



**Suzanne Zoglio:  
Talk About Living!**

## The folly of perfection

“Anything worth doing is worth doing right.” That’s an expression I’ve heard since I was in grade school. Supposedly motivating adults were trying to inspire excellence...and to some extent, I guess they did. I became good at most things I tackled, and found satisfaction in the quality “products” produced.

Now older –and hopefully wiser- I see “worth doing right” being quite different from “doing perfectly” ...especially, if “perfect” is defined by someone else. The distinction has allowed me to take risks a perfectionist could not take and learn new crafts others might be too overwhelmed to try.

A few years ago I started pastel painting, having had no previous training or even inclination. I joined art leagues, signed up for classes, studied with a passion, and then began experimenting. As it turned out, I have a natural gift –probably rooted in my genes from my father’s artistic family.

Now, certainly every one of my paintings is not a masterpiece. But they are all good...except the ones I threw away. The completed works are not perfect, but they were all worth doing. I continue to study with “masters” and develop my individual techniques. Creating each new piece brings me great joy. I love my new expression...almost as much as writing.

In my ability to accept “worth doing” versus “perfect” as a rule, I have uncovered a dormant gift that now has emerged into a passion. Who knew?

Do you ever wonder if you might be sitting on a hidden treasure? Could pure joy be just beneath a learned tendency to do it perfectly or not at all? Are the fears of looking foolish stifling your exploration of writing that book, entering a photo contest, applying for the “Top Chef”

contest, taking acting classes, auditioning for a local choir, taking a volunteer leadership role?

Many readers over the years have shared with me their desire to “have a passion.” They wish they loved something the way I love coaching, writing, and painting. My answer is always the same – a question. What brings you joy? Not what are you good at, but what do you appreciate? What do you love learning more about?

If you find two or three inclinations, read a book about each, not necessarily about the craft, but perhaps a memoir of someone who was good at your aspiration. Then, take a class for beginners and see if it “clicks” for you.

You could talk with people you admire in the field, go on line and peruse websites of those pursuing your would-be passion. And don’t feel compelled to disclose your new venture to anyone. No need to meet anyone else’s expectations or report back on your progress. Just approach the pursuit as if you were shopping for a new suit. You think you know what you want, so you shop around, try a few on, and go home with the one that feels right.

It doesn’t have to be perfect. But it does have to work well for you.

[www.zoglio.com](http://www.zoglio.com)