



What did you think you were going to do for your future job when you were younger?



Brian: I thought I would become an architect or engineer.



Katie: I wanted to be a teacher like my mom!



Django: I thought I would be a professional musician touring the world.



Sara: I thought that I would be an international business executive or an architect.



Were there ever any other careers you wish you had explored?



Katie: I was really interested in all sorts of science fields--I thought I wanted to do biochemistry research or engineering. When I discovered I was the most interested in the health sciences, I became interested in physical therapy as well.



Django: Definitely music education & sound therapy.



Sara: Yes, architecture.



Do any of you have any regrets about the career path you took?



Katie: No big regrets so far... I love what I do :) I think something that will keep me on this trajectory is making sure I'm being honest with myself and checking in periodically!



Django: Just a general regret is learning to ask a lot of questions later in my life. Asking when I do not understand what's being taught to me is such a powerful tool. I recommend you start asking clarifying questions and admitting when you are confused in school now. It will help you learn and grow. Woohoo!



How can I stay interested when I don't see the point in my classes?



Kathi (Careers CLiC): Even though I liked school, I did not enjoy all of my classes. Looking back now, I realize that finding out what you don't like is just as important as finding out what you do like! And, even as an adult, there are a lot of things I have to do that I am not all that interested in. Now, I try to find ways to make the most of all experiences, even the ones I'm less interested in. And, not liking some things makes spending time on the things I am most interested in that much better!



Lorin (Careers CLiC): There is value in learning which topics don't interest you. It's a good idea to try as many different things/subjects early in your education, then you can navigate toward the things that interest you the most. Here are a few tips: 1) Look for the moments in class that you can build your interests on. 2) Ask the teacher how it relates to careers or college, or what they find interesting about the subject. 3) Consider thinking about the variety of skills that you are learning in a class that relate to the workplace. So for instance, if you are doing a team project, and maybe you didn't get to pick the topic or the team members, you are gaining collaboration skills and learning to work through challenging situations. Employers are looking for workers who can stay engaged and self-motivated even through the uninteresting aspects of work. And businesses always need people who are collaborative team members. 4) Remind yourself that it takes grit to challenge yourself to do well in a class that feels less interesting - which is a great trait.



Django: Continue to be curious. Education is an exploration! It's all about one's mindset. Think about how we get to take these courses and how lucky we are to have a chance to learn new things. It's a true privilege in my opinion. Also find the classes that speak to you and make you excited. I know they're out there 😊



Sara: Sometimes the learning in taking classes that you don't like is more about staying committed to something that is challenging. I think that working through things that are challenging is a skill that every person needs in life.



Katie: When there are things that I don't want to do but "have to" do (school, trainings, going to the DMV, etc.), I try to make it into a story. Like the worst case of getting through a class you don't like is that you'll have a story about it, something you can laugh about or bond with someone with. Is there anything about the class you do like (teacher, friends, etc)? Otherwise, sometimes I just have to put my tunnel vision on and focus on what the outcome will be (is it a prereq for a class you really want to take later? Is this class the only thing standing between you and graduation? etc).



At our school we are working on 30-day challenges and goals...what about your job challenges you and provides opportunities to grow? How do you meet those challenges?



Katie: A lot of my most interesting challenges revolve around communication--communicating with my patients about their dental health, communicating with the team I work with, communicating with the laboratory I work with who makes my crowns and dentures, and communicating with other dentists/physicians my patients see. I practice being clearer in the things I say and write--I would say I'm constantly growing in how I write and speak.



Sara: Staying engaging for students is challenging. I try to come to my meetings with students with a smile, positive attitude and a good plan that I can be flexible with.



What's the point of taking classes around different things for a career and then changing the career?



Lorin (Careers CLiC): Taking a variety of classes can help individuals develop multiple skills, and those skills can be transferred to other situations or other careers. The workplace is constantly changing so being flexible and acquiring different skills has many advantages and can potentially lead to opportunities that might open up later in a career path.



Kathi (Careers CLiC): You can learn skills that can be transferred to different occupations in almost every class I can think of. For example, in math class, you don't only learn how to solve a specific equation, you also learn and practice perseverance, time management, logical reasoning and creativity to name a few. These skills might not seem obvious while you are doing homework or taking a quiz, but they are all helpful in many career fields!



Which jobs require a college degree?



Django: It is helpful but not required for my work. As far as getting a job in the tech industry, doing a summer Bootcamp coding course the way I did is a great option. Only 3 months long! There are also tons of free coding courses online. Whatever you wanna do, begin building a resume to document your accomplishments and focus on your end goal. Good luck!



Sara: My current job requires a master's degree but many of my colleagues are actually still working on getting their master's degree while doing the same work that I do. When I was a practicing therapist it was required that I had extensive training. To become a licensed therapist you must have a Master's Degree, 2 years of training within the field with supervision and you also must pass a licensure exam. Once licensed you need to continue to attend conferences and maintain current knowledge around the field to maintain licensure.



Katie: one of the great things about the dental field is the variety of different roles on the team and different aims and educations! The three main types of dental professionals who work with patients are dental assistants, dental hygienists, and dentists. Dentists require a doctorate degree (so at least a bachelor's degree (4 years) and then doctorate degree (another 4 years)). Dental hygienists require an associate's degree (2 or 3 years), though some out of state dental hygiene programs are bachelor's programs. Dental assistants require certification /endorsement (and there are specific types of dental assistants, too but I won't go into too much detail), so this is a profession you do not need a college degree for.



Lorin (Careers CLiC): There are over 900 different types of occupations/jobs with different requirements. Some require college and some require job training, or both. Some jobs require a high school diploma, an associates degree (two years education at a community college), college degree, or advanced degrees. While other jobs might require some specialized training like an internship or an apprenticeship. It's important to make the most of your middle and high school years so you can be prepared for any education or training you might want to pursue in the future. Explore different jobs to learn the requirements and research the options to gain the skills necessary to do that work. If you are interested in the medical field or restaurant work, for example, there will be jobs that require a high school degree and other jobs that require college. It's helpful to explore a variety of jobs and review the requirements so you can be better prepared and keep your options open as you move toward your career path.



Kathi (Careers CLiC): The answer to this is constantly changing - especially right now. I recommend looking up a job or occupation of interest to find out what the general education and training requirements are. Then take a look at current openings in that field to see what education employers are actually requiring for a specific position. Our office has noticed that some employers are reducing college degree requirements and focusing more on experience and other traits like willingness to learn, strong work ethic, etc. And, many employers offer tuition reimbursement so you can earn a degree while working.



Is not going to college a bad thing? Does not going to college affect your life? If college isn't what I want to do but I want to be successful. What should I do?



Django: No one has to go to college. Anyone can be successful if they work hard and are dedicated. Your heart will guide you. Listen to it. ♥



Katie: You know yourself better than anyone else! Certainly there are some fields where you need to go to college to get a specific degree, but if your path doesn't involve that, then that is 100% your choice to make. It's not a now-or-never decision--while it may be easier to go to school before you have kids or a mortgage or aging parents to take care of, you can always decide to go to college later in your life. I agree with Django--your heart will guide you!



What age do you think is a good age to start looking at careers you might enjoy?



Lorin (Careers CLiC): The best age is any age! People sometimes begin exploring careers in elementary school and they continue to learn about careers all through adulthood too. Middle school is an excellent time to start. Begin by exploring your personal interests and ask the adults you know about their jobs and careers. Teachers can point you to resources on learning about jobs and careers. You don't need to make a decision about a career now, but it is good to know what the opportunities are and what the requirements might be. If you find you are interested in a career and then change your mind (or change several times) that is fine too, keep learning and exploring. Jobs and careers are constantly changing and there are many interesting and rewarding careers to learn about.



Kathi (Careers CLiC): You can start looking into careers at any age! The work we do with students follows a Continuum of Career Development: Career Awareness for elementary students, Career Exploration for middle school students and Career Preparation for high school students. So, middle school is a great time to explore what career opportunities match your interests. Right now, the average person changes jobs 12 times over their lifetime! So, you can continue exploring career options your whole life.