

What Should I Do with My Life?

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Have you ever asked this question? Have your children asked this question? I'll bet your employees ask this question! Or have you provided such a welcoming environment and opportunity for them that they already have answered this question? Wouldn't that be terrific?

The title of this week's article is the same as a 2002 book by Po Bronson, an author who asked himself the same question. He chose to launch an all-out search for others who had sought their answers. He conducted over 900 interviews, from which he chronicled fifty stories of successful and not-so-successful people.

With this article, I'm seeking your assistance, but let me first provide some background. For the past couple of weeks, a friend of mine and I have been studying John Maxwell's *Put Your Dream to the Test: 10 Questions to Help You See It and Seize It*.

In one of our recent conversations, my friend and I were exploring the concept of extraordinary people. In fact, please do yourself a favor and put the paper down for a moment and consider this request. Name three people you consider to be extraordinary.

Obviously, your choices will be based on what the word "extraordinary" means to you. One definition is "exceptional in character, amount, extent, degree, etc." Go ahead, put the paper aside and think about who you might consider "extraordinary."

Did you think about people you know? Or did you tend to think about people who are famous? It would be interesting to conduct some research to see how most people respond.

As my friend and I thought more about this concept, we realized that famous people did most of their extraordinary work prior to becoming high profile. Look at all the work Mother Theresa did before she became a household word by winning the Nobel Peace Prize in 1979. Can you name any of the work that Winston Churchill did for 65 years before he was elected Prime Minister of England in 1940? Consider all the work that Martin Luther King, Jr. did in his church before the final years of his life.

We realized that many people are plugging away daily at what they consider to be important work. You may consider them to be quite ordinary people, yet they may be extraordinary in their skills, their commitment to serving others, or their efforts to continually improve what they know and do. What is it that separates and elevates ordinary people to the level of the extraordinary?

That's where Po Bronson and his book came into my conversation with my friend. We all have to answer for ourselves, "What should I do with my life?" Avoiding the question doesn't help, of course, because no answer is an answer. Time marches on, and so do our lives!

My friend and I asked ourselves, "I wonder which individuals who live around us are delighted that they have the privilege every day of doing what they love? Are there stories out there of ordinary people actively pursuing their dream?"

Will you help us answer that question? You might know such a coworker, a neighbor, or a friend. Maybe you were astounded when you spoke with your child's teacher, your accountant, or a police officer. Perhaps you had an amazing experience with a hospital worker, a farmer, or your pharmacist.

Maybe you've always admired your grandfather's outlook on life or your pastor's willingness to serve. Maybe YOU are one of those rare people who knows with total certainty that you were created for exactly what you are doing! If you know such a person, please let me know who it is.

I'm not sure what I will do with this information, but I promise that if you will contact me (see below), I will acknowledge your response. I promise that my friend and I will study the information we receive and draw some conclusions, and I expect you'll see this topic again in a future article.

Dennis Hooper prefers that you contact him by e-mail at dhooper2@juno.com. If you don't have access to e-mail, please leave a message for Dennis at 478-988-0237.