

Do You Love Your Work?

By Joyce Minor | Highlands Today
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Life is too short to spend it working at anything you're not passionate about. So why do so many Americans toil a lifetime at jobs they despise, always wishing they were somewhere else?

We have to work for a living, but we don't have to hate it. For all of us, there ought to be some kind of work that could be both enjoyable and lucrative. Unfortunately, for many people the kind of work that they enjoy is not the kind at which they can make a decent living.

If I had a dollar for every person who told me that at heart he/she is really a writer or a musician or an actor, but makes his/her living as a real estate broker or an insurance agent or a bus driver, I'd be so wealthy I wouldn't need to work at all.

Our society is a place where only a few can make a living playing games like football and poker, but if they're really good at either one, they can make a veritable fortune. However, if your talent is in writing poetry or composing symphonies, it doesn't matter how good you are at it, you've got a better chance at winning the mega lottery than making a living doing what you love.

And that's just not fair.

We teach kids to love sports, music and art, but do we make it clear that very few of them will ever make a living doing those things. The ones who come closest will probably be those who teach, but most people who teach the arts or sports would rather be actually doing than teaching. They just can't make a living at it.

So what do we do? We can't stop teaching arts and **sports**. We know that exposure to such curricula helps children develop physical stamina and cultural appreciation. Even if the skills they learn are never more than lifetime hobbies, lives are greatly enriched by them.

Especially in these lean economic times, it's tempting to focus only on training that leads to paying careers. When school budgets are tight the first things we consider cutting are art and music.



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This should not be. Studying music helps with coordination and focus, and actually helps develop math skills. Art provides a creative outlet, helping children learn to channel their emotions productively. Aren't all these skills vital in the workplace as well?the diversified workforce of the future. The more well-rounded their education, the more likely they will be to find jobs they can actually enjoy for a lifetime.

Instead of cutting these programs, we need to find creative ways to enhance them, helping students understand that **sports**, music, and art are not intended to become their careers, but tools for developing job satisfaction and minimizing stress in whatever careers they ultimately choose. We also need to encourage and support community theater, amateur musical groups, and **sports leagues for adults**, so young people can remain active in these endeavors after they graduate and join the workforce.

The broader the range of skills and experience our students develop, the more employable they will be as adults. The more culturally savvy they become the better they will fit into

