

# Passion 2011

**The 21tiger guide to doing what you love every day, for the rest of your life.**

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## Preface

After strengthening our relationships with our family, now we get to the fun stuff. The passion for what you do will give you the strength to push you throughout your whole life. Without it, you feel listless and bored. The snowball of energy will grow and grow each day making you a more exciting fun positive person--and it all starts now.

The reason you need mind, body and family in order is to help you find and cultivate your passion. The point is not to become famous or rich (although, sure, if that happens, great). The first three components are your support system--a means to an end. Going forward, we're going to build a source of Passion in life that is going to change everything.

## Passion vs. Hobbies

When I think of the word Passion (not work, and not play), most people think we're talking about hobbies. "Oh yeah, sure Mike, I play golf now and then" or "Lately, I've been playing Poker a lot, does that count?"

Not quite. Passion comes from taking something in your life, and making it a *practice*--getting better everyday, and never stopping. That means you're not doing it for 'fun' or 'money.' You're not doing it to look cool. You're sure as heck not doing it because it's easy; there will be times when it's hard, and it's not fun, and it's inconvenient, but you do it anyway. That's a practice. You've probably heard this term being used to describe a medical or legal professional. Think Kung Fu instead.

Playing the piano and language learning are other examples. I love languages for many reasons: you can meet new people, you can travel and discover the real heart of far-flung countries, you can have rich lively conversations with people you could never come across back home. There are things in our lives which we feel *suited to*, for some reason there is something which is hard for others, which is easier for us, because we enjoy doing it. What is left handed for others, is right handed for us, we can express ideas more easily via these trades, for some reason. That 'for some reason' part is the gift. Passion and fire come from doing something creative, something that is an endless stream of discovery (both physical and mental). Think of a singer getting ready for a big performance. For me I enjoyed drawing, learning languages and writing stories. I didn't do it because I was 'good at it' (whatever that means) I did it because I enjoyed it.

### Habits

What do you love to do? Think about your hobbies. Have you ever taken a night off to draw or paint? What about creativity? When was the last time you created something?

## What does Passion Look like?

First I'll tell you what it doesn't look like. Have you ever wondered why people at cocktail parties talk about their jobs? It's an easy way to get a conversation started, but man is it boring! The truth is, most people think they're supposed to talk about that stuff, like they're making people around them feel comfortable with a softball question. What you're really doing is making people think about their jobs and make them feel like they at the office/hospital/worksite right then and there! Ugh. You notice the energy level in their voice dropping and think "Man this guy's a drag. What's with the one word answers?" Stop talking about 'how do you pay the bills every month?' You're sucking the energy out of the room. Only people who don't have any passion in their life talk about that stuff for any length of time--since they spend 14 hrs a day behind a computer filling out Excel spreadsheets, you figure, "He's probably got a great Accounting story.." Nope.

Instead, ask them what they like to do on the weekends, or what they are you passionate about... your new friends will thank you for it. Watch them light up, and hear the speed of their speech pick up. They might even flail their arms around as they describe this amazing thing they just learned, or drop a "Did you know.." hilarious story about some deep cut Jazz Trumpet player from the 1970's, or a 45 minute epic tale of might and mystery about a hike through African Jungle, taking spectacular early morning photos of Gorillas.

Wait, that's a hobby right? No. Hobbies are for fun. This is taking that feeling of 'Huh, this is fun' to 'I'm going to take this and do it right, and be great at it, every day, and whatever happens happens'..The difference between a hobby and a passion is the commitment to stay on the path towards mastery.

This passion has to be cultivated. Our friend who flies around the world taking beautiful photography, and posts it online or sells original prints on the side, first started off by picking up a camera, and playing with it. He wasn't in Africa, he was probably in New Jersey, or something. He went outside, snapped a few pictures, then put the camera down. "Hmm, cool camera", he thought, then went back to checking the News. He could have gotten distracted and never picked it up again.

Warning: Watching TV and playing Video Games are not examples of passions, addicting though they may be. They are distractions. If you find yourself reaching for distraction, what you're really looking for is passion. When I was younger I played a lot. I realize now that all the time I was playing video games, I was bored. And my friends were bored too. So we all got together, and were bored together. And all the time we

were distracting ourselves, collecting gold coins to buy some magical armor, we could have been working on our selves.

I believe there is a natural order that we go through in personal development, first lower level physical development, then higher order emotional development. If you're not following the natural course of development and self-improvement, you will get bored, and distract yourself any way you can. You'll skip steps and start pretending you've got everything handled. Young kids even do this by wearing big baggy clothes, and 'acting' confident and tough, when really their minds are buzzing with nerves, as they look to another September of tests, new rivals, and new friends. They can make up stories to sound tough, but it doesn't work, it sounds incongruent. Instead of working on themselves, they get distracted by image. And the internet age, has only made this lie and deception easier. We shouldn't be too surprised that kids do this stuff, we can't expect them to want to focus on fundamentals.

When you were very young and couldn't get control of your body (lose weight, gain weight, whatever), or couldn't get interesting in school, you just felt a little frustrated, embarrassed and helpless. Instead of asking your parents, you just skipped steps and lie about it. Whenever we skip steps, we're distracting ourselves; we're distracting ourselves from solving the actual problem because we don't know how to solve it. We do that in school, we do that in work (e.g.. summer job), we might even steal if we need money, and tell white lies if we think it will impress a member of the opposite sex. No one will buy the lie, and we'll feel even more helpless.

## **Habits**

What are 5 ways you distract yourself? Hint: it's a distraction if you find yourself doing it in between actual projects/tasks. Your most precious resource isn't money, but time. How do you waste time?

## The Buzz.

I want to talk about how it feels to do something that you love. How it feels to start it, how it feels to struggle, and how it feels to experience improvement. What does Passion Feel like though? Notice how your new friend at the cocktail party started buzzing when you let him tell this wild story about the Gorillas in Africa, and how he caught the perfect photo, just as the light hit? He was fired up! Instead of him feeling like he was back at JC Accounting Corp, the totally boring way he pays the bills, he felt like he was in the African Jungle! Amazing. Because as he was talking to you, he was recalling images of the trail, and the sunlight, and the campsite. All the images and emotions kept flooding back to him. Things we're passionate about recall that passion whenever we think about them, talk about them.

Remember, if you're not doing what you love, you've already lost. All the money in the world isn't going to give you that buzz in the pit of your stomach, the thrill of growth, of mastery. If you're not doing what you love, you're not going to develop the passion and excitement, and ultimately won't have the energy to do bigger and better things in life, like helping others, and making friends. Like we talked about, without that higher energy level, you can only pretend to be successful, and you deserve better than an aimless life, riddled with lies and devoid of principles. Forget about your college degree for a moment. Forget about your job title, and forget about your loved ones. Just for a moment.

Have you even done something where you thought, "Hey, I don't know if it's possible to do this for a living, but man I love this." Again, playing Xbox, Scarfing Hotdogs, and Shopping are not acceptable answers. Think of something Creative.

Dante once referred to Art as the "Grandchild of God". Whether you're Christian, Jewish, or Rastafarian, the point remains: If we are a creation of God, then our creations are akin to God's grandchildren. Beyond the interesting metaphor, the point is the feeling we get when we create art is like a connection to a higher power. That feeling of creation (even if my idea of creation is merely combining three or four ideas from somewhere else and adding my own twist) is exhilarating. The problem with sense addiction or distraction is there's no creation, and more importantly, no thrilling sense of creativity. For me, I loved to write, and I loved to draw, and I remember not just once but several times thinking "there's not much money in it, so I won't be a comic book artist/cartoon animator/short story writer" and later in life, I found that I was fascinated by Design, but didn't really like the security of that field (e.g.. Graphic Design), and later still, in Business school, I found that I really enjoyed getting up in front of the group and

talking, and thought “Hmm is there a way to be a public speaker for a living? Or a Comedian? Nah. Too much of a long shot.”

It's that negative self talk about career objectives we need to take out to the backyard and shoot right now. For every time I didn't do something it probably came down to one of the following three excuses:

- *Not Enough Easy Money to Turn it Into a Career*

Firstly, if something is not worth it because there's no easy money, I'd sure like to know where easy money comes from, exactly? The Lottery (for those of us decent at Math) is not easy money, playing professional Basketball is not easy money, and being a professional Craps player is not easy money. Easy money doesn't exist. So you're supposing that you're love for Poetry is a waste of time because you can't sell poems in digital form on Amazon, and rake in all that fat Poetry money, is ridiculous. The point of doing what you love is not, “this is so easy for me, so all the money just flows in.” It's a ridiculous requirement because it presupposes that the only reason you would do something for a significant amount of time *is to get paid lots and lots of money.*

- *Not Enough Time to do it as a Hobby*

Secondly: you love poetry, but you just don't have enough time to do it as a hobby. Well if the first excuse was thrown out of court, this one gets gently prodded out by old dudes in white gloves. Here's a thought: if you don't have enough time to do something you love, wake up earlier. Seriously. Just do it! Look, you'll get up for work because if you don't work they'll cut the power to your house, but you won't actually get up for something fun? That's sadistic. Do you know that most of the big Fund Managers on Wall Street are up at 4AM getting data from the overnight markets in Europe? They're waking up at the crack of dawn to read about the European Bond Market. And if they're good, they actually like this stuff. For you, you can choose anything you want in the entire world, and if you can do it for at least 1 hour every morning, that's over 350 hours of poetry, dance, writing, kung fu, cooking, hiking, doodling, drawing, screenwriting or sewing every year. Think about how much happier you would be, and how better you're gonna be at your new passion.

- *Beyond Money or Time Wasting, Zero Incentive to do it.*

Thirdly, beyond the economic incentive (e.g.. not starving), and time killing (e.g.. whittling), you see no benefit do even doing it. The third is probably the most

dangerous, because its not obvious to others how to refute this internal objection. People might walk past and see you drawing and say, “What are you doing? Just killing time with some stupid kids stuff? There’s work to do!” And the flip side is when we hear about people who did what they loved, despite having a busy life (I’m thinking of JK Rowling ), they always emphasize all the vast sums of wealth those authors are making... “Oh JK Rowling is a big success story because before she was going broke, and now she’s rich, so all that time slaving over those coffee stained pages *was worth it!*”

Huh? Do you think JK Rowling would have been able to write a single page if she didn’t love writing? If we focus on the money, now we’re back to the first problem again. If we fundamentally can’t comprehend doing something for a non-financial benefit, we’ll never get the buzz, and the excitement in life, because money, the lottery, and the European bond market ain’t gonna do it.

Have you ever wondered why so many Models become Actors, then Producers, then Writers, then Directors? Why do TV stars move to the movies? Why do comedians move to TV? Why do bloggers write their own books?

For the money? That’s a great cynical answer. The only problem is ‘For the Money’ doesn’t produce good work, it doesn’t produce talent. Studios don’t allow cast members to jump into the directors chair, “Well he needs the money” The only reason actors develop the instincts to even contemplate moving into the director/producer role, is because they get so good at their own job that they start to think big picture, and want to change little things about other members of the cast (again, the cynic would jump in here and call that Ego, shush), or plot points, or comedic timing, etc. They start to care about something which they not being paid to do.

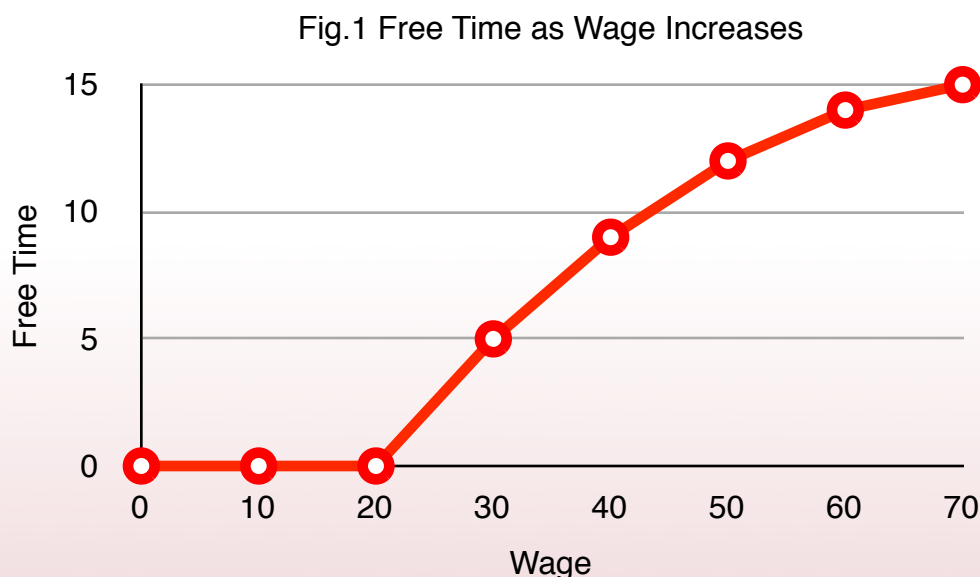
They start to care, and their minds start buzzing about ideas on how to improve the performance. The first time they approach the director with a suggestion is very ballsy. Soon the star actor is ‘coaching’ other cast members on the nuances, while they’re not filming. Trying not to be a jerk, and trying not to be controlling, the actor learns the art of teaching. Very slowly. This process could take years (think of a great TV show lasting 8 to 10 seasons). The trust between cast members, and gentle nudging of certain key members is crucial. The important point here, is there’s no financial incentive for the star to do *any* of this, and that’s why people listen. He or she *cares about the finished product*. The opportunity to direct full time, comes much later--probably even on a totally different show, or an independent movie.

You know what a great job looks like? You come in when you want, do what you have to do, you strategize for the future of the project/division/company, then punch out a couple hours later. And in your free time you can do what you really love. Doing what you love gives you energy to do even better at your job, so you can do it more efficiently and have even more time for passion.

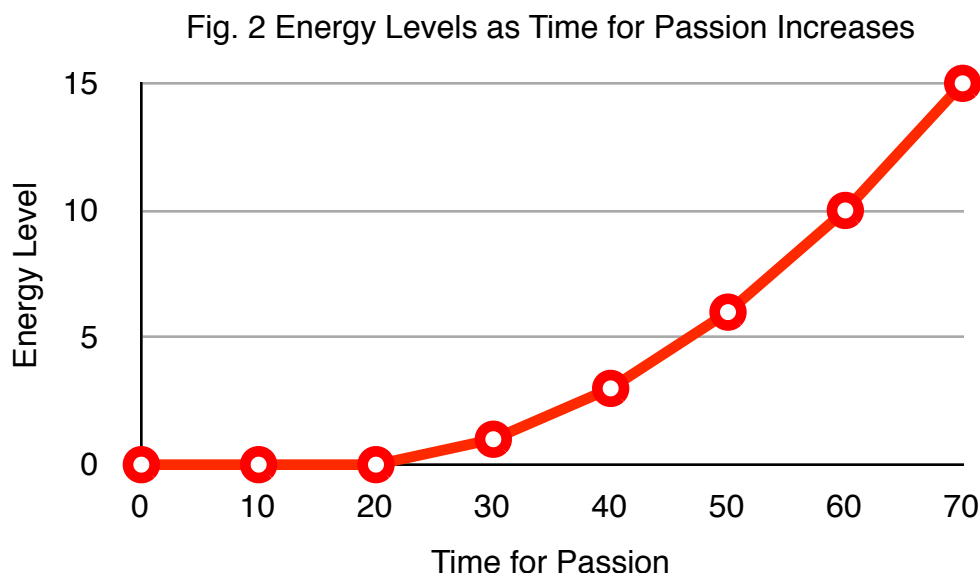
Classic Economists traditionally model workers as having bills to pay, for which they get a job, and as soon as they can afford it, go home and relax. They see work as a necessary evil to support life and “leisure.” So each day is broken into Work and Leisure. When you have low wage you can’t ‘afford’ much leisure, but as you make better pay you start ‘buying’ time off. It’s a luxury to have free time.

And the simple model is great for what it was made for: giving Economics students exam questions. But I have a minor quibble with the word choice, which, while very economical, is deadening: Leisure.

Leisure is a guy in a hammock in his back yard, intermittently sipping lemonade and doing a crossword puzzle. You may as well be sleeping. I don’t want to look forward to sleep, I want some passion! Passion gives you energy (for everything) and Energy makes you better, more friendly, more attractive, a better salesman, a happier worker, a more persuasive (not cranky) boss. Now take a look at this chart.



The first chart shows that as you make more money per hour, you start taking more time off. At first you don't have any free time, maybe even working two jobs, and as you start making more, you take more time off. An interesting thing happens, when you start to get free time (when you're making over \$20 per hour), you have the chance to indulge in your favorite hobby, or passion. Check this out.



But, why would the buzz of higher energy levels *accelerate* instead of just increase in a straight line (e.g.. a 1:1 relationship)? Your passion for, say, Pottery picks up your energy level (Figure 2). Your energy level makes you more pleasant and focused and commanding at the office, which in turn leads to more clients, and more promotions. As your wage goes up (Figure 1) you get a little more free time to devote to your Passion, and the whole cycle repeats itself in a virtuous circle of happiness and prosperity. Your passion not only increases your energy level, but increases your free time, so the effect is compounded.

So working and doing something you love don't necessarily have to be the same thing (the age-old view), but can work in tandem. The more money you make, the more free time you get, but that free time is *useless if you don't have something fun to do in your life*.

Many people strike it rich (lottery, game show winner, NBA contract) and don't really know what to do with that 'free time', and go on shopping sprees for distraction (or

worse, alcohol, drugs, gambling). Rather than be sideswiped by riches and success, we have the advantage of planning for it. Finding your passion now, puts you way ahead of the latest reality TV show winner. Cool, huh?

Note: there's nothing wrong with loving what you do for a living; in fact, as long as your job is challenging and interesting, I fully expect you will enjoy meeting new people, getting new accounts, sharing in company profits, and even planning the direction of the company. But don't use "but I have a cool job" as an excuse to slack off on Passion. There's too much at stake.

When you get paid to do something you love, you're actually turning something passionate into... work! Suddenly, cultivation, curiosity and mastery aren't the goal, but income maximization and time crunching to meet deadlines are the goal. So we're going to separate passion and money.

Just like how big name Hollywood actors do action blockbuster movies to afford the ability to do cool independent movies, or write their own masterpieces, we can do the same: work to make money, so we can 'afford' to do what we love. Getting rich doesn't eliminate the need to have some fun and passion in your life. And like Bill Gates, the ultimate hobby may just be doing something that, not only can you not get paid for, but, *you're giving money away!*

## **Habits**

Forget about Money, Career, Appearances, or Impressing people for a minute and write down some of the things you love to do, even if you haven't done them in years.

## Walking the Path

It's also key to remember, we're walking lifelong a path here, whatever your passion is. Maybe you love telling funny stories (like a comedian or humorist writer). When you first sit down to write your first bit of material, it may sound awkward. Keep at it: the point is not to worry about getting the next belt color, or pass the exam (but over time, you will naturally do all of those with ease). What is the point of being great at something? Some of the best artists and actors, photographers, and scientists...are they really driven by Passion? Or fame? The greatest, the real stars are walking the path towards mastery, and it makes them happy, just to stay on the path and continually improve. It's actually multifaceted:

Firstly, they're doing something they love, so they're happy (pretty much all the time, no cocaine required. Seriously.) Secondly they're doing it for the right reasons, so they're motivated. Thirdly, by staying on the path, they will always improve, which means it never gets boring, and they can keep trying more challenging projects. Fun. Fun. Fun.

The hard part is not improving (the brain takes care of that, mostly while you sleep), the hard part is *staying on the path*. To stay on the path, you must commit to do what you love everyday, for 30 minutes, 2 hours--whatever you can manage. Understand that by prioritizing that over anything else, you are prioritizing your happiness and sanity, not chasing distractions (or short term achievements). The worst thing about distraction is that it takes away your time.

Do it not with the short term goal in mind, but the end goal: complete mastery. Know that your mind has the power to do anything, and if you're struggling now, eventually that obstacle will be overcome. The Mind can do that for you, but you have to give it the time to sort everything out. Imagine a tennis player who practices his serves half an hour everyday. At first, he hits one or two great shots, and the rest are horrible. Eventually, he becomes excellent. But not if he expects results on the first day. The 'masters' are the ones who found out what they wanted to do very early in life, and thus had *decades* on the same path, and slowly became great.

## Habits

Take a look at your daily schedule. You should see some workout routine, daily meditation, and a big chunk of your day is *work*. If you can't see a one hour block before work to fit in your passion, wake up earlier. ;)

## Sharing Your Passion

A funny thing happens when we start doing something we really love, like playing the piano. Everyday you sit down, plug in your little keyboard (so as not to wake anyone up while you do your morning practice), and start plugging away at scales, and chords, and then the left hand practice, and right hand practice. Eventually you practice doing both hands at the same time, and you're actually getting really good at that. You've been working on learning a song you really love--one of those wispy British pop acts with a great piano part--and every time you play three notes that sound even close to the real thing you get a buzz. You're loving it. You practice that one song for a couple weeks and it actually sounds very cool. You find yourself humming along and you figure if you had a half decent voice you could even perform it.

"Woah." You trip over your own thoughts. "Perform?" Suddenly, all your fears come rushing back:

*What if I screw up and everyone is laughing. What if I'm going too fast and should just focus on the scales for a few more months. What if people want me to do this all the time? Every time someone comes over to the house I have to do a performance like a dancing monkey?*

Stop right there.

In the same way that your brain showed you how to hit an 80MPH serve consistently, and how to play *Für Elise* with your eyes closed, your brain is doing something here too. I'm not talking about the wacky nightmare where you become the Piano playing monkey, but the notion of putting on a performance.

Why would you suddenly have the urge to put on a performance, you ask? Why on Earth would you ever want to share *anything* with anyone? Because it's the fastest way to get really good.

You've done this in pretty much every other aspect of your life, so it makes perfect sense to share what you've learned with other people. Yes. Preparing for a Calculus test is annoying (to most), but if you're prepared, the test is nothing to worry about. And if you're a real geek, you've mastered the material and even delight in flipping your way through the 30 page ordeal. You even find yourself engrossed in the bonus question. You take another 15 minutes to go over the test again, going through your thought processes again: check. check. check. Got it. Got it. Got it. It's not a frightening experience because *you were prepared*. After you pass in your test, you

calmly exit the classroom, and for about 30 minutes, you're buzzing. You totally nailed that test, and you can't wait to find out the score. In a way, taking a test is like sharing your math skills, putting them on show.

Some feedback (like test scores in school) takes a few days to comeback. Sometimes the feedback takes a fraction of a second (like a big championship game, or a Comedian's first standup act). The point is not to freak out about 'cheating' to get a good score. The point is to go up and perform honestly, so you know how your practice is going and how you can improve. You're just doing this for fun, and for the amazing feeling you get. The feedback is a good thing, not a bad thing. Without feedback, you'll never know if you're getting better or just floundering. This is how you get better, this where you get motivation!

You want to, as soon as you get competent, start entering contests and competitions. Those competitions will let you know where to improve, and eventually will show the world, how amazing you are. Having something coming up, a date on your calendar with a big red circle on it will hone you and your nerves will focus you. And when you come through the other side, you'll be that much sharper. When I started writing again, I collected a few aspiring writer friends who wanted to meet on a weekly basis, and share our work. Feedback, Cappuccino, and fun.

And the first day after your performance/exam/contest/show, you'll get up, and resume your practice, like you always did. Passion Plus Feedback.

And how is that performance measured? Similar to how you track your own progress when you practice, but here, its the truth. If you're a pitcher.. it comes from strikeout counts. If you're a comedian, its laughs.. put a microphone behind the stage and then listen to your jokes in the car on the way home, like Jay Leno did when he first started doing stand-up. What's your metric?

In a sense, that feeling of sharing a great art with someone is the goal here. Greatness, and the Path to Mastery will feel great. The practice should feel superb. But if you never share it with anyone, it's almost as if you'd never learned it at all. After all, how can you walk outside and honestly keep this great part of your life a secret.

For a writer, he could write lots of terrible books and never publish them or write fantastic stories with amazing emotional highs and tragic depth, but never publish them... and in the end, it's the same thing. If you never share your art with someone because you don't want criticism (ego), you end up not having a positive effect on people either way. You hurt yourself and you hurt others.

And by the way, if you don't want to share your craft, your practice with other people then *what the heck are you so passionate for?*

When I was in University, I started my first online venture, a website that connected college students, so they could swap textbooks. Using the web to connect buyers and sellers was an obvious solution. And while the 'network' with but a handful of 'users' seemed kind of useless at first, when I got my first textbook swap on the site, it felt incredible. *Because of me*, these two people were benefitting, and totally happy with the trade. They would tell their friends about it (hopefully) and the site would grow organically. The buzz of those first few successful swaps, gave me the energy to keep improving the site.

Nowadays on 21tiger, I feel like I have a very niche audience, and when I can strike a chord with them, and start getting discussions on the site, it feels exhilarating. In other words, the audience, the spectators, the customers--whatever you call them--the people you share your passion with have a very important and exciting role to play as well! They reward me for doing the right thing and punish me for doing the wrong thing.

Without the passion you lose interest and people stop coming to the meetings. Without Feedback you get a little lonely, and feel like your hours are pointless because you're not getting credit, you're not improving, and you're not affecting people.

Turning it on it's head: it's pretty hard to learn JiuJitsu all by yourself. Feedback is just training with other people (and maybe later competing); that doesn't make you a showoff or an egotistical, it makes you a social person who wants to share their passion with others.

## **Habits**

Sharing is great because you'll be getting better and instead of just watching DVD's you're sharing something creative and interesting with people. Can you think of a good system for 'collecting' feedback and using it to improve your passion?

## Passionate People

A funny thing happens when you really start getting into something you love. You start making friends. Not only will you be more magnetic, but you start looking for meet-up groups, and organizations where you can share your hobby with others. And perhaps for the first time, you find yourself bursting with energy, not withdrawn and shy, talking about this thing you really love. You start making friends with passionate people

What do these passionate people look like? And how do they feed themselves? The truth is passionate people are the people you love to hear about, love to hang out with, and can't stop talking about. They're full of energy and they do lots of cool stuff. So I interviewed a few of them:

### **David Zeuss Cochrane**

*Founder of Environmental Ingenuity,*

*Adventure Seeker*

*Currently living between Shanghai, China and Vancouver Island, Canada.*

**21T: Now, I have to ask about the name: Zeus, the greek King of the Gods, you must have been a confident kid growing up? ;).**

David Zeuss Cochrane: Ha ha, no quite the opposite, most of my childhood was very difficult my mother brought my brother and I up herself she did everything from slinging chainsaws to working for the ministry of forests. I left home at the early age of 14, I immediately started work as a floor covering installer. I was still having a hard time until I bought a boat and moved on the water for a major lifestyle shift. I meditated for almost a whole year at times my boat was completely iced in and hurricane force winds occasional made for a good adventure, so many stories began here. The result of the living completely alone, and the friends who took me under there wings at the time shaped my life into the fun easygoing guy I am today. Because of my lack of childhood in the past I choose to live like one now (all my descriptions are based on logic and my philosophy)!

**21T: Wow. So you've listed here a few hobbies on your Facebook page... can we go down the list? Just tell me what you've done recently for each. First: Sailing?**

DZC: The day before I left Canada , I sailed my newly built gaff rigged topsail cutter dingy... its so awesome! It is way overpowered! I designed it.

**21T: Dancing?**

DZC: Hmmm at my friend's wedding in Zhejiang province last weekend, but in the past i have done breakdancing,swing jive Argentinian tango , and salsa poorly!

**21T: Camping?**

DZC: Two weeks ago I went to Tantou island for a Camping trip to mix it up with some different types of people. Yay! Fun!

**21T: Hiking?**

DZC: Monday and Tuesday of last week I went and summited three peaks at Huang Shan in Anhui Province [4 hrs West of Shanghai].

**21T: Flying?**

DZC: Over two years ago I went stunt flying in a katana [surfboard].

**21T: Any others I missed? There must be a ton... You've gotta be the most positive person I've ever met.**

DZC: Sky runners, seaskipping, power kiting so many others.....Variety is the spice of life!

**21T: Now I have to tell you something: When I first met you, it was on a tour, to a Bamboo village about 4 hours outside of Shanghai. I brought my then-girlfriend and when she met you, she made the connection that you and I were both Canadian (and both from the Northwest). I'll never forget her reaction: "Hey if you and Zeuss are both Canadians, why is he so nice/friendly/helpful, and you're so selfish?" I swear she was being funny while she said it, but I have to admit, I didn't really have an answer for her!**

**You really are an unusually nice guy. Any idea why you're so nice, and go out of your way to be nice/helpful and most people are more, into their own thing, a little more selfish? It's hard to dissect yourself, I know.**

DZC: Hmmm, I have decided to live my life different then others, I have made it a goal in my life to keep people around me happy or at least try. this makes me happy ! and Mike, from the Tantou island trip I didn't notice any selfishness.

**21T: One question I ask everybody is this: how do you think you would relate to people if you didn't have all this fun stuff in your life? How would you be negatively impacted. That includes work interactions, dating, etc.**

DZC: I would make other fun, hmm dinner parties, art, more music etc there are always ways to have fun and fun like beauty is in the eye of the beholder !

**21T: Got any favorite books to recommend?**

DZC: I am a wilbur smith fan, he stirs many emotions

21T: Thanks for your time, man! Hope to see you soon!

DZC: Cheers My friend you too!

**Michael Hurt**

Founder of [feetmanseoul.com](http://feetmanseoul.com),

Photography Expert

Fashion Lover

University Professor of US History

Currently living in Seoul, South Korea.

**21tiger: The first time I heard your voice was on this BombEnglish podcast where you would give foreigners a glimpse of life in Korea. How'd you get into Podcasting?**

Michael Hurt: Basically a few years back a new version of iTunes came out that had podcasting as a built in feature. And actually before Podcasting, I'd always been interesting in the idea of doing Internet Radio. I have a friend who's a really funny near-comedian, her name is Ann. And we got the idea of recording her doing jokes as little 5 minute MP3's and putting them up on a website. It was an interesting concept, so when Podcasting came along, it seemed like something to get into, and since I was in Korea, and listening to some Japan-based English podcasts, I realized there nothing equivalent to that in Korea. Koreans didn't use iPods as much at the time, so I said to myself, 'If these guys can do it, as long as it's interesting, why not Podcast?' So that's what I've been doing, and I built up everything from there, starting in 2005.

**21T: And you're still doing radio around Korea? I've seen lots of of your 'listen to me tonight at 8PM,etc' on Facebook posts. What kind of stuff do you talk about?**

MH: I've got a few musical segments on radio shows [in Seoul], and that just happened through friends who happened to know that I know a lot about certain genres of music, so those are funny little things, but definitely the Podcasting made it easy to do that. Producers could listen to me, and knew what I would sound like on the air, they could hear I was up to par, because I'm pretty comfortable talking--at least talking into a mic, and then talking live isn't such a big jump from that.

**21T: You do know that most people aren't so dynamic, right? Lots of people just watch TV all the time. Have you always been a wild, kinda off the wall kind of guy?**

MH: I've always been pretty active. I guess I do like making things, which is why I got into photography, I like looking at the results, the pictures. Back then, it was film, so it was like a Christmas present to look at the film, and have others look at your pictures. But yea, I've never been able to just sit around, watch TV, and just passively consume.

I guess, since college. Being here in Korea, having your entire life be an anthropological experience. You always wanna comment on something, take a picture of something. It's a lot easier to produce this kind of stuff, partially just, being curious about media, but also being in Korea. Those two in combination are what's responsible for all this stuff -- podcasting, blogging -- it's also a way of processing being here.

**21T: I'm dying to know how you first got into the photography stuff. Since you got into it, you've become a pretty serious photog now have classes and you take people around Seoul snapping pictures. That sounds so damn cool.**

MH:I just sort of fell into it. I've been into photography since I was a kid. The thing is, when I got to Korea, there was a lot more new stuff to process, but I didn't really take pictures the first time I came here; I guess I was just too busy being in it, rather than taking a step back and looking at it. But in 2002, when I returned, I was in graduate school I think I was ready, I had prepared a photo project, I was gonna do a lot of street photography, and a documentary, and that's what I did, when I came back here in 2002. But, after 4 years straight of doing that and realizing that, while some people thought it was interesting, in the end, it wasn't getting me published, Koreans in general didn't really like it, and anything (not even critical) looking at Korea, they're very sensitive about, especially back then. In 2006, I basically just gave up the street photography, and moved into this experiment called [www.feetmanseoul.com](http://www.feetmanseoul.com) that eventually led me into street fashion photography, so I has a street element with kind of a grit. But also, the street fashion pictures are as much a record of the environment as they are of the person, so they're what people call environmental portraits. So from there, people started reacting more to the fashion photography and I fell into Seoul fashion week and, after a couple seasons, figured out what I needed to do there, which is pretty much, basically create lots of photo content, for the few people who are interested in Korean fashion to do with (fashion blogs, etc). And that naturally led to me publishing the photo book, and I got more interested in some of the studio stuff, and you know, now I'm equally interested in Studio runway you know fashion behind the scenes. It's nice to have models and whatnot to help create beautiful pictures, so its a departure away from the documentary street form where you can't control the environment so it's kinda nice.

**21T: Michael, you have like 2000 friends on Facebook, not that I'm jealous,--do you think its way easier to make friends and meet people when you're doing all this different stuff? Or do you think you're just naturally charming ;)**

MH: Um, yes, because I do so many different things--partially to pay the bills, and partially just getting out there that I end up with a lot of 'so called' friends on Facebook, but what Facebook actually is, is a record of all your networks, so, especially if you've been a teacher, um, you know, one switch of a school and you've got 150 more 'friends', um, you've got a whole bunch of students that are connected with you. Every time you switch an institution, a new school, move into a new group of people, you pick up 50,100, 150 more people, so that's how the networks started, the number of friends started rising, I think also with getting out there doing all the photography and whatnot, people tag their [photos], and when people hang out in groups/parties/production companies and go to their events, um , people tend to be connected already, they type in my name, it comes up, and they Friend me on Facebook, tag my pictures, so that also helps build up the raw number, although, you know, there are a lot of people on my friends list, I don't really know, so don't be jealous!

**21T: One question I ask everybody is this: how do you think you would relate to people if you didn't have all this fun stuff in your life? How would you be negatively impacted. That includes work interactions, day to day stuff like shopping, even dating, etc.**

MH: I don't know about negatively impacted, but, photography is a great way to meet lots of people! I'm essentially a nerd at heart, like, I'm not a partier. So, you know, I'd go along and go to the parties when I was in my 20's, in Korea, and in Seoul, and whatnot but its a little different when you're in your 30's, heading into your 40's. It's a great way, you know I go to parties, and I take pictures, I do participate, I'm actually part of a community a little bit, people know who I am, so It's comfortable but I probably wouldn't go to those parties if I didn't have my camera... I wouldn't be interacting with early 20 year somethings as much as I do. Going to these kind of places, its a great way to get new amateur models, or, hook up with other photographers or, you know, get gigs sometimes. So I think with the photography, podcasting, meeting people, interviewing people, you have an excuse to get in people's faces, and I think all of it makes me much more sociable, that I would be otherwise. Although I'm a social person, I, you know, just have my normal group of friends, I'd probably stick to that... but the media stuff gets me constantly moving outside of that group, so one thing is, I guess my group of friends wouldn't be as diverse, um, were it not for the media stuff.

**21T: Got any favorite books to recommend?**

MH: Not really. My problem is I usually read non-fiction or history and some sci-fi stuff from the old days. I always say, I recommend 'A History of Knowledge' by Charles Van Doren, or for a sci-fi tip, "The Forever War" by Joe Haldeman which is actually going to be turned into a movie. Otherwise, I don't really keep up. My book recommendations might be pretty bizarre to most people. I like books like 'The Americanization of Benjamin Franklin' by Gordon Wood.

**21T: Alright, thanks for your time Michael. My Korean still totally sucks, but I hope I can spend some serious time over there someday. Where can people find your podcast and all the cool stuff you're doing?**

MH: Most of it's linked to Metropolitician.com, or feetmanseoul.com. I'm getting more into Twitter. Bombenglish.com is getting more and more activated, and basically we're trying to get paid for our efforts, so that's where you can see us.

**21T: Thanks man.**

**Bo Han Yang**

*Founder of Bo Han Music*

*Guitarist/Singer/Drummer for Depraved Hearts*

*Life-long Street Fighter and World Warrior*

*Attorney*

Other Hobbies: JiuJitsu, hitting the gym, visiting Reddit, and replaying Chrono Trigger every other year.

*Currently living in Sacramento, California, USA.*

**21Tiger: Now we obviously met in High School, and besides being a genius with languages at an early age, you were a whiz kid on Guitar... Why don't you tell me how that started.. and where you took it from there?**

Bo Han Yang:As a necessary corollary of a childhood in Taiwan, I used to hit the karaoke on an almost weekly basis -- so singing has always been a hobby of mine. Plus, growing up around my sister, who later double-majored in piano and violin and became a music teacher, some sort of a sibling peer-pressure thing driving me to learn an instrument too. But most importantly, my keen observations as a fifteen-year-old led me to the conclusion that guys who play the guitar get the girls. So there I was, hanging out in [Boarding School friend] Taichi's room 24/7 because he had a guitar that he doesn't mind me playing.

The first song I learned was Bob Marley's "No Woman No Cry," the chords to which Taichi taught me. That was in Grade 9 or 10. After that, I would just hide in my room, listen to CDs, and try all day to emulate and replicate whatever I heard on the guitar. Before long, I think it was in Grade 11, I was playing -- you guessed it -- Stairway to Heaven and Hotel California, solos included.

As I dove deeper into the rabbit hole (so to speak), I started visiting the back of the school auditorium to use their spare drum set. And by the time I graduated high school I was pretty well versed in guitar, drums, and bass. I think I was able to do all that because I didn't care what English paper or Physics AP assignment was due, or what parties my friends were going to. I just did what I wanted to do, which was to sit in that little back room and try to learn as many tunes and tricks as possible. Come to think of it, I probably should have spent more time studying, or at least out partying to attempt to fulfill one of the original purposes of learning the guitar.

**21T: Awesome. Tell me about the Depraved Hearts.. how'd the band get started?**

BHY: Some people take law school very seriously, treating the institution and the experience with almost religious fervor and reverence. But I've always thought of it as just a place to learn something useful, and as an investment in myself so I can get some sort of a return for my tuition money. So I found a friend with a similar mindset, who, in a drunken state at a party, came up with the brilliant idea to form a funny, and good, cover band to play around local venues. At the same party, we worked the room and found four others who were also down with the idea. It's been a great time ever since.

**21T: Very cool, Hey, I want to congratulate you on finishing Law School man, that's an amazing accomplishment!**

BHY:Ha! Thanks! It's not all that special, though. Anyone with some masochistic tendencies can do the same!

**21T: Was there a point where you realized, "I have to get serious about the career", or was it something you always wanted to do? I remember in high school, none of us knew what we wanted to do (I wanted to design basketball shoes for Reebok, for example).**

BHY:And I wanted to become a member of \*NSYNC! But seriously, it was simply the path of least resistance. I didn't want to become just another stiff working at a call center right out of college, but I didn't have the guts or qualifications to escape that fate either. So I got some loans and headed to law school! I never wanted to become a big-shot lawyer making millions and working 80 hours a week. All I wanted was a decent living so I can fund myself and, more importantly, have the money to continue doing the things I like to do -- dabbling with music, taking all kinds of lessons, and generally being content with life.

**21T: And the weightlifting ... you've been doing it seriously since high school. I think one year we all came back and you were like 30 pounds bigger. How'd you get into that? Who helped you?**

BHY:I think everyone who works out begins with the same human motive -- to attract the opposite sex. But I had another secret purpose. For some reason, and I'm not sure why, I made it my personal mission to dispel the stereotype that Asian guys are scrawny, nerdy, and generally unattractive. So, armed with the fitness knowledge from a 3-feet-tall stack of Men's Health, and Arnold's Encyclopedia of Bodybuilding, I went

on a crusade of em-buff-ination. Then I met my friend Wilson Barker, whose love for the gym rivaled mine and helped me reach my goals every step of the way.

**21T: One question I ask everybody is this: how do you think you would relate to people if you didn't have all this fun stuff in your life, like guitar, working out, etc? How would you be negatively affected? That includes work interactions, day to day stuff, dating, etc.**

BHY:Hmm. If I didn't have all these shenanigans going on, I guess I would listen to others talk about the cool things they do and try to do those things myself. Honestly, I find it somewhat difficult to interact with people who don't have a "thing" or two to do, so if I were that person I would probably be frustrated with myself. If I didn't have my shenanigans, I think I would either die of boredom or self-hatred! I also wouldn't be dating my girlfriend now because I wouldn't care that she has a good voice and ear for music (she sings beautifully), and I just wouldn't know what to do with myself generally. Maybe watch Dancing with the Stars?

I think I would also need a lot more material things to keep me happy or at least to impress other people -- to show them that I "do something" or "am something." A red or yellow sports car would probably be good, so I could be that dude with the nice car. Or maybe I could buy nice suits and look nice with all that money I've saved from not buying equipment and whatnot.

But again, I suppose in a hypothetical world where I didn't have my shenanigans, I would have much more time and resources to earn better grades, work longer hours, and clean up my place. My place is always a mess.

**21T: As you know I played guitar for many years, but never really put on performances or really pushed myself to be a serious artist, like you have. Can you talk about the feeling of sharing what you've done, rather than just playing guitar alone in your dorm room, etc. How is it better?**

BHY:Of course you've gotta put in the work in the dorm room first before moving on. But once you move on to the next step, it's such an incredible feeling. First the performance part of it. Biologically, the adrenaline rush just makes you feel good, alert, and in the present -- like a better version of caffeine. Then you realize that it's not so much about how good you are or if you're the best musician in the world, it's just about feeling comfortable enough with yourself to be able to stand up there and say "this is what we do. If you like it, stay and dance and sing and have a good time. If you don't,

leave." It's about feeling comfortable in your own skin, and letting others feel comfortable in theirs.

Now, I would say that writing songs and producing the music is very similar. I just do the best that I can and make the tune the way I like it. If it's good for what it is, then it's good. Hanging out with creative people and collaborating on countless projects has really taught me some valuable stuff. Everyone's different and we all look at things differently and have different ideas. But ultimately, we're all in the same boat trying to make the same thing happen. I've played with many musicians, each of whom puts his own spin on the song. The bass player wants to put a funk line in a slow jam, or the keyboardist wants to sub jazzy chords in for a rock tune. These things sound jarring to some but cool to yet others. But difference is a good. Sometimes it makes things difficult, sometimes it makes things beautiful. But it's what makes things interesting.

**21T: Got any favorite books to recommend?**

BHY: I just read *The Greatest Show on Earth* by Richard Dawkins and *The Grand Design* by Stephen Hawking. Each book has its own flaws, but they're worth a read (or two) nonetheless. They really put things into perspective.

**21T: Sounds cool man, is there a website where I can check out some of your music, etc?**

BHY: Check out [myspace.com/bohanmusic](http://myspace.com/bohanmusic) for some of my stuff, and for our performances, go to [youtube.com/thedepravedhearts](http://youtube.com/thedepravedhearts).

The band's website is <http://depravedhearts.com/>

**21T: Awesome, thanks for your time, Bo Han.**

BHY: Thank YOU for the conversation!

## Goals

Take out a sheet of paper and think about your goals. Consider your performance at work, and the way you act around people socially. How did you do in school/college? Anything you'd like to improve or get handled? Mentally, you might have trouble getting away from negative thoughts, or maybe you procrastinate, or maybe you just want the will power to read a ton of books every year, right after this one!

Write down 2 super ambitious goals, and add them to the Health goals from the previous book...Stumped? Here's one I wrote, ages ago:

*"Every moment of practice is pure bliss."*

Make a point to before you go to work, get a good 30 minutes to an hour each day with your passion. It's your dedication and consistency (whether you're feeling the progress or not!) that makes this a *practice*. You're in this for the long road, not the quick distraction. Again, if it means waking up earlier, great. Do it. You'll go into work already pumped, and feeling positive, and looking forward to the next morning. Cool, huh?

## Habits

These goals-turned-affirmations are brilliant because you can control them. Notice how strange they feel the first time you say them, and how natural it feels in the coming weeks. Get into the habit of reading these a couple times, after your morning meditation. As the weeks go by, your behavior will change. From time to time, consider the wording and revise it, as your goals evolve.

## In Closing

Take this time now, to discover what it is that makes you feel pumped, excited, buzzed. What keeps you up at night in a good way (think Christmas morning every single day kinda thing). Stop worrying about how to ‘make money’ off it, stop worrying if it sounds cool, or sounds impressive! The most liberating question you can ask yourself is, “What hobbies/activities would I do, if I didn’t have to worry about making money off them?” The payoff is so much greater than cash. Or maybe you just need to look at your hobbies in a whole new light. How can you scale your favorite pastime? Snapping pics of your backyard doesn’t sound that impressive, but when you start telling people about your photography trip to Chile or North Korea, they start getting excited. And you’ll get excited too. And that’s the point.

In the next book we’ll finally talk about money. In this book we separated your passion from making money. If you can do it, great. But the bills are still showing up in your mailbox every morning. In the next book Money 2011, we’ll break down the simplest way to make all these problems go away, and start building up your fortune, regardless of your job, or your income, or your situation. Some people spend their whole lives trying to figure this out; we’ll handle it in under 30 pages, so we can get on with more important things.