

Career Change in Midlife



Are you thinking about a career change? You are not alone. Many people experience a shift in their values during midlife. You may no longer find fulfillment in the same things you did when you were young, leading you to feel a disconnection between your job and the inner you.

Do you ever feel bored with your job and find yourself thinking about a career change? Do you feel irritable, frustrated and even depressed in your current job? Do you remember the dreams you may have left behind in pursuit of your current career?



Exercises 1: The Current State:

Take a few minutes to write down your answers to these questions:

- 1. What will it mean to me if I do not make a career change?*
- 2. What are the risks of a career change?*
- 3. Do I have time to search and implement a career change?*



Sit with your answers for a while. What does your body feel like right now? Do you feel calm, anxious or determined? Is there a specific area of your body where you feel something? Do you feel something in your stomach or neck?

Write about how your body feels:

Exercise 2: Looking Inside

On a scale of 1-10 rate yourself for each of the following. 10 being the strongest and 1 being the weakest:

_____ *How willing am I to do what I need to do to make this career change?*

_____ *How strong is my belief in my ability to plan the steps necessary to make this career change?*

_____ *I feel I have control over making this career change.*

_____ *There are people in my life who will support this change.*

_____ *My decision to change careers is my own decision.*

After you have assigned the ratings pick one of these areas to address and see if you can do something over the next week to raise the score $\frac{1}{2}$ point. So if you rated number three a 5 is there something you can do this week to make it a 5.5? How can you increase your control over this change?

Write out your ideas:



The Enemy – The Negative Chatterer

If you decide to take steps toward creating a new career you will notice the old familiar voice of the negative chatterer trying to stop you. The negative chatterer may come from within or without. The external negative chatterer may be a family member or friend who has always been afraid of change and has tried to hold you back in the past.

Write down the external negative chatterers in you life:

Write down people who will support your decision to change careers:

The internal negative chatterer is also an old familiar friend who rears his ugly head every time you try to move forward. You may fear failure or commitment. It is also possible for old negative feelings from childhood to rear up and to try to stop you by telling you that you are not good enough or smart enough to make this change. Speak back to those negative thoughts and think back to a time when you broke through the barriers and succeeded.

Write out the negative self-talk that runs through your mind:



Now dispute the negative talk. What is the evidence for the negative self-talk being true? Is there another way to view the situation?

References: *Heppner, Mary (1998). The Career Transitions Inventory: Measuring Internal Resources in Adulthood. Journal of Career Assessment Vol. 6 Number 2
Perosa, L & Perosa, M. (1997). Assessments for Use with Mid-Career Changers. Journal of Career Assessment Vol. 5, Number 2.