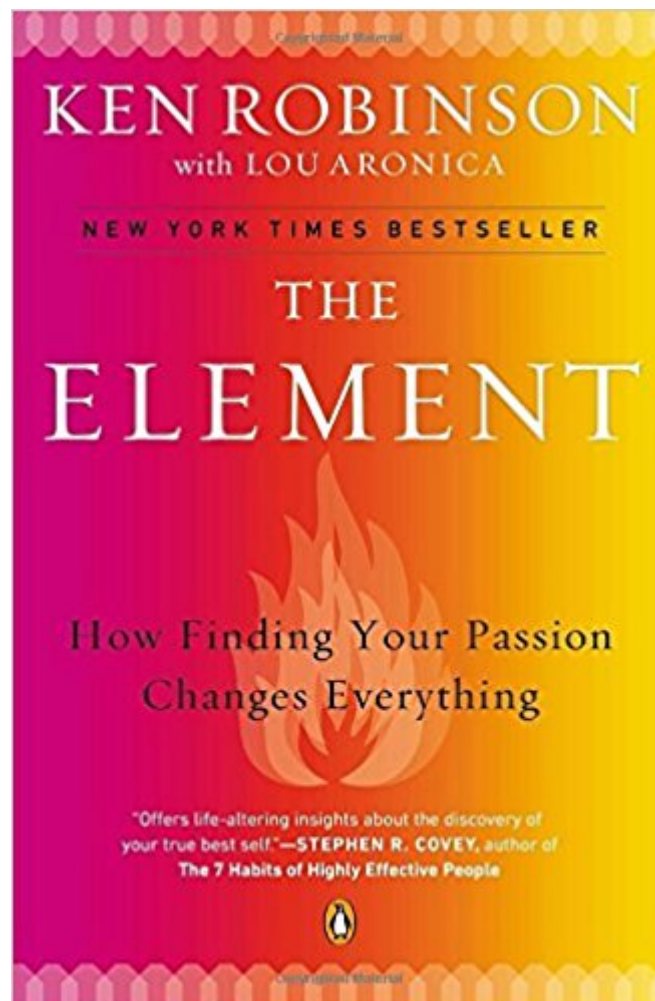




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# The Element: How Finding Your Passion Changes Everything



## Synopsis

The Element is the point at which natural talent meets personal passion. When people arrive at the Element, they feel most themselves and most inspired and achieve at their highest levels. With a wry sense of humor, Ken Robinson looks at the conditions that enable us to find ourselves in the Element and those that stifle that possibility. Drawing on the stories of a wide range of people, including Paul McCartney, Matt Groening, Richard Branson, Arianna Huffington, and Bart Conner, he shows that age and occupation are no barrier and that this is the essential strategy for transform— ing education, business, and communities in the twenty-first century. A breakthrough book about talent, passion, and achievement from one of the world's leading thinkers on creativity and self-fulfillment.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Robinson (Out of Our Minds), renowned in the areas of creativity development, innovation and human resources, tackles the challenge of determining and pursuing work that is aligned with individual talents and passions to achieve well-being and success. The element is what he identifies as the point where the activities individuals enjoy and are naturally good at come together. Offering a wide range of stories about the creative journeys of different people with diverse paths to the element— —including Paul McCartney, The Alchemist author Paulo Coelho, and Vidal Sassoon as well as lesser-known examples— —he demonstrates a rich vision of human ability and creativity. Covering such topics as the power of creativity, circles of influence, and attitude and aptitude, the author emphasizes the importance of nurturing talent along with developing an

understanding of how talent expresses itself differently in every individual. Robinson emphasizes the importance of mentors and reforming and transforming education, making a convincing argument bolstered by solid strategies for honing creativity. Motivating and persuasive, this entertaining and inspiring book will appeal to a wide audience. (Jan.) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an alternate Paperback edition.

“The Element offers life-altering insights about the discovery of your true best self.”  
•Stephen R. Covey, author of *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* “Ken Robinson presents the theme of creativity and innovation in a way that makes you want to go out and make your dreams a reality. In his wonderfully easy-to-read and entertaining style he presents the stories of many who have done just that. . . . It is a book that lightens and lifts the minds and hearts of all who read it.”  
•Susan Jeffers, Ph.D., bestselling author of *Feel the Fear and Do It Anyway*® and *Life is Huge!* “A great and inspiring book. It’s been said that an unexamined life is not worth living. True enough and Ken Robinson doesn’t let us off the hook. After the first page, you have to abandon your ego and look for your own gifts and graces.”  
•Warren Bennis, author of *On Becoming a Leader: The Leadership Classic* “Robinson (*Out of Our Minds*), renowned in the areas of creativity development, innovation, and human resources, tackles the challenge of determining and pursuing work that is aligned with individual talents and passions to achieve well-being and success. . . . Motivating and persuasive, this entertaining and inspiring book will appeal to a wide audience.”  
•Publishers Weekly “Ken Robinson is a remarkable man, one of the few who really look at and into you, so he makes you feel at ease and happy. I’m proud to be in his book as one of the people he feels attained the Element. Reading his book helps you pinpoint the search we must all make to achieve the best in us.”  
•Gillian Lynne, choreographer, *Cats* and *The Phantom of the Opera* “While the world is changing faster than ever, our organizations, our schools, and too often our minds are locked in the habits of the past. The result is a massive waste of human talent. The Element is a passionate and persuasive appeal to think differently about ourselves and how to face the future.”  
•Alvin Toffler, author of *The Future Shock* “A brilliant and compelling look at creativity, and the path to succeed in the global world of tomorrow.”  
•Harry Lodge, co-author of *Younger Next Year*

The foundation thinking for this book is long overdue - when you love what you do you will do it happily and well throughout your life. Many adults have followed that dictum but many more adults, the teaching community particularly, has applied the word 'work' to define what should be our most creative, productive and, thereby, fulfilling time of our lives - school. When the word 'work' is substituted for 'passion' all the life goes out of wanting to be in a classroom. It will be 'work'; we must complete our school 'work'; We have to get this job done for our 'work'. If you change that word out for 'passion' what a revelation of difference it makes. I tried to find a school for my very smart, energetic and creative stepson that followed such an open and energizing philosophy and there was none to be had in the '80s. As a result he detested school and left early to follow his passion. Thank Heaven he did! He excelled in his field and, along the way, mastered all the math, communications skills, computer and technology skills, and is a happy person. Do read this book and make it your own Mantra.

This book talks extensively and a bit repetitively about your element. I wish it would also talk about how to actually discover your element and use it. I think they decided to do this through two books to make more money. So basically 200 pages which could be 50.

The book was an interesting read on the histories of many people. It is written in a way to show you how others have changed their lives given their own challenges in life. I needed this book years ago, but am now in a place where I am writing similar books myself. However, I still want to share this book with as many seekers of truth out there as possible. It often takes many versions of the same positive story, to help someone learn how to create this type of positive change in their own lives.

THIS IS THE BEST AND MOST FASCINATING BOOK I HAVE READ ABOUT DISCOVERING OUR TRUE SELVES AND WHAT WE ARE HERE TO DO IN THE BEST WAY POSSIBLE. BECAUSE ONLY IF WE KNOW WHO WE REALLY ARE, WE CAN BE AND LIVE TO THE FULLEST. THIS BOOK HAS MADE ME REFLECT UPON WHAT MY TRUE PASSION IS IN LIFE. WHERE DOES MY TRUE PASSION CROSS WITH THE FACT THAT I CAN DO THAT PASSION OR ACTIVITY WITH HAPPINESS, EASE, NATURALITY AND THE CONCEPT OF TIME IS LOST BECAUSE I AM DOING EXACTLY WHAT I WAS MEANT TO DO IN LIFE? THAT IS OR SHOULD BE MY "ELEMENT"! SIR KEN ROBINSON GIVES US HIS OWN TAKE ON THIS AS WELL AS FASCINATING REAL LIFE EXAMPLES OF PEOPLE FINDING THEIR ELEMENT. THIS IS ONE

## OF THE BEST BOOKS I HAVE EVER READ IN MY LIFE!!!

Robinson, Ken. 2009. *The Element: How Finding Your Passion Changes Everything*. New York, NY: Penguin Books. Why is it that so many people are not content with what they are doing? According to Ken Robinson, it is because they have not discovered the "Element." This is simply "the meeting point between natural aptitude and personal passion" (21). After describing the Element in the first chapter, the author proceeds to show how one needs to "think differently" (the second chapter) particularly about the role of IQ to find success in life. The next two chapters develop an understanding of the Element by moving beyond imagination, finding the zone where you find yourself. In the remaining chapters, Robinson discusses finding people with a like passion, not worrying about what people think, and doing away with the idea that luck is the key. In chapter eight, the author helps us understand the importance of "mentoring" and gives four roles for a helpful mentor. The remaining three chapters speak to three concerns: first, is it too late to find one's passion, second, if I follow my passion will it be out of love or for money, and, third, the importance of reforming the educational process in the light of the Element. This book is well worth its modest price. It shows the importance of discovering how one is wired in order to find true fulfillment and significance. I heard Robinson online through a recorded TED Conference where he quotes a poem that finishes "I have spread my dreams under your feet; Tread softly because you tread on my dreams." All teachers and educators need to realize this lest they force people into a life where dreams are destroyed.

I heard Sir Ken Robinson speak recently, and he's an excellent speaker and story teller. Perhaps I expected too much from the book. By in large, the points in the book are not new, and some of his conclusions are hyperbole. How does one's "element" differ from one's "calling" or "vocation" (in the classic sense)? Does everybody have a passion and special skill deep within them? Many do; but many seem not to. Do schools have a responsibility to help students discover their passion? It's great when it happens, but I think a school's basic mission is more modest than that. The very memorable personalities he uses as examples are, in my opinion, "prodigies." There have always been and always will be prodigies, and such people generally persevere whether or not they are supported. Is this new information? I have enjoyed reading the book. Many of the biographical sketches are interesting. And it has made me think a little bit about the central issues he raises. But I would have preferred a more concise publication. Less than midway through the book, I found myself thinking, "All right, all right. I get the point. Let's move on," So, I give this book a moderate

recommendation,

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