

## Passion Projects for Smart People: Turn Your Intellectual Pursuits into Fun, Profit and Recognition

**Michael R. Wing**

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A sure cure for workplace boredom is the “passion project,” which educator Michael Wing says people pursue because it “adds meaning to their lives and gives them satisfaction.” In a book that celebrates and demonstrates creativity, Wing writes in a kind of show-and-tell style, describing numerous projects conducted by him and others.

To provide an organizational structure, the book classifies the projects into categories that relate to how one conceptualizes and pursues them. One chapter, for example, explores how projects can result from affiliations with organizations or collaborations with individuals.

Another chapter concerns projects that emerge from travel with purpose; “travel with a sense of mission is more satisfying and transformative than travel without one,” writes Wing. Still another chapter discusses “citizen science programs,” such as the Audubon Society’s annual Christmas Bird Count, that anyone can participate in. There are plenty of examples all along the way.

Wing is not just a raconteur—he follows his own advice, pursuing numerous projects of his own, some of which he incorporates into his science classroom. He firmly believes there is a direct relationship between projects and happiness, citing several authorities to validate his belief.

The author generously provides a lengthy section of resources to encourage others to delve into projects that interest them. Unfailingly positive, Wing concludes his engaging book with this impassioned exhortation: “Have a project, like a secret garden, which occupies your thoughts even when you’re too busy with daily life to work on it.”

BARRY SILVERSTEIN (September/October 2017)

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