

Thinking about Passion

There is no passion to be found playing small - in settling for a life that is less than the one you are capable of living.

Nelson Mandela

Great ambition is the passion of a great character. Those endowed with it may perform very good or very bad acts. All depends on the principles which direct them.

Napoleon Bonaparte

Passion is energy. Feel the power that comes from focusing on what excites you.

Oprah Winfrey

Passion rebuilds the world for the youth. It makes all things alive and significant.

Ralph Waldo Emerson

Passion is the genesis of genius.

Tony Robbins

Jealousy is bred in doubts. When those doubts change into certainties, then the passion either ceases or turns absolute madness.

Francois de La Rochefoucauld

Passion makes idiots of the cleverest men, and makes the biggest idiots clever.

Francois de La Rochefoucauld

Revenge is an act of passion; vengeance of justice. Injuries are revenged; crimes are avenged.

Samuel Johnson

It is obvious that we can no more explain a passion to a person who has never experienced it than we can explain light to the blind.

T. S. Eliot

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He only employs his passion who can make no use of his reason.

Cicero (106 BC - 43 BC)

Only passions, great passions, can elevate the soul to great things.

Denis Diderot (1713 - 1784)

Judgement, not passion should prevail.

Epicharmus

It's the soul's duty to be loyal to its own desires. It must abandon itself to its master passion.

Rebecca West (1892 - 1983)

It is easier to exclude harmful passions than to rule them, and to deny them admittance than to control them after they have been admitted.

Seneca (5 BC - 65 AD)

My fault, my failure, is not in the passions I have, but in my lack of control of them.”

– Jack Kerouac

“Passion. It lies in all of us. Sleeping... waiting... and though unwanted, unbidden, it will stir... open its jaws and howl. It speaks to us... guides us. Passion rules us all. And we obey. What other choice do we have? Passion is the source of our finest moments. The joy of love... the clarity of hatred... the ecstasy of grief. It hurts sometimes more than we can bear. If we could live without passion, maybe we'd know some kind of peace. But we would be hollow. Empty rooms, shuttered and dank. Without passion, we'd be truly dead.”

– Joss Whedon

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Martin Schoeller. Des Moines, Iowa. Spring 2012.

I took this portrait of Gabby Douglas in Des Moines, Iowa, where she was living with a host family, in order to train under local coach Liang Chow. Though only 16, she left her family in Virginia to pursue her dream: competing in the London Olympic games this summer. Despite the growing pressure and all-consuming training, she was incredibly relaxed and easy-going. I like the image because it tries to detail the mysterious ways athletes of this caliber carry their round-the-clock determination and discipline into their most daily routines.



The Swimmer's Moment by Margaret Avison

For everyone

The swimmer's moment at the whirlpool comes,

But many at that moment will not say

'This is the whirlpool, then.'

By their refusal they are saved

From the black pit, and also from contesting

The deadly rapids, and emerging in

The mysterious, and more ample, further waters.

And so their bland-blank faces turn and turn

Pale and forever on the rim of suction

They will not recognize.

Of those who dare the knowledge

Many are whirled into the ominous centre

That, gaping vertical, seals up

For them an eternal boon of privacy,

So that we turn away from their defeat

With a despair, not for their deaths, but for

Ourselves, who cannot penetrate their secret

Nor even guess at the anonymous breadth

Where one or two have won:

(The silver reaches of the estuary).

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Sept. 22, 2013. Pakistani women grieve over the coffins of their relatives, who were killed in a suicide attack on a church in Peshawar, Pakistan.

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Sept. 23, 2013. Pakistani Christians hold a burning tire as they stage a protest in Lahore against the suicide bombing of a church in Peshawar.

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Sept. 25, 2013. An artist prepares an idol at a workshop ahead of Durga Puja festival in New Delhi



Reason and Passion XV by Khalil Gibran

And the priestess spoke again and said: "Speak to us of Reason and Passion."

And he answered saying:

Your soul is oftentimes a battlefield, upon which your reason and your judgment wage war against passion and your appetite.

Would that I could be the peacemaker in your soul, that I might turn the discord and the rivalry of your elements into oneness and melody.

But how shall I, unless you yourselves be also the peacemakers, nay, the lovers of all your elements?

Your reason and your passion are the rudder and the sails of your seafaring soul.

If either your sails or our rudder be broken, you can but toss and drift, or else be held at a standstill in mid-seas.

For reason, ruling alone, is a force confining; and passion, unattended, is a flame that burns to its own destruction.

Therefore let your soul exalt your reason to the height of passion; that it may sing;

And let it direct your passion with reason, that your passion may live through its own daily resurrection, and like the phoenix rise above its own ashes.

I would have you consider your judgment and your appetite even as you would two loved guests in your house.

Surely you would not honour one guest above the other; for he who is more mindful of one loses the love and the faith of both.

Among the hills, when you sit in the cool shade of the white poplars, sharing the peace and serenity of distant fields and meadows - then let your heart say in silence, "God rests in reason."

And when the storm comes, and the mighty wind shakes the forest, and thunder and lightning proclaim the majesty of the sky, - then let your heart say in awe, "God moves in passion."

And since you are a breath In God's sphere, and a leaf in God's forest, you too should rest in reason and move in passion.

Purple Passion
by Raymond A. Foss

*Royal, rich, deep purple
brilliant luminous petals
drink the pulse of light
from the fleeting flash
burn the fragrant color
into the cell, cut through
the fog, radiant hue
seal a moment with your power
capture the instant
of purple passion*

Choose three of these texts and determine

- a) What the text is saying about passion**
- b) What details are significant in helping you determine that message**
- c) How you could respond personally (in any format)...you should outline your response**

You will be required to choose one to do your actual writing on.