



Happiness & Hustle

**A Guide on How to Discover Your Passion and Create
a Successful Side Hustle While Working a 9 to 5.**

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"Happiness is not something ready-made. It comes from your own actions."

-Dalai Lama

Introduction

Let's face it, we all want HAPPINESS. If you're reading this, it means your day to day just isn't cutting it anymore. Chances are the life you are currently living right now, is not the life you envisioned or wanted. I'm sure you have that burning desire to enter a new level in your life but you are still trying to figure out how to get there. Have you been feeling stuck and unsure of your passion or purpose?

Ready to take a leap into the side hustle world but don't know where to start? Either way, you came to the right place and trust me you are not alone. Almost 80% of millennials are experiencing depression and anxiety due to working a job they hate. Huge number right? Yeah, I know.

Majority of their unhappiness comes from several areas; not being paid enough, not getting the recognition they feel is deserved, and even having to deal with toxic bosses and coworkers. However, one of the most frustrating reasons of them all, was not feeling passionate about the work they actually do. At this point in your life, you're probably thinking how the hell did I become so content with where I am?

If you were like me you went to college for several years, attended a trade school or went directly into the workforce, only to discover the difficulty of finding a job in your field. So what happens next? We take the first employment opportunity that comes our way because our bills never take a day off.

Side Note: These can't be the same bills our parents paid!

As time goes on, we find ourselves becoming stressed and even depressed working at a job that makes us miserable all for some level of stability. Whether you hate your job or are completely ambivalent towards it, the fact of the matter is that you still have roughly the hours of 5pm to 9pm or more available to you every day. Granted, some of these hours are spent on personal care, running errands, cooking and other obligations especially if you have children.

Aside from these things, you still have at least 2 hours or more of free time each day. The truth is you have the opportunity to choose how you want to live your life, you don't have to settle for it! We all are in search of financial freedom, flexibility or an exit strategy from the 9-5 life and guess what? Side hustles present the perfect opportunity for this.

For many people, their side hustle is the gateway to monetizing their passion. You can build wealth, increase your savings, or even become your own boss by building up a business while still earning consistent income from your full-time job. All while avoiding the financial risks of stepping out on your own as a full time entrepreneur. The peace of mind that comes with earning additional income on the side is that there are endless possibilities of what you can do with those funds. You can pay down debt, have an emergency fund, or even save for that down payment on a new home.

My Story

Side hustling has always been about FREEDOM and HAPPINESS. I wanted the luxury of living life on my own terms and going after what truly made me happy. This meant doing work that made me light up every day and allowed me the flexibility to go where I want, when I want and have the means to do anything I want. In other words, I wanted to live my best life! I started off working a 9-5 and took the traditional path of going to college and earning a master's degree. Sounds pretty good huh?

I'm here to tell you, that what glitters isn't always gold. It wasn't until I was 3 years into my career as a School Counselor that I realized I couldn't continue to work in that role for the rest of my life. I would try to convince myself that it wasn't that bad by focusing on my good salary, benefits and job security. However; reality would creep in and remind me that regardless of how good things looked on paper it could never compare to my desire to have uncapped income and not have someone telling me how to do my job or when I can take days off.

Ultimately, it was affecting my peace of mind by having to bite my tongue to remain professional at all times during work. Once I realized that spending 40 hours a week at a job I disliked was impacting my happiness, I immediately started looking for other ways to use my skills, experience and degree. I was determined to use my degree because I refused to believe I wasted 6 years of school for just a piece of paper. I remember getting home from work every day and researching on the computer to look for other opportunities. I knew counseling was my passion but working for someone else was not.

"Life is hard for two reasons....because you're leaving your comfort zone or because you're staying in it."

So of course, my search was slim because I didn't want to go work another job which meant I had to do some soul searching within myself to determine how I could continue to chase my passion while working for myself. To be honest, it took me several months to decide on what I wanted to do. In other words, the struggle was real! I finally came across a person who just happened to ask me if I had the license to open a private practice and I replied "No, it takes too much time and money to do that."

After that conversation, I put that option in the back of my head and kept working my same comfortable job even though I was unhappy. Sad, right? I believe comfort makes us stay in situations longer than we should. Comfort is just another disguise for fear. We become so comfortable within our routine and resistant to change because it takes too much effort. I was that person and being fearful of the unknown held me back from my full potential.

I had to check myself and realize that the happiness I was searching for was on the other side of fear. One of the biggest pills I had to swallow was that “I was the one blocking my own success because I was playing it safe” and there is no success without risk. Once I shifted my mindset and began operating with the outlook of having more faith than fear, I was ready to take a chance on starting a business while still working full-time. I had no idea what I was getting myself into but I was willing to take the risk whether I failed or not.

"You can't play it safe your whole life and expect to reach your highest potential. You have to be willing to take risks."

How I Did it

I know you're thinking how in the world did you work a 9-5 and run a private practice for almost 2 years. The answer is..... it wasn't easy at all and involved a lot of consistency and self-discipline. My daily routine consisted of waking up at 5:30am and not returning home until 8:00pm. Yes, I was working close to 14 hours a day by being at a full-time job and then going to my private practice to see clients afterwards. Was I exhausted? Absolutely, but nothing worth having comes easy.

Ultimately I had tunnel vision, I would use any time after work and weekends to work consistently on my business. I even traded in partying and hanging out with friends for my dreams. I didn't shop or spend money on unnecessary things either. Initially, I invested \$10,000 into my business, \$5,000 for my license alone to practice in the state of North Carolina and the remaining \$5,000 was for office and other expenses. Budgeting was my best friend. Every month, I made a budget, stayed committed to it and refused to live outside of my means.

I must admit, it was hard remaining true to a vision and seeing everyone around you living in the moment and enjoying their weekends to the fullest while your face is stuck in a book or computer to accomplish your goals.

It was also difficult to have people in my life who didn't understand my vision but I soon realized that the vision was not meant for them, it was only meant for me. Looking back, I wouldn't change anything about my journey. The sacrifices and losses were all worth it.

Side Note: You are not missing out on anything when you are getting your sh*t together!

I remember when I started out I had ZERO clients the first 2 months and I was disappointed and frustrated in tears. Here I am paying rent for a nice office with not one client in it but I refused to give up! I started marketing heavy with business cards, brochures, social media and speaking at local events. I had to ultimately hustle every minute of the day and every chance I got. In over a year of staying consistent with building clientele and creating a brand, I started seeing more and more clients every day of the week and on Saturdays.

At one point, I realized I was seeing so many clients that it exceeded the amount of my paycheck at my full-time job. Once I realized that business was increasing, I was ready to throw up the deuces and tell my boss that I was “never coming back to work!” Then I had to come back to reality and determine if the good income streak would be steady before quitting, so I gave it another 6 months.....sigh.

Sure enough, the money kept rolling in and when I did my taxes it reflected 6-figures! I stared at my taxes over and over again. I could not believe that I made this amount of money in a year. That’s when I knew it was time to ditch the job and hand in my resignation letter with a huge smile. Even when giving my resignation, I was still in disbelief that my hard work paid off and put me in a position to ditch the 9-5 life. The feeling of quitting my job was indescribable and absolutely freeing!

"The first step to boosting your income is to identify where your passion lives and to be true to it."

How did I make 6-figures? Let's do the math. I charged \$110 for a Clinical Assessment (one-time fee), \$80 for a 60 minute session in helping others solve their issues and \$40 for anger management class (60 minutes) of at least 7 people which equals \$560 total twice a week. So I was seeing 30 clients a week every Monday through Saturday and averaging about \$2,400 a week (before taxes).

Listen, if I can do it so can YOU! I know you're thinking...."You can charge people that amount of money because you're a therapist." Not true! There are plenty of people who are charging the same if not more for their knowledge even without a degree. If you're an expert in something, you can charge what you are WORTH! People will pay for quality in your service and/or product. In these next few steps we are going to tap into your motivation and jumpstart your idea of having a side hustle by identifying your passion, prioritizing your time, choosing the side hustle that fits you, and crushing your excuses (yes, I said it).

Sound good? Let's do this!

Identifying Your Passion

Before we tackle your schedule, we are going to start with identifying the passions and goals that you want to pursue. Some may be fairly simple and inexpensive to start. Others, like photography can be more resource heavy (expensive and time consuming).

For this exercise, don't let the cost or time constraints enter your mind. Solely focus on the passions and hobbies you would pursue if time and money were no object. Imagine that you could do anything you wanted to do.

Take all the time you need to figure out your interests. If you have trouble coming up with answers, let your mind wander.

Ask yourself: if you could do anything you wanted, what would you do?

What would your ideal lifestyle be?

You will find insight in your answer.

Below, list up to 5 (but at least 3) passions or hobbies that interest you:



Five horizontal lines for writing, each preceded by a yellow arrow pointing right.

Prioritizing Your Time

Once you identify your passion, the next thing is learning how to prioritize your time and money in order to execute your goal. You've heard the saying, "If you want it badly enough, you'll make time for it." There are only 24 hours in a day — no more and no less. While you can't add more hours to the day (no matter how much you wish you could), you can only make the most of the time you do have. The truth is, many of us struggle with having enough energy at the end of the day to actually start a side hustle that we're passionate about.

Be mindful that what you PUT in, is what you will get OUT. So if you put in 20% effort, you'll only see results of 20% in the outcome. It takes real work and sacrifices to master your side hustle and earn additional income. This will include less time spent with friends, less time watching your favorite Netflix shows, waking up earlier or losing sleep to get things done. Overall, you can't expect your lifestyle to remain exactly the same as it is right now. Believe me, when you achieve your side hustle goal you will see that all of the sacrifices were worth it.

Are you ready to prioritize your time?

It's time to make some moves and turn that 5pm-9pm into something worth talking about!

1. Limit the amount of time you spend on social media or other time-consuming apps on your phone.

Um, excuse me, what did you just say? You heard that right. We all have an addiction when it comes to the apps on our phone especially social media. Limit the time on your phone and instead focus on the things that you really want to do.

2. Create (or find) a space where you can work distraction free.

Some of us thrive in chaos, but others need peace and quiet to truly concentrate on the task at hand. Either way, you can find a space that works for you. Whether you need to create a work area or go into a different room in your house, having this space will encourage you to get in the mindset of focusing on the task at hand.

3. Set goals, but don't put time limits on them.

Even with things that you want to do, we all know it can be difficult to stay focused on a certain task over a period of months or even years. We tend to reach creative blocks, lose momentum or inspiration as timewears on. It's important to remember that you are doing this for you and no one else. It shouldn't be something that adds stress to your life, but that enriches it.

4. Leave time for yourself to still mentally unwind.

Though some hobbies may seem passive, they are all actually active pursuits that engage your mind and energy. Sometimes you really just need a break to decompress from life's demands. Don't deny yourself that time it's an important part of a balanced schedule.

5. Ask yourself, "Is this how I really want to be spending my time"

Sometimes we end up in situations we don't want to be in. We get roped into things we don't want to do. We end up in roles we don't want. My advice to you is that if you truly don't want to be there, and find the experience completely unfulfilling, leave. Then, take that time and dedicate it to doing something your heart is 100 percent on.

6. Do it first thing.

Can't find time in the evenings? Try waking up 30 minutes early to get your "me" time in. It will be tough at first as you adjust, but ultimately making the time for something that will eventually create more income for you will be more valuable than 30 more minutes of sleep.

Choosing the Side Hustle that Fits You

When trying to determine the right side hustle, you have two options:

Option A: Choose something that you're already an expert at.

Option B: If you already chose something you're passionate about then you need to master your craft with it.

Even though it's obvious that you should be skilled at the side hustle you choose, it's just as important to be passionate about it. If you think about it, you'll be spending a good chunk of your free time working on it and if you choose something that you're just good at but not passionate about you will most likely be on the fast track to burnout. One thing about passion is that it never gets old. Of course, there are other factors to consider besides just what you're skilled at and passionate about.

Let's think.....

Is it something you could charge money for?

Is there a need and/or demand for it?

What problem will you be helping people solve?

Who do you hope to serve?

"The key to success is to make an impact while making income"

Once you narrow down your ideas, run them by someone you trust (trust is very important, you cannot tell everyone your idea) and ask for their honest opinions. This type of feedback will be essential to helping you choose the best side hustle.

Also, make sure you consider your niche and try to be as specific as possible. Will you focus on men or women? A particular age group? When I began my side hustle, I targeted Millennials. Why? First, I am a Millennial. Second, I was aware of the issues we face in our generation every day so I knew I was tapping into a market with a need for solutions to their problems.

Easier said than done, right?

In the next section, we'll cover the most common excuses you use to waste your time.

Crush Your Excuses

Even when we start out with the best intentions, excuses seem to pop up left and right, preventing us from accomplishing what we set out to do. In this section, I'm going to help you crush those excuses and actually make the time for your passion outside of your day job.

1. "I don't have time!"

Let's be honest, you actually, probably do. You just have to make the time; no one else is going to do it for you. If you really don't think you have time, try writing down your exact schedule every day to pinpoint the time you are wasting.

(Be honest about how you are spending your time and on how you feel about the way you spend that time).

2. "I can't motivate myself."

Sounds like you need an accountability system. I bet you have a friend who'd be willing to let you check in with them. There are so many podcasts and YouTube videos out there to motivate you on the daily. Not to mention, you can find a mentor who has been successful in doing what you would like to do. Be RESOURCEFUL. There are plenty of ways to stay accountable, the important part is that you actually do the checking in (whether you actually did the work or not).

3. “I have such a busy schedule, by the time I get home I’m just exhausted.”

A lot of people have busy schedules but it’s up to you to alleviate that exhaustion. Take some time to make sure you are getting adequate sleep, nutrition, and hydration. These things are often culprits of exhaustion. If your exhaustion is something that concerns you, consult your doctor or a health professional for a deeper look into it.

4. “It will take too much time.”

Here’s a little secret: Whether you’re doing what you love or not, time will be passing anyway. It doesn’t go faster or slower just because you’re binge watching a series on Netflix or scrolling through your timeline on Instagram and Facebook. Listen if time is going to pass anyway, you might as well make it count!

5. “It’s too expensive.”

Some passions are expensive, yes, but not all. If what you’d like to do is too expensive right now, dedicate yourself to researching it or taking smaller steps while you save up.

6. “There are too many things I want to do.”

There’s no shame in picking one over the other, switching back and forth, or dividing your time how you see fit. Don’t get so bogged down in a state of indecision that you do nothing. Remember, lack of action gets you nowhere.

Side Hustle Ideas

Need some Inspiration to get started?

Here are some online side hustles you can pursue with your passion.

Online Coaching – Do you have a natural ability to motivate people? Do you have expertise that can help them improve their lives? You might be a perfect coaching candidate.

Online Teaching – If you're the kind of person who wants to teach everything they know, find that skill people want to learn and teach them how to do it.

Consulting – If you've got special training or experience in a business-related field, why not offer consulting services to business owners?

Freelancing – If you have an online skill to offer such as graphic design, web design, photo editing, writing, editing, bookkeeping, accounting, data entry, proofreading, etc, you could become a freelancer.

Blogging – Do you have a lot of knowledge on one particular topic? Do you love writing about it, talking about it, and answering people's questions about it? Why not start your own blog? A blog is a great side hustle option.

Create and Sell Digital Products – Again, if you have a lot of knowledge about something, put that knowledge to work for you!

E-Commerce – Did you know there are ways to sell physical products online without ever handling the merchandise yourself? If this idea appeals to you, consider setting up a store that offers print-on-demand products.

Congratulations!

You made it to the end of the ebook! Hopefully you are feeling more motivated to chase your passions, make time in your schedule for the things you want to pursue, and are confident enough to crush your excuses and create a side hustle!

To conclude, here are a few final tips:

There's no pressure. Hobbies should bring you joy. They should never feel like a chore. If you need a few days off, take them! But don't forget to give yourself a push when you really need that extra motivation.

Passions evolve. It's okay to change your passions over time, it's even encouraged! If something isn't floating your boat anymore, it's okay to move on to more interesting things. Just do you!

Exhaustion is normal...to a point. We all have to work, and the daily grind can be downright exhausting. However, being so tired that all you can do is come home and fall into bed is not healthy - for your mind or body. Manage your exhaustion accordingly.

Your time is yours. It's really up to you how to spend your time. Be intentional with how you spend your time and you will be a happier person.

I wish you the very best as you embark on your journey to make time for your passion while working your 9-5. Remember, your **HAPPINESS** should always be a top priority.