagine instead of treating depression with antidepressants we supported people find and live their passion and sustain a high degree of joy in their lives.

In contrast, notice your body when you are really excited or motivated. Your whole being oozes it - in the quickness of your step, the swing of your hips, the twirls of your excitement, the smile on your face and the poise and grace you float around life's dance floor with. How do you experience passion (or “depassion”) in your body?

Find the dance you want to dance

What if you are void of passion? What if you hate your job or your life in general? What if you are unwell or going through something that leaves you far from feeling motivated or passionate about something? What if you have never had the resources to get, or do what you really desire?

Often what robs you of living your passion is that you may have no idea of what lights you up or how things could be different. Take some time to be still and ask yourself the questions, “What have I always dreamed of doing? What has given me a “buzz” in the past? What feeds my soul and makes me feel content and happy?” Find your craving or burning desire – and yes, that is really how passion feels. Often you can find your passionate desire by noticing what you feel is missing in your life, what your major whinges are about or what you envy about other people's lives! You may also notice your desire by listening more carefully to that “belly ache” or “burning (or sometimes empty) heart” feeling.

Add doing what you love more and more. Subtract what doesn't turn you on.

Using work choice as an example, I don't mean everyone should leave work that feels like drudgery. It might mean starting an absolutely new career. It may be changing your attitude around your current work and creating other ways of working within that role in a more fun-filled way. It may be shifting upwards, downwards or side-wards in your company to a role that is more fulfilling and one

that allows you to do other things that you are passionate about. It may mean incorporating aspects of your work with social or leisure pursuits that you enjoy.

Dance your own individual dance style

So tango may not be your style. Is your life more like the slow fox trot – even, regular, simple and uncomplicated or is it more like the flashy quick-step? Whatever it is, dance your own individual style and express your unique self with passion. You might be passionate about cooking with a kitchen full of exotic herbs and spices to experiment with in a chaotic kitchen and with plenty of time up your sleeve. Someone else might be passionate about cooking by following the recipe to the “t” and preparing a perfect dinner party for 8. Express your unique passion in your own individual dance style.

Even if dancing is not your thing, do it with passion

Yes you still may need food on your table, but you may not be able to easily leave your “passionless” job today. Or you may have a family you need to cook for without the gourmet chef arriving magically every night. But you CAN start to change your attitude and ignite some passion into those everyday chores or tasks which don’t necessarily light your fire. Add some new moves or dance steps to your everyday repertoire. You might want to try something in a different order, sing or whistle as you work or even spice things up by adding a new dance partner – eg kids help you cook, invite a new friend to lunch during your work day. Change your posture or speed of movement to “up your energy.” Do something to fuel the passion in the meantime, but also start taking steps to find the new job, develop the relationship more intimately, or whatever you wish to do more long-term that has you “falling and feeling passionately in love” with your life again.

Start with the easy dance steps, then progress to intermediate and advanced level

If you are in the pit of depression or in a minor slump of de-passion, or even merely just leading your life (not dancing it!), find some small spark of passion in what you are doing. Make every effort to be fully mindful in what you are doing, and do it with as much enthusiasm as you can.

A bit like the rungs of the ladder or using the analogy of dancing, take a step at a time. Usually at a dance class you might learn one or two dance steps in a night as it would be foolish to try and learn all of the steps in one big hit. You would also start at the beginners’ class making gradual steps towards improvement.

So it can be with passion. Take new steps that fuel your passion – no matter how small they may seem. As you get a glimpse of what a life of living passionately feels like, this will be your small spark that can create a lovely roaring fire and will motivate you to progress to the more advanced “passion” dance class!

Passion not obsession - Is there such a thing as being an overly passionate “dancer”?

What are you passionate about? What are you obsessed with? Is there a connection here? During my recent holiday break when I read a book about an extreme-sport junkie, I got some insights into passion versus obsession. Here was a man, who year after year won countless long distance extreme races by training hard, but also by paying acute attention to mechanical details that would reduce segments of his race by seconds and which would cumulatively allow him to win the race. He was so passionate about winning that the rest of his life “went on hold.” His obsession seemed all in the aid of trying to gain some self confidence which had been knocked out of him as he grew up. Yes

he was passionate (actually obsessed!) about his sport, but the passion lay more in ‘killing his demons’ than flying and having fun with the “angels”.

Imagine if you loved dancing, but you did it all day, every day and lived and breathed it constantly. Or imagine attending course after course or reading book after book in personal development, but not putting anything much into practice. Imagine going to the gym for one or two sessions a day to keep fit, toned and the weight off! With extremes and intensity of anything, you can become a slave to your obsession, rather than free to enjoy your passion, and the side-effects of the two are very different.

Bring out the dance teacher from within – PASS “I” ON - Your legacy

Another way of looking at passion is in the word itself. PASSION = PASS I ON. How would you like to pass on your passion and the expression of yourself, your interests and your love of life to those around you and leave this legacy to your future generation? If you are not living your passion at present, that is what you are passing on. If you are indeed living your passion, you will be the “belle of the ball” that everyone admires and wants to dance with.

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