

The Art of Making a Living

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Since grade school days you have likely been asked countless times "What do you want to be when you grow up?" Your response over the years has probably been deeply influenced by the images you see in media. We are influenced by socialization about what is gender appropriate, what is prestigious, what is worthy of pursuing.

Our understanding of "success" influences our choices. We see images of material wealth, prestige, sexual conquest, and sporty cars and begin to equate these things with success. Our minds become numb to the reality that this is only one definition of success. Further, we begin to see the world in terms of winners and losers. People that achieve the symbols of "success" are winners while others seem like "losers". This value system becomes a lens through which we see the world.

I'd like to invite you to be radical with your thinking for a moment and to view the world through a new lens. Forget about winning and losing, and think, instead, about your career as an expression of your identity-- as a source of fulfillment. Imagine that today you are not seeking approval from others, but seeking approval from within. Imagine feeling courageous and clearly in touch with what you really, truly enjoy in life. Imagine the kind of world you would like to live in, and the role you would like to play in creating that world. Do you have this picture clearly in mind? Now consider, how might this approach to choosing a career influence your career choice? Would such thinking open any doors or pathways to explore?

If you would like to explore the possibilities for artfully living your life by building a satisfying career I would like to recommend a book that might help entitled, [Zen and the Art of Creating a Living](#), by Laurence G. Boldt. This book offers sage career planning advice, but also takes you on an inspirational journey to define your identity and life values. It is a tool for expressing those things that are most precious and meaningful to you as a person through the choice of your life's work. The author challenges you to express yourself in your work by seeing work as an art, no matter what your occupation. He explores the spiritual side of working while offering a variety of inspirational and philosophical quotes that invite you to reflect on the meaning of life.

I invite you to explore the meaning of work in your life. Your college education is only the beginning of a long career journey you will take in building your life. This book may offer a valuable guidance in your life-long journey to become the person you want to be, and to find fulfillment in "the art of making a living".