

Vital Signs: The Nature and Nurture of Passion

Passion is a concept that's talked about a lot these days, in a lot of different arenas:

- * Business and leadership experts talk about employee engagement.
- * Coaching and career development folks talk about finding a calling.
- * Educators talk about passion-based learning.
- * Couples and relationship counselors talk about keeping the spark alive.

But passion is much bigger and deeper than what happens M-F 9-5, or what happens between partners.

Ultimately, passion is a life skill---a *stance*---that helps bring vitality to *all* our engagements: from work, family and school life, to creative, social and spiritual life. And it's a survival mechanism---critical to health and well-being---because your attachment to life depends on your interest in it.

According to Gregg Levoy, author of *Vital Signs: The Nature and Nurture of Passion* (and author of the bestselling book *Callings*), the trick to cultivating passion is not just finding *a* passion, or even a person or purpose to be passionate about, but *living* passionately. This begins with identifying where you *lose* passion---which routines, relationships, involvements or beliefs drain your energies and which ones revitalize them. Then making choices that take you toward rather than away from your vitality, and finding ways to offset the downward-pulling forces of everything from daily routines to life in a Code Orange world.

Some of what we'll explore in this hands-on workshop:

- * **Passion can be cultivated.** Turned on as well as turned off. And this happens most readily at the level of the moment, not the five-year plan or the extreme makeover.
- * **Passion is in the risk.** In the willingness to step from the sidelines onto the playing field.
- * **Passion breeds passion**, and disinterest breeds disinterest. If you lack passion in your own life, your other relationships will be denied that energy---your partnerships, friendships, communities, classrooms, congregations and corporations.
- * **Passion equals productivity**, and lack of passion sabotages it.
- * **Passion isn't just exuberance, it's *endurance*.** It's sometimes shoulder-to-the-wheel stamina and patience on the order of years.
- * **Passion is intimately related to health.** Passion is vitality, and honoring your passions enhances your vitality.