March 29, 2020

Dear Passion Project Pursuers,

During our first Zoom session, many of you shared an initial idea about what you might pursue for your Passion Project. You mentioned a broad range of topics. Many of you expressed an interest in a particular animal group (dogs) or a breed within that group (golden retrievers). Some of you mentioned activities (basketball, gardening, dancing, acting) or broad subjects (mechanical engineering, marine biology) that interest you. Some of you posed specific questions (How do cakes rise?) while others of you offered up big topics (cars, bikes, piano, oh and caaattttttsssss). You offered these thoughts both aloud to the group and in writing in the chat box.

The question is, what do you do with that initial topic or interest? Certainly, you could type “golden retrievers” into a search box and start learning about them. You could even type big topics like “acting” or “mechanical engineering” or “cars” and see what pops up that feeds your interest in that topic. You could click on a link or watch a YouTube that intrigues you and see where it takes you. This could lead you to discover something about your topic that you didn’t know, or that you didn’t know was of interest to you. Pursue it. Let it take you down a “rabbit hole” till your interest fizzles. Then take a break and return to it later to consider what you might do next.

However, at some point, even at THIS VERY POINT, perhaps before you type anything into a search box, we recommend that you explore your own curiosity about your topic. Sit yourself down with your parent and ask yourself, “What am I curious about? What questions do I have about this topic?” Start writing those questions down. Write down as many of them as you can. Let questions that you write prompt you to ask other questions. Ask your parent what questions come up in their mind, perhaps prompted by your questions. Take seriously the practice of asking questions, of giving your curiosity room to breathe and grow.

Once you have 10 or 20 or 30 questions, choose one. Type that into a search box and see where it takes you. Share with us this part of your journey when we meet again next Friday.

Can’t wait to see and hear from you all!