



CAREER CHANGE CORNER

Note: I wrote this series in 2014¹ while in the process of implementing my career switch; I was so challenged by what I was witnessing and experiencing that I decided to put pen to paper and record it. I also reached out to others who were going through or had gone through more or less the same experience. Some of my views have since evolved, some have remained the same and I have since developed more expertise in the career change niche.

Changing careers mid-life: risks and opportunities

Part 3

In part 3 we explore the question of reconnecting with your passions in order to forge a new career path in your midlife. It is not easy to connect with a part of yourself that has long been suppressed by “realities” or the pragmatic notion of “getting on with it.”

Take time out to connect with your passion

**Linda, a former tax lawyer now working in corporate social investment, knew that she had unfulfilled passions but needed time out to figure out exactly what these passions were and how to leverage this into a career path. She wanted to find out “...what makes me bound out of bed in the morning to get to work and what would even be worth sacrificing salary for.”*

If you have the funds, do consider stepping out of your normal routine to drown out all the voices and pieces of advice and really look inside yourself. This could involve meditation, using some of your annual leave to pursue long-forgotten hobbies and interests, a weekend break away, long refreshing daily walks, or a day at the spa.

Stepping out of your normal routine will help you connect with your innermost self so that you can begin to establish what it is that excites you and makes you feel alive.

**Linda, who also suffered from burnout, had enough savings to tide her over for a few months to do some soul-searching. So did Evangelos Doucas, a successful realtor for Remax Living.*

Evangelos has a LLM in Shipping Law and International Politics and once had designs on a career as a diplomat. He had stints as a legal advisor for a large Greek shipping company, ran the family business after his father became ill, joined the marketing department for Samsung, and was a legal advisor for BP Biofuels.

Evangelos took two years off to find his true passion after BP retrenched him which forced him to rethink his career choices and to finally confront the fact that he had never been happy professionally. Evangelos says, *“the fact of the matter is, I was never happy with my career choices...I wanted more, I wanted to pursue my passion.”*

Even though it all looked glamorous from the outside, Evangelos was spending a lot of time investing his energies in doing things which did not please him and this was not sustainable.

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Evangelos further says, *“It was important for me to give myself the time to find myself. I was not in a hurry. I did self-motivation and personal growth courses and was in search of what really appeals to my soul and its purpose.”*

*Khadija, a researcher with degrees in Business Administration and Counselling Psychology, agrees, *“It is important to find inner calm and peace that leads to clarity on career choices and on ones behaviour.”*

It may not be easy to do all this work on your own and you may find value in enlisting the help of a career or life coach. Here at **Higher Self**, I offer guidance by way of free resources but for a more in-depth solution, you are more than welcome to get in touch and we can design a programme specifically tailored for you.

*not their real names