

Mid-life — the turning point for many

Over the past months, I've been noticing an interesting phenomenon around folks with whom I work, and many whom I only know as friends, colleagues or acquaintances. What am I noticing? Several of these folks, in mid-life, are exploring work-life issues, for example, around family, career, health, finances, relationships, spiritual life, and personal and professional growth and development.

However, there is one single thread that runs through their concerns - they are seeking, or searching. Some are seeking inner peace and tranquility. Others are looking for a way to create a solid foundation and center around which their family can grow and experience a true and real sense of "family". Still others are looking for greater rewards, achievement or recognition through their work.

What I notice in their seeking is just about every one of these folks has decided the goals they thought were important, the dreams they held as sacrosanct, the "gold ring" they were chasing "just doesn't do it for me any more."

It seems these folks no longer are experiencing fun, pleasure, real peace or joy and have decided there's a new sense of "happiness" they want to experience — a "happiness" they thought they were experiencing but alas, is no longer palatable, palpable or pleasing having been replaced now by a sense of boredom, malaise, sadness, frustration and emptiness.

So, they find themselves at a life stage where they are searching, seeking

What many of these folks are now discovering is their ego got in the way, early on - very early on - and now, later in life, the expensive cars, homes and toys don't do it for them nor do the exotic trips, the younger women, trophy wives or boy-toys, or plastic surgeries, the crash diets, the wrinkle free creams and hair coloring products, or..(fill in the blank)...the artificial means they thought would boost their own sense of self.

Their attempts to "cover over" age through artificiality in order to impress their world have brought them to this place of seeking — somehow knowing they now need to address the "problem", not the symptom.

Having spent countless years, dollars and energy on the "outside", what they're now looking for is their "inside".

Life dealt many a challenging hand - career issues, spousal issues, children issues, relationship issues, health issues, financial issues. These folks are often sad, depressed, unhappy, angry, full of guilt and regret, disappointed and disheartened.

So, for them, seeking and renewal start on the inside - with an open, honest, sincere and self-responsible exploration of "Who am I, really?" and "What am I, really?" Who am I in the world and how am I in the world from this inner place?

It's at this point these folks, many for the first time, deeply explore their legacy — what do I want to leave to the planet? What is it folks will say about me at my funeral? What's my epitaph?

The good news is these folks are now conscious, willing and able to look back....and at the same time to look ahead. While many experience disappointment in reflecting on their past, they are equally willing to learn from their past - their choices and decisions that perhaps did not produce the life experiences they had hoped for. From a deeper exploration, their wisdom bubbles up. So does hope and optimism.

It's here their inner journey, their deeper exploration serves them well what have I learned? What lessons are there for me to see? What will support me as I go forward? What have I learned about the

world of work, bosses, and the meaning of work? What have I learned about dysfunctional relationships, abusive partners and toxic friends? What have I learned about my addictions? What have I learned about me as the result of work-life choices I've made?

It's at this point, they begin to realize the gift they're receiving - the gift of being able to be conscious and honest about where they're choosing to go a new and different direction which, for many, will result in a life (not a lifestyle) complete with true and real dignity, harmony, inner peace and a high degree of self-worth and self-esteem - many, for the first time.

So, our \$10 food for thought questions are:

How would you answer the question, "Who am I?"

What do you want out of life?

Where are you in various aspects of your life and why are you there?

Do you feel like a victim much of the time?

Do you spend much of your time regretting past life-work choices? Why?

Would you say you're living a life or a lifestyle? Do you know the difference?

Do you find yourself being overtly or covertly angry much of the time?

What brings you true and real happiness and joy? How often do you experience true and real happiness and joy?

Did you ever experience a mid-life crisis? Are you experiencing a mid-life crisis now?

Do you journal or do deep exploratory or reflective work on your life, on your life choices? If so, what do you/have you seen about yourself? If not, any reason why not?

Do you have any idea of what your legacy might be? If not, do you care about your legacy?

What qualities do you most want in life?

Why are you on the planet?

"It is only when we realize that life is taking us nowhere that it begins to have meaning."

— P.D. Ospensky

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