



ARE YOU A DREAM KILLING PARENT (or a Dream Killer in general)?

By Anthony Moore

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The number #1 excuse I hear when parents crush their children's dreams is "you need something to fall back on," which is very lame when you think about it. On another note, many parents are stressed because they feel their kids have no direction (many times this isn't the case, but more on that later).

If your child has a direction (as long as it isn't illegal, unethical or self-destructive), that's all the more reason to realize the blessing and run with it. Stress differentiation and "thinking outside of the box" but still encourage the dream and passion. In other words, if you have children who want to play in the NBA but don't seem to have the talent necessary (or you're worried about the extraordinary odds against them), don't discourage them from their passion of basketball. Leverage the passion by showing them other areas in which they can participate that deal with basketball outside of being a player on the court (it can lead to something else for which they do have extraordinary talent). If they're on a basketball team let them know that there are other areas they can apply their passion to that can be more advantageous and "less traveled" (such as a coach, agent, promoter, general manager and so on). Also, even if they don't make it to the NBA, they can use their passion for basketball to advance in other areas. For instance, they could build relationships through playing basketball that help them in an entirely different career (whether they're playing basketball on the high school or college level, or even in a pickup game).

So you want your child to have something to fall back on? If the something to fall back on is the main thing you're stressing, it's not something to fall back on, it's a career path you're forcing on them (the truth hurts, doesn't it). If you're a parent in this mode, please break the cycle and encourage kids to dream big and think outside the box (we don't need any more people going insane and harming innocent people because they're not where they really want to be). At the same time, I am a strong advocate of having backup plans and developing skills in different areas. Success means giving yourself different options—having more options means having more freedom and more leverage.

I was talking to a friend who rediscovered her gift to write after she reached age 40 and returned to school. She wondered why that gift was revealed to her so late in life, so she reflected on her past. She eventually remembered something that happened when she was around the age of 10. At that tender young age, she wrote poetry and had a strong passion for writing. One day her mother found and read some of her poetry. She told her mother she wanted to be a writer. Her

mother then proceeded to shoot down her dream. Her mother told her it was a stupid use of her time and that she needed to set her sights on being a nurse (which by the way was the mother's profession). My friend ended up being a nurse and was miserable, as she hated doing it day in and day out. It turns out that she had little tolerance for being around sick people (not a quality you want to have if you're shooting for that "Nurse of the Century" award, get the drift). Not only did her mother push her away from her passion, she pulled her into an area that for her was unnatural.

Another instance of a dream-killing parent includes a woman who as a young girl wanted to be a makeup artist. Her mother criticized that goal and stressed that she pursue the "safe" job of being a teacher. This is not a criticism of teachers, as they have arguably the most important job in the world. However, if teaching is not one's calling, it can result in misery and unhappiness as was the case of this particular woman. She indeed was unhappy in her profession, which was amplified by a group of unruly kids (not a great combination for success, if you know what I mean).

Fortunately, this person later rediscovered and pursued her passion. She is now doing very fulfilling work involving using her creativity as a makeup artist for a variety of people, including the deceased. She's loving it—even the deceased people part. Even more, she likes the deceased people part a lot (**think about it**, she doesn't have to worry about them moving or doing other bothersome things that live people do, such as complaining)!

Contrary to what this person's mother told her, the reality is that there are many paths for makeup artists, a few of which are being a makeup artist for actors, models, and, of course, the deceased. Fortunately the subject of this story got back to her passion, but think of all the wasted time she spent being miserable doing something she hated. Life is too short and unpredictable to be unnecessarily miserable. Being that any day can be our last, it's important that we are as happy as possible every day. Moreover, many people never get back to their passions and purpose as they get caught up in doing things they really don't want to do.

Unfortunately, there are countless stories of people who were discouraged from pursuing and finding their passions by parents who stifled their abilities to discover who they really were by confining them to "safe" proven paths. This can be as disastrous as perpetuating cycles of alcohol and drug addiction, sexual indiscretions, physical abuse, or any given number of destructive practices.

Break the cycle! Don't limit your children to limitations that may have been imposed upon you (or that you may have imposed upon yourself). Encourage your children to dream big and experiment. If anything, help them to succeed in their chosen field in a unique and "outside of the box" way. If your child has a

unique passion it's probably a blessing. Those people who have less common talents often become the greatest successes. **Remember**, it's about supply and demand. The fewer people who can provide a greatly demanded service or product, the more they will generally get compensated for doing so. **Think about it**, when it comes to any given product we want that is supplied by lots of different providers, we commonly choose the cheapest version (putting all other considerations aside). However, if something only has a few providers, or we perceive a brand as providing something that others don't, we're usually willing to pay a higher price.



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