

Story Block: *Passion*

*Exploring the art and
science of Passion*



in partnership with

H O L S T E E

Story Block: Passion



We often hear people say: “money doesn’t buy happiness.” While there is some truth to that notion, more happiness is found while living a life of passion. However, too often the idea of passion is as elusive as a unicorn.

I loved a unique take on this elusive subject in the book *The Passion Paradox*, as mentioned in the intro.

They write, “Mindlessly living with a passion can be extremely harmful and destructive. Mindfully living with a passion can be the key to a life well lived.”

The authors talk about key components that create the optimal conditions to experience Harmonious passion:

- Driven from within
- Focus on the process instead of becoming obsessed with the short term results. Think of the old proverb, “The master has failed more times than the student even tried”
- Instead of worrying about being the best, become the best by focusing on getting better. This starts by swapping a “win or lose” with a “win or learn” mindset
- Be patient. Appreciate that deep growth takes time
- Be here now. Stay in the present moment, for it is arguably the most precious gift you have been given

“Harmonious passion manifests mainly from activities that are freely chosen without contingencies; when you do something because you enjoy it, not because it offers potential rewards, and not to avoid negative repercussions. It aligns closely with the ancient Greek notion of “eudaimonia,” or a kind of happiness that results not from overwhelming pleasure but from striving to meet one’s full potential by engaging in activities that one considers meaningful ... Those who focus most on success are least likely to achieve it. Those who focus least on success, and focus on the process of engaging in their craft instead, are most likely to achieve it.”

Here’s to pursuing your passion with a little more intention!

Passion



Do you lead with
your head or your heart?

Finding and nurturing
the things that light you up
is difficult but essential.

Do what makes you
feel alive and you may
find yourself in places
you never thought possible.

HOLSTEE

Passion *noun*

pas·sion | 'pa-shən

A strong liking or desire for or devotion to some activity, object, or concept.

Merriam-Webster Dictionary © 2020

In this guide, explore how harnessing your passions can lead to higher well-being.

Enjoy poetry, philosophy, and a range of activities to help pinpoint personal virtues, strengths, and motivations – the building blocks of targeted, fulfilling practices and activities.

Dive into teachings by Christopher Peterson, Martin Seligman, Tim Kasser, and Dr. Tal Ben-Shahar – just to name a few. Learn how to reflect meaningfully on connection and engagement, bring personal values and strengths to the surface, and find gratification in challenge.

Use this guide to identify and grow the areas of your life that are the most compelling and rewarding.



“What and how much had I lost by trying to do only what was expected of me instead of what I myself had wished to do?”

RALPH ELLISON



Rose, Thorn, and Bud

We wish it was as easy as snapping our fingers and we'd all know, without a doubt, what we're passionate about and how we should spend our time. But sometimes it can be hard to figure out. One of our favorite exercises is to take time at the end of the week to identify our **rose**, **thorn**, and **bud**.

- Rose
- Thorn
- Bud

What was the **highlight** of your week?

What was one **pain point** in your week?

What are you **looking forward to** next week?

When we assess the moments that make us feel connected engaged, frustrated, bored, or challenged, we get closer to knowing ourselves and what makes our lives meaningful.

Tuck this guide into your journal, bedside table, or somewhere you'll come back to it through the month to name your rose, bud, and thorn.

Rose	
Thorn	
Bud	

Rose	
Thorn	
Bud	

Rose	
Thorn	
Bud	

Rose	
Thorn	
Bud	

Looking back on your month, do you see any **patterns** or **trends**?



“The good life consists in deriving happiness by using your signature strengths every day in the main realms of living. The meaningful life adds one more component: using these same strengths to forward knowledge, power or goodness.”

MARTIN SELIGMAN



“When I think about passion, it’s hard not to think about love and dreams.”

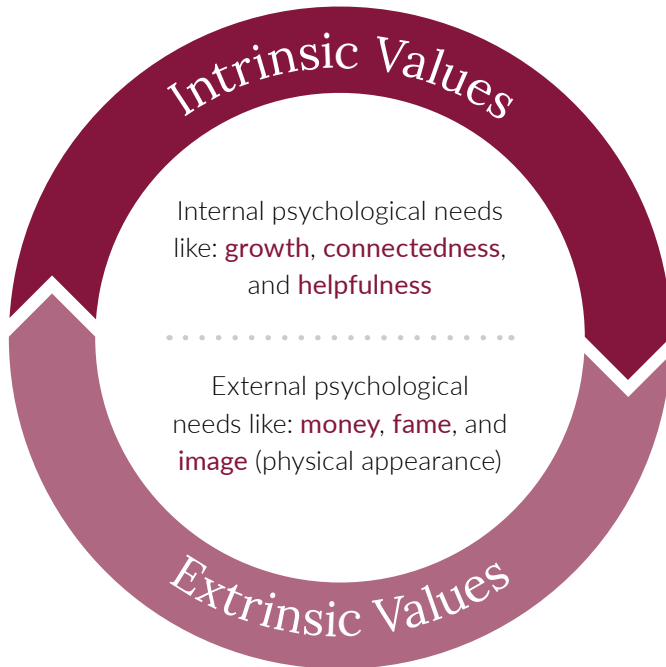
MAIA BOAKYE



The Root of Fulfillment

On the surface, it's easy to do a high-level inventory of what we're **passionate about**. We look at our daydreams, how we allocate our time, and what life events make us happy. However, the tricky part is determining the motivation behind these passions. A way to do this is through the examination of our intrinsic and extrinsic values.

Psychologist and author of *The High Price of Materialism*, [Tim Kasser](#), is interested in how our **intrinsic** and **extrinsic values** impact our well-being.



“Never work just for money or for power. They won't save your soul or help you sleep at night.”

MARIAN WRIGHT EDELMAN

After more than 20 years of research, Tim found that **intrinsic values often correlate to higher well-being**. While it's natural to have a mixture of intrinsic and extrinsic values, we should aim to prioritize intrinsically-based values as they are at the root of personal fulfillment. He encourages people to ask themselves, “Is my life set up in a way that actually reflects what I believe is most important?”

What are two intrinsic values you find important? In what ways do you live out these values, and how do they make you feel?

(Example: I value connectedness. When I spend quality time with my family, it makes me feel fulfilled and proud.)

A large grid of dotted lines provided for writing answers to the question above.



“There is no passion to be found playing small — in settling for a life that is less than the one you are capable of living.”

NELSON MANDELA



“My mission in life is not merely to survive,
but to thrive; and to do so with some
passion, some humor and some style.”

MAYA ANGELOU



30 Day Challenge

We wish it was as simple as just telling you to follow your passion. We've all felt pressure to not just identify our passions but also figure out how to prioritize them. **How do we make time for the things that make us happy but don't feel as urgent as other responsibilities?** **How do we decide if and when to go all-in and pursue our passions full-time?**


When we take time to reflect each day – which moments made us feel most connected and engaged, which made us feel frustrated, bored, or challenged – we get a little closer to knowing ourselves and what makes us feel most full.

At the end of each day, take a moment to complete this sentence:

Today, I felt most **alive** when _____
_____.

We recommend spending a few minutes writing down your answer so you can recognize patterns and identify trends at the end of the month – but **the moment for reflection is the important part.**

Put a ✓ in the boxes below for each day you complete the challenge!

1	2	3	4	5	6	GREAT 7 START!
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
HALF WAY 15 THERE!	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	FINAL 26 STRETCH!	27	28
29	30	 WAY TO GO!				

What trends or patterns did you notice during this challenge?

A grid of 20 rows and 20 columns of small dots for writing reflections.



“Do whatever brings you to life ...
Follow your own fascinations,
obsessions, and compulsions.
Trust them. Create whatever
causes a revolution in your heart.”

ELIZABETH GILBERT



Reflect & Discuss

Use these questions for self-reflection or to spark meaningful conversations.

ICEBREAKERS

If you could learn any new skill, what would it be?

01

What is one thing on your bucket list?

02

What do you want to get better at?

03

DEEPER QUESTIONS

When do you feel most alive?

01

What would you do or try to do if you knew you couldn't fail?

02

What social issues fire you up?

03

Are our passions part of our identities? Are our passions who we are?

04



”Don’t ask yourself what the world needs.
Ask yourself what makes you come alive and
then go do that. Because what the world
needs is people who have come alive.

HOWARD THURMAN

