

Rolande R. Hodel

I used to believe that changing disciplines or careers while in the middle or towards the end of your studies is unwise. Recently, however, I have been noticing more and more professionals who started studying one thing only to switch over to another, even though they are seemingly very far along in what they had originally started studying. Rolande Hodel, for example, had been studying psychology, then switched to chemistry, then when she was getting her Ph.D. studying nanotechnology, she thought about changing to pharmaceuticals instead. That is fascinating to me that she was so far along in her career already but decided to change. This just reiterates the saying, “follow your dreams” because those dreams can change at any time.

I think that it is not always wise to make many career changes. In Hodel’s case, it was a success because she was determined. In many other people’s cases, people who may not be so diligent, making a career change based on a whim so late in the game would not prove prudent. Another important thing I realized is that Hodel did not simply allow the current social constructs dictate who or what she would become. She decided to define her own destiny.

I want to be an inventor. Hodel’s story has given new meaning to that goal because I have only ever thought about inventing a small thing that can impact a lot of people. Hodel, in essence, invented something large that impacts a lot of people. The thing she invented was her company. In this sense entrepreneurs and inventors are a lot alike. The main idea is to see a need and fill it, regardless of its size.

I appreciate Hodel’s take on life and how she’s motivated by loving everyone and making sure that people’s basic human needs are provided. Hodel’s story is making me think more deeply about my current position at the University and what I am studying. One question I have is how do I make more connections? I suppose an easy answer is to participate in school functions but I have to work when I am not studying so I need to add a social aspect to my life so that I can be greater.