

## The Career Coach

Title: **Crafting a Career That Fits Who You Are** by Elaine Voci, Ph.D.

When you create a career path with heart, your life becomes joyful, prosperous and meaningful – with you in control. Instead of counting the hours left until each work day ends, you will be counting your blessings that you get to do what you love for a living.

The secret to finding work you love lies in expressing your **passion**. Ask yourself, “What matters to me most?” and “What issues, causes and problems do I deeply care about?” and “What common threads connect what I *care* about, with what I *know* about, and what I am *curious* about?” And, “How can I apply my most joyful skills to these things?”

Case in point: I recently met a married Carmel couple whose careers are joined in a creative venture called Luminis Books (Meaningful Books that Entertain). Chris Katsaropoulos is the publisher and his wife, Tracy Richardson, is the president; together, they publish thought-provoking literary, young adult and middle grade fiction ([www.luminisbooks.com](http://www.luminisbooks.com)). Chris and Tracy love their lifestyle; they have freedom over their work lives, and are masters of their own destiny.

Chris has a 20 year background in publishing and has always been a writer. Tracy is also an author with a marketing background. They espouse the philosophy that the only regrets in life are risks not taken. In 2008 they were ready to come to terms with the kind of work they wanted to engage in for the rest of their lives. They wanted something they could take ownership of and they had lots of experience in writing, publishing and marketing so they decided to launch their own publishing house. As Tracy described it, “The hard part was overcoming fear – we didn’t make a giant leap but we took little steps that got us out of our inertia. We learned that we are all limited only by our courage to decide.”

In 2010 they published their first book, and many more have since followed. As a small publisher, they provide authors the dual advantage of a high level of service and a long term relationship. They use social media to reach readers directly and offer special events. For aspiring authors, they offer sage advice:

1. Go to writers’ conferences\* where you can have your manuscript reviewed and speak directly with decision makers. Getting your book published is all about networking.
2. Be sure your writing is polished; hire an editor to professionally refine your finished manuscripts.
3. Write about what you love – honor the unique “voice” you were born with as the precious gift that it is.

Their advice applies equally to creating a career that fits who you are: use networking effectively; present a polished appearance; and aim your job search at finding work that suits you. When you do what you love it's not work at all – it's more like "high play" where you lose track of time and are in service to something greater than yourself. That is the transformative power of your passion in action – to give expression to what you care about and to contribute to the world.

For more inspiration, read *This Time I Dance!* By Tama Kieves; and *Do What You Love and the Money Will Follow* by Marsha Simetar.

\*The 40<sup>th</sup> Midwest Writers Conference is held annually at Ball State in Muncie, Indiana, and offers networking, manuscript evaluations, agent pitch sessions, hands-on tutoring with social media and class sessions.

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