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The Magic of Theatre and the Magic of Passion

Life is a struggle of identity. Of course, it's not the only struggle that any of us face, but it's a massive issue that we all face in one way or another along our journey of life and existence. Fragments and ideas of our identity come and go, and they do so in accordance with the ebb and flow of your life's motions and happenings. It's fine not to know who you are, or what you want to do with your life, or who you want to be. No one has the answers from the get go, but what is important is the effort to find an identity that you love and that you're comfortable and happy with.

My path to my current identity has been a long but worthwhile journey. Long before I found my life's strongest identity thus far, I was a young, naive boy who was simply lost and directionless in life. I had almost no hobbies, I had difficulty maintaining friendships, and felt very isolated and lonely until I found theatre. In my sophomore year of high school, I was introduced to a club of students that performed plays and musicals twice a year. I was first exposed to their activities through my sister's membership, but over time, I was accepted into the group on my own merit and eventually, I found my calling. Being exposed to theatre and backstage work gave me a sense of community that was missing in my life, and I fell in love with it. The fact that the community was also held up by the merit of one's actions made it even

better, as merit was fair and equal - unbiased, and people more or less got back what they put in. That meant that people who were held in high regard were treated with respect for their actions and efforts, instead of being treated well because of something trivial like money or looks. It was a system that had a foundation of respect and earning your keep, that was supremely attractive and I fell in love with it. Over the years, I kept at it, learning more and more every year and gaining more and more experience, until finally during senior year, I had earned my way to a keystone position within the club. I had knowledge and involvement within everything that happened in the club, and the difference of who I was when I started out to who I was when I graduated was a massive shift. Through theatre, I found a passion for collaborating with people, a passion for dealing with technology geared towards entertainment, I found a desire to express myself and to bring into the world something that wouldn't exist without me... through theatre, I gained the desire to express my true self for my true self's sake.

Of course, everything in life comes with problems. One problem within the theatrical world is that it can be hard to find connections and to network within the industry, especially as a stagehand who is only recently starting off a career. You can be limited by an environment that prohibits your learning ceiling, circumstances that can limit your learning ceiling, or even problems within yourself that can derail progress towards the dream. The seemingly simple solution to this problem is to simply keep going. Life is confusing, it can make you feel lost, but one day you will find your happiness and passion again. It's only a matter of living life and learning lessons that will mold you, prepare you, and let you know who you really are and what you want to do in life. As I stated before, I myself am an example of this fulfillment of dreams and aspirations. I have had problems with being a lackluster student in high school, which in turn

created a negative image of theatre as a distraction in my parents' heads, which in turn led to them wanting me to focus on something else. Which was fine, they were just looking out for me; but what they seemed to be missing is that I was happy and thriving in that new environment, I was finally doing something with my life and it's led me down to this path of early success and happiness in who I am and what I am doing. Another thing that young stagehands, and young people in general can do, is to put yourself out there in the world. Once you find your passion, you must exhaust every effort in the name of getting better. You have to be brave and explore new frontiers that you thought were inaccessible before. If you do these things, your potential in something will be noticed by people who are "in the know" and that is how you advance and elevate yourself further in life and in your career, your passion, and your life goals. Learning this lesson the hard way (or perhaps the easy way) has really opened my eyes to the possibility of people being whatever they want to be. It has given me a strong resolve in carrying out actions that will make me happy, it has given me a feeling of dedication to what goals I have set to myself, and it has led me to feeling a sense of responsibility to people who are just like I was, and it makes me feel responsible in ushering in a sense of belief and self-trust in those who struggle with the confidence to be the change they would like to see in the world.