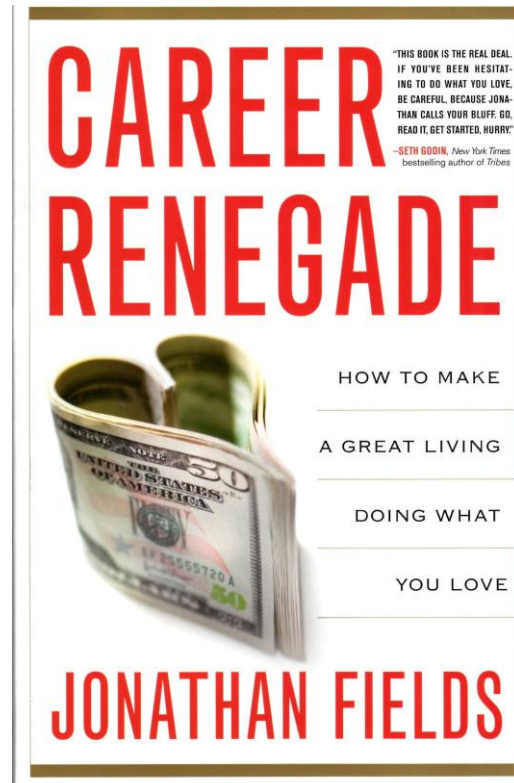

BOOK REVIEW

"Career Renegade: How to Make a Great Living Doing What You Love" by Jonathan Fields

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The title alone is enough to grab one's attention, bringing to mind non-conformism, thinking out of the box and walking the path less travelled. Or maybe even blazing a new path particularly when studies show that seventy-five percent of Americans for example are dissatisfied with their work lives. One suspects that figure would be replicated in most westernized countries.

A career renegade, according to Fields, is someone who takes charge of his or her career and makes it work to fulfill their own passions. That may mean starting your own business, as Jonathan has done several times – but it doesn't have to mean that. It could mean switching careers and going to work for a different company, or it could mean reshaping your attitude towards the job you

already have – whatever it takes to transform your work life into a meaningful career – one that won't eat you up from the inside out. A career renegade doesn't necessarily have to radically change careers, he or she may also find a new career so closely related to the one they currently have.

Fields knows what he's talking about, having switched careers himself. A lawyer by profession, he became a personal trainer, then a yoga proponent, then a marketing and PR adviser. So he comes across as a credible, dependable career renegade himself.

The book talks about finding what it is you love doing best, and building a career out of it. It's all about passion, because if you're not passionate about what you do, it becomes a chore, an obligation, something you end up resenting doing. The biggest stumbling block to following your passion is that sometimes it's not a viable source of living. The challenge then is creating a need for your passion, or working around its little offshoots.

Fields offers several nuggets of wisdom on transforming a passion into a career, like redeploying your passion in a hungrier market. This means creating a niche for yourself and your passion in fields that at first glance have no demand for it. He also suggests exploring small, but wealthy audiences for your passion. These audiences tend to be fiercely loyal, thus you can demand a greater premium for a distinct product or service. If there's a need, transform your passion so it fits that need.

The book is a gold mine of suggestions; it's also a gold mine of how to's. This is what's great about this book. You as the reader are constantly engaged and challenged, and made to think about *your* passions and how you can turn them into careers. Take note, careers, not just one, because one career may spin off into another, equally lucrative career.

Readers will discover:

- The career renegade paths to passion and prosperity, such as how to turn teaching into a fabulously lucrative career.
- How to use technology to turn a seemingly moneyless passion into a gold mine, like the sportswriter who turned blogging into a six-figure income.
- How to rapidly test your idea for free, from the comfort of your couch.

- How to establish yourself as the go-to person in the area of your passion by building recognition both on- and offline.

Life's too short to spend your days doing something you don't care about. Packed with hundreds of resources, innovative strategies, case studies, and tools for success, Career Renegade reveals how to earn a great living doing what you love.

Fields also recognizes the importance of having a solid support system, thus, he devotes one whole chapter to tips on how to get that kind of support from friends and family – usually the first people to balk at the idea of a "career change". This is a particularly delicate maneuver, as they may perceive it as something that would drastically alter a lifestyle they are used to having. The trick is to reassure them that you are not chasing windmills. You also need to find mentors, good ones, who can point you in the right direction. These mentors are crucial to success, but Fields also gives a nod to the new social media, and social networking, recognizing their potential as launching pads for career renegades.

As a whole, the book is inspiring. Subtly, Fields espouses the merits of a work-life balance. If you enjoy what you are doing, it ceases to become a job.

Jonathan Fields' book offers us hope that yes, we can all be career renegades (or perhaps already are) in varying degrees.

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