

Art Autobiography
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Recall: My experiences and memories with art started when I was a child in elementary school over 50 years ago. Each year, I would participate in the art contest/fair and my art work would be displayed in the school halls. I think I won a few times some ribbons for my work. I then went onto high school and did not take any art classes. I did go to some summer theater camps growing up as well as did summer arts and crafts. I played the organ for 4 years in elementary school and also took ballet classes. I then went to college and did not take art classes. However, during my junior year of college, I took a photography class because I had bought a new fancy olympus camera with many lenses. In this course, I developed my own photos. I did make a portfolio of all of my photos. This photography experience stood out as it was a relaxing class where I learned all aspects of photography. I also took the course at Worcester State University as a consortium class while I was a student at College of the Holy Cross, Worcester MA. I took it with a friend and I enjoyed bouncing ideas off of each other. It was also a good break from my Chemistry curriculum. I have done a lot of non-digital photography over the years, but now I am caught up in just taking digital photographs with my cell phone. That is the extent of "art;" in my life and I never thought I had any talent in drawing or painting.

I went on for my master's in plastics engineering, and had a challenging engineering curriculum, but while a graduate student, I did take a flower arranging class at night with one of my fellow students. This was a

class that gave me some creativity, but also structure because there were rules for flower arranging. I think I like having design criteria versus being totally creative.

After graduating with my master's degree, I accepted an engineering position in Grenoble, France. I took so many trips to all the surrounding countries and I must say that in most of the countries, I went to famous art museums to see the art work. Although I was not be creating myself, I enjoyed the museums . I would take tours in museums that explained the wonderful art work. I have been to Leonardo De Vinci's art work outside museum in France, the Louvre, the Muse D'Orsay, The Rodin Museum and so many more. Every building in Europe is incredible piece of artwork. Everyone felt the impact of the Cathedral of Notre Dame being destroyed not only because it was a place of worship ,but because of the incredible art within the building.

Currently, I have a 17 year old daughter who is gifted in art. Ever since she was young, she participated in art classes and art fairs. She did take two art classes in high school and went to a private art teacher weekly during her middle school years, but then she go too busy with other activities and stopped. I had saved all her artwork from Kindergarten to the present day, where I took digital photos of all of her work. She entered a contest for girls scout camp one year to design the camp t-shirt and then she won the contest for the state of New Hampshire. I was living "art" thru my daughter's art talents!

She always adds art to any project she did with school. She also did drama and dance (ballet, jazz, tap) in elementary school and has been playing the violin for 7 years. Her science fair projects always was a beautiful artistic display as well as scientific.

Reflect: The general characteristics of art experiences that are meaningful are where I tend to observe those that are talented in an art. A turn off for me is if I need to be personally artistic because I really cannot even draw a straight line. As an engineer, I recently took a 3D printing, additive manufacturing ,course and the solid works part of the course was difficult for me. The design using a CAD software challenges me I do not feel successful at Computer Aided Design. . I feel limited in my art ability. Perhaps, I feel unsuccessful because I have not had much training in art. I have gone to those Paint Nites shops where a group of people are instructed to paint all the same picture where it was fun event, but I just do not have any confidence in any art work that I paint.

Connect: I think the definition of art is: expression of oneself involving creativity. I usually think of art as an expression of painting or sculpturing, but it also could be dance, music , or even writing. I view art as something that talented people partake in. I feel like it involves gifted people in those areas. My past learning experience shaped my definition of art. For example, my husband and I enjoy seeing plays especially musicals, so, it is a form of art even though we are not the ones actually participating. My definition should maybe expand to people who experience an art versus

always someone that need to execute it themselves. I view art as entertainment. Experiencing art gives one pleasure. It is educational and it can open one's world. My attitude toward art is that it is competitive. Not everyone has the talent for art to become famous. However, some people may execute art because it is a passion knowing that not everyone can excel in art. My attitude is that art can be very traditional and modern. Art can be interpretive. The art form I like may not be the same art that someone else likes. There is appreciation for art often based on one's personal experiences. I keep away from actually performing in the arts myself because I do not have the talents, but I so enjoy watching the people who have talent. One events that we have seen when my child was small up until now are plays at the Peacock Players. That is a local youth theater company. My family goes to see 2-3 plays by the Peacock Players each year and this demonstrates my attitude toward art. I love to see young students developing their talents and it is amazing to see the level of talent in young students. We have seen one of my daughter's friend develop in theater thru this organization. Tomorrow we will go see him in Newsies. My daughter has tried out for these Peacock Player plays over the years, but has never gotten a part. This also gives me the attitude to never stop trying, but also to focus on developing the talents you were given. I have an awful singing voice, but I can use my voice as an art, be creative and turn my awful singing voice into some form of art for someone??!!