

In your 17 or 18 years of life, in what do you place your highest value, what is ...



My Passion: My Father's Notion of Houses We all have temporary passions, things that seem important for a short time, and as we grow older and expand our experiences, we realize how transient many of these passions can be. My father is certainly more enduring than temporary passions; indeed, his example and his words remain indelibly etched in my mind and my soul no matter how much time passes. He often notes to me that "it is better to build human houses than to build houses with empty people." This essay will explain my interpretation of my father's proffered wisdom, and how this folksy quotation affects my overarching values, passions and commitments. More particularly, this essay will discuss education as my most important value, learning in different settings as my passion, and my commitment is a desire to develop personal learning habits which will contribute to and enhance my education values.

As an initial matter, the concept upon which I place the greatest value is education. Without an education, without knowledge and experience, I am what my father refers to as an empty house. Education, as my personal value, is not intended to be defined too narrowly; quite the contrary, I envision education as encompassing facts and experiences. It is learning how to socialize with different kinds of people as well as learning about facts. It is as much about learning about my limitations, whether physical or emotional, as well as learning about philosophies and the hard sciences. Curiosity is one of my motivations and a desire to live my life purposefully is another. We learn every day, if we are aware of the opportunities, and in this way education is something which permeates our lives. I can't think of a greater value to be passionate about.

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Related to my choice of education as my greatest value is my continuing passion to learn in different settings. To be sure, most people associate education with formal educational settings. They think of desks, and classrooms, and exams. This is certainly one type of learning setting, but is hardly the only setting of which I am passionate about. My passion is to visit lakes and ponds, to examine artifacts and relics in museums, and to meet people both young and old. Each experience furnishes the house to which my father alluded, making it more beautiful and complete, and I view broad experiences as a passion to be pursued and indulged in with passion. Given my greatest value, and my passion for broad experiences, my commitment is to develop learning habits that help me to fulfill my goals. It is useful to note, first, what habits are harmful to my goals. Staying at home, playing computer games, and withdrawing are all destructive habits. I need to be aware of my time, both at school and in my free time, and take advantage of all opportunities offered to me. I need to join clubs or groups, I need to be brave and introduce myself to new people, and I need to define more carefully and more precisely what subjects and questions interest me. I also need to reflect on my own aptitudes and decide whether certain subjects will motivate me or bore me. With respect to my academic and professional future, I need to learn to plan and to schedule my time more carefully. I need to make time to pursue other interests and other experiences. Time is, after all, a limited commodity, and I am committed to making the best use of the time allotted to me in my lifetime.

In the final analysis, my values, passions and commitments can in many ways be traced to my father's frequent quote. I think that he is a wise man

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and that he is trying to teach me to value education and to pursue a worthy and useful life. To be an empty house, devoid of color or texture, would be a tragedy. My life will not be a tragedy.