

The

Mid-Life Manual

Live Longer, Be Happier

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Grow Your Capacity to Love

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Live Longer -- Be Happier

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Mid-life is a time of change and transition for most people. It is a time of evaluating the first part of life and making adjustments for the rest of one's life. The majority of the clients I have seen over the years have been moving through mid-life. Each person was in the process of making changes to enhance their own sense of purpose to find greater meaning in life. They sought to let go of negative patterns which no longer served them so that they could be more closely aligned with a truly meaningful life.

This manual was written to assist people moving through this profound time of life transition. In it you will find the following:

PART I: Your Guide To Wellness is an inventory which helps you to determine what you wish to change in your life. Areas you will assess include: Body, Mind, Heart, Spirit, Relationships, Home, Work and Money.

PART II: Remedies For Wellness, Passion and Purpose, is a collection of remedies to improve your wellness, vitality and satisfaction in each of the life areas from the inventory. You will build your energy and learn how to follow your own inner wisdom.

PART III: Create A Vision For Your Life shows you how to create your ideal life plan. This helps you determine what matters most to you, and to envision what will bring you true happiness and success. You will then outline a map of goals for your life with steps to achieve them in the next six months, one year, and five years down the road. Each area in the wellness inventory is covered.

Part IV: Find Work You Love provides you with essential information to be happy with your work. Whether you wish to improve your current employment or find new work, you will find everything you need to create the work situation you will love. A template is provided for you to create a blue print for your ideal job description. You will then develop a plan using the most powerful job search strategies to find your perfect work.

The mid-life manual concludes with ways to nurture yourself and to be successful in creating a more meaningful, fulfilling and passionate life.

PART I

Life Wellness Inventory

Your Guide To Better Health & Happiness

Now it is time to assess your wellness. Your wellness is affected by your diet, your thoughts, your feelings, your spiritual practices, your living environment, your relationships, even how you earn and spend money.

**Watch your thoughts; they become words.
Watch your words; they become actions.
Watch your actions; they become habits.
Watch your habits; they become character.
Watch your character; it becomes your destiny.
Author unknown**

The following section will show you how to assess your health in a variety of areas. The areas that you will assess include: physical, mental, emotional, spiritual, social, home, work, and financial. The places of your life which are under the greatest stress, indicate the parts of your life in need of the most immediate change. You will identify the specific area of stress that calls for your attention.

In each wellness area you will give yourself a score from 0-3. 0 represents the parts of your life you are happy and content with. 3 represents a high level of distress in your life. These are the things about your life which you dislike and wish to change. Use the following scale in filling out the inventory.

- 0** I am happy and content with this part of my life.
- 1** I am currently changing this part of my life.
- 2** I am distressed and unhappy about this part of my life.
- 3** I am very stressed and strongly desire to change this.

Use this wellness guide to identify the nature of the stress faced in each of the major life area. It is a tool to help you to prioritize the challenges in your life. You will set goals, first to lower stress and increase wellness, then to grown personal satisfaction and fulfillment.

At the end of each section you will add up your score and find out your level of satisfaction. After completing all sections you will compile your total score.

Body: The House of Your Soul

HOW HEALTHY IS YOUR BODY? PHYSICAL HEALTH INVENTORY

- 0** I am happy and content with this part of my life
- 1** I am currently changing this part of my life.
- 2** I am distressed about this part of my life.
- 3** I am very unhappy and strongly desire to change this.

1. _____ Do you eat three well-balanced meals a day with dairy products, meat or protein source, breads or grains, and fruits and vegetables?
2. _____ Do you exercise regularly (2-3 times per weeks approximately 20 minutes each time?)
3. _____ Do you sleep at least 8 hours each night?
4. _____ Do you keep your alcohol, caffeine, and sugar intake to a minimum and avoid unprescribed drugs?
5. _____ Do you practice proper dental hygiene by brushing your teeth at least 2 times a day?
6. _____ Do you visit your doctor and dentist for a checkup at least once a year?
7. _____ Are you no more than ten pounds over or under your desired weight, thinking and feeling positively about your body?
8. _____ Do you rest or relax whenever you are tired?
9. _____ Do you gracefully accept the aging process and the limitations of your body?
10. _____ Do you avoid using harmful substances?

Soul Wellness-Physical Health Score _____

TARGET

Pick three answers you would you like to change _____

DESIRE

Write a positive goal statement for each answer which you would like to change.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

GOAL

Target Date

- _____
- _____
- _____

Mind: The Director of Your Soul

HOW HEALTHY ARE YOUR THOUGHTS? MENTAL HEALTH INVENTORY

- 0** I am happy and content with this part of my life
- 1** I am currently changing this part of my life.
- 2** I am distressed about this part of my life.
- 3** I am very unhappy and strongly desire to change this.

- 1. _____ Do you set realistic goals for yourself?
- 2. _____ Do you avoid procrastination?
- 3. _____ Do you value, know, and respect yourself?
- 4. _____ Do you focus on a positive outcome whenever you are in a difficult situation?
- 5. _____ Do you always try to speak the truth?
- 6. _____ Do you remain calm under stress?
- 7. _____ Do you ask for help and seek support from others when needed?
- 8. _____ Do you express your anger in a healthy way instead of storing it up inwardly?
- 9. _____ Do you live in the present?
- 10. _____ Do you believe that most people are basically good?

Soul Wellness-Mental Health Score _____

TARGET

Pick three answers you would you like to change _____

DESIRE

Write a positive goal statement for each answer which you would like to change.

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____

GOAL

Target Date

- _____
- _____
- _____

Heart: The Passion of Your Soul

HOW HEALTHY IS YOUR HEART? EMOTIONAL HEALTH INVENTORY

- 0** I am happy and content with this part of my life
- 1** I am currently changing this part of my life.
- 2** I am distressed about this part of my life.
- 3** I am very unhappy and strongly desire to change this.

- 1. _____ Do you often experience painful mood swings?
- 2. _____ Do you feel safe in the world?
- 3. _____ Do you love yourself?
- 4. _____ Do you love your family and friends?
- 5. _____ Are you usually able to identify how you are feeling at any given time?
- 6. _____ Are you comfortable expressing your feelings to others?
- 7. _____ Are you generally free of anxiety and depression?
- 8. _____ Do you feel peaceful and serene most of the time?
- 9. _____ Do you feel hopeful about your life?
- 10. _____ Do you experience some happiness every day?

Soul Wellness-Emotional Health Score_____

TARGET

Pick three answers you would you like to change_____

DESIRE

Write a positive goal statement for each answer which you would like to change.

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____

GOAL

Target Date

- _____
- _____
- _____

Spirit: The Essence of Your Soul

HOW HEALTHY IS YOUR SPIRIT? SPIRITUAL HEALTH INVENTORY

- 0 I am happy and content with this part of my life
- 1 I am currently changing this part of my life.
- 2 I am distressed about this part of my life.
- 3 I am very unhappy and strongly desire to change this.

- 1. _____ Do you believe that you have a spiritual dimension (soul, spirit, essence)?
- 2. _____ Do you feel connected with God or a Higher Power?
- 3. _____ Are you aware of your intuitive nature?
- 4. _____ Do you seek guidance from and listen to your inner voice of wisdom?
- 5. _____ Do you find meaning in your life?
- 6. _____ Do you have a life purpose?
- 7. _____ Do you live by The Golden Rule (treating others as you want to be treated)?
- 8. _____ Do you pray or meditate as often as you would like?
- 9. _____ Do you receive strength and direction from your prayer and meditation?
- 10. _____ Does the condition of your body, mind and heart enhance your spirit?

Soul Wellness-Spiritual Health Score _____

TARGET

Pick three answers you would you like to change _____

DESIRE

Write a positive goal statement for each answer which you would like to change.

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____

GOAL

Target Date

- _____
- _____
- _____

Relationships: Mirrors of Your Soul

HOW HEALTHY ARE YOUR RELATIONSHIPS? SOCIAL INVENTORY

- 0** I am happy and content with this part of my life
- 1** I am currently changing this part of my life.
- 2** I am distressed about this part of my life.
- 3** I am very unhappy and strongly desire to change this.

- 1. _____ Are your family and friends important to you?
- 2. _____ Do you have intimate relationships in your life and visit family and friends as often as you would like?
- 3. _____ Do you spend more time with people than with machines?
- 4. _____ Do you feel loved and nurtured emotionally by family and friends and do you love and nurture all of them?
- 5. _____ Are you free of resentment toward family or friends?
- 6. _____ Are your family and friends generally positive toward you and you toward them?
- 7. _____ Do your family and friends show respect by listening to you and do you listen to them?
- 8. _____ Are you overly dependent on others for your emotional needs?
- 9. _____ Do you accept yourself sexually and consider your sex life to be healthy?
- 10. _____ Do you have enough time alone?

Soul Wellness-Social Health Score _____

TARGET

Pick three answers you would you like to change _____

DESIRE

Write a positive goal statement for each answer which you would like to change.

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____

GOAL

Target Date

- _____
- _____
- _____

Home: The Habitat of Your Soul

HOW HEALTHY IS YOUR HOME? HOME INVENTORY

- 0** I am happy and content with this part of my life
- 1** I am currently changing this part of my life.
- 2** I am distressed about this part of my life.
- 3** I am very unhappy and strongly desire to change this.

- 1. _____ Do you love the place where you live?
- 2. _____ Do your surroundings enhance your self esteem?
- 3. _____ Is your living environment free from stress?
- 4. _____ Is your home close to nature?
- 5. _____ Do you have enough space?
- 6. _____ Can you afford (emotionally and financially) the place where you live?
- 7. _____ Do you live in a low crime area?
- 8. _____ Do you enjoy your neighbors?
- 9. _____ Do you feel part of a community?
- 10. _____ Is your home in a pollution-free (air, water, noise) environment?

Soul Wellness-Home Health Score_____

TARGET

Pick three answers you would you like to change_____

DESIRE

Write a positive goal statement for each answer which you would like to change.

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____

GOAL

Target Date

- _____
- _____
- _____

Work: Your Soul's Vocation

HOW HEALTHY IS YOUR WORK? WORK INVENTORY

- 0 I am happy and content with this part of my life
- 1 I am currently changing this part of my life.
- 2 I am distressed about this part of my life.
- 3 I am very unhappy and strongly desire to change this.

- 1. _____ Do you love your work?
- 2. _____ Does your work contribute something to the world?
- 3. _____ Are you respected by your coworkers and boss and do you respect them?
- 4. _____ Are you valued at work?
- 5. _____ Are you satisfied with your current level of education/training?
- 6. _____ Are you qualified for your work and happy at your current level?
- 7. _____ Do you feel secure in your current job?
- 8. _____ Are you content and fulfilled in your career?
- 9. _____ Do you rarely experience overwork and high stress at your job?
- 10. _____ Are you free from burn out with your work?

Soul Wellness Health Score _____

TARGET

Pick three answers you would you like to change _____

DESIRE

Write a positive goal statement for each answer which you would like to change.

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____

GOAL

Target Date

- _____
- _____
- _____

Money: Currency of Your Soul

HOW HEALTHY ARE YOU WITH MONEY? FINANCIAL INVENTORY

- 0** I am happy and content with this part of my life
- 1** I am currently changing this part of my life.
- 2** I am distressed about this part of my life.
- 3** I am very unhappy and strongly desire to change this.

- 1. _____ Do you give at least 10% of your gross annual income to charity?
- 2. _____ Do you save at least 10% of your gross annual income?
- 3. _____ Do you pay off your credit cards each month?
- 4. _____ Can you afford the goods and services you buy each month?
- 5. _____ Are you aware of the exact costs of your fixed monthly expenses?
- 6. _____ Do you set aside at least \$100 each month for retirement?
- 7. _____ If you don't own your house, are you setting money aside to buy one?
- 8. _____ Do you cut expenses wherever possible?
- 9. _____ Do you have enough financial expertise or use a financial advisor?
- 10. _____ Are all your financial records together in one place?

Soul Wellness-Financial Health Score _____

TARGET

Pick three answers you would you like to change _____

DESIRE

Write a positive goal statement for each answer which you would like to change.

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____

GOAL

Target Date

- _____
- _____
- _____

**You don't get to choose how you're going to die,
or when. You can only decide how
you are going to live now.
Joan Baez**

What did you learn about yourself in examining the various aspects of your life? _____

Have you included all the things about your life that you wish to change? To see if you really have noted all that is essential to you, ask yourself how you would live your life if you found out that you had one year to live. Have you included everything? The next section will provide you with recovery tools to build your wellness in each of the previous life areas. It provides you with remedies to lower your stress, improve your health and wellness, and gain a deeper sense of meaning and purpose in your life.

PART II

REMEDIES FOR WELLNESS, PASSION & PURPOSE

Remedy:

- 1. Any medicine or application which puts an end to disease and restores health.**
- 2. That which corrects; a corrective cure; to cure; relieve; correct, repair.**

Why is it so difficult to change? Why do people resist change? Do you? If so, why?

This section contains suggestions as to how you can lower your stress level in each area that you desire to change. It provides you with remedies to recover your energy. The remedies provided are diverse. Some are challenging, some are easier said than done. They may seem simplistic, or perhaps they might appear too difficult to seriously consider implementing. Monitor your reaction. Reactions usually indicate when we are not at peace with a given area of life. The greater the reaction, the greater the fear of change we likely are facing. What emotions would be released were you to give up a favorite attachment such as eating too much junk food, spending hours a day in front of the television, or taking other people's inventories? Who would you become without such distractions?

**If you want a quality,
act as if you already had it.
Try the "as if" technique.
William James**

Be willing to change and work toward new ways of living. You will see new paths emerge that hold the keys to your deeper purpose. It is not the rate of change that matters, but the courage to stretch beyond your current state of distress. Joy and satisfaction develop from a single step beyond what you think you are capable of.

Before reading further it is recommended that have completed the wellness inventory and have written down the aspects of your life you wish to change. Then you will find this section most useful. Perhaps doing it only confirmed what you already knew about your life. Maybe you learned something new about yourself. Now comes the most important question: How would you describe yourself in terms of your willingness to change and your level of motivation? Your answer speaks volumes about your life. People who have a high level of motivation and are very willing to change usually make steady, sometimes remarkable progress. Such people are willing to move through negative patterns and other personal shortcomings.

Other people are not yet ready to make such changes. If motivated by fear and

doubt, they will seek the security of their current pain over unknown changes in life. At the beginning of each year memberships in diet programs and fitness clubs skyrocket. Most of these new members will only find temporary progress before habits pull them back into their familiar discomfort.

It is important not to judge yourself no matter where you are. Fears, insecurities, self doubts and even character defects are all simply defenses. Even those parts of yourself which no longer serve you have helped you to get to this place in your life. The ego is made up of layers of defenses.

The lower your score is in each life area the freer you are of stress. Put the number you came up with from each of the areas below. After you have the number written down, multiply it by 3.33. This will give you a percentage up to 99.9%. This is simply to give you a rough estimate as to how much stress you carry. Write down your answers:

- | | | |
|--|-------|---------------------|
| • Body: The House of Your Soul | _____ | x3.33= _____ |
| • Mind: The Director of Your Soul | _____ | x3.33= _____ |
| • Heart: The Passion of Your Soul | _____ | x3.33= _____ |
| • Spirit: The Essence of Your Soul | _____ | x3.33= _____ |
| • Relationships: The Mirrors of Your Soul | _____ | x3.33= _____ |
| • Home: The Habitat of Your Soul | _____ | x3.33= _____ |
| • Work: Your Soul's Vocation | _____ | x3.33= _____ |
| • Money: The Currency Of Your Soul | _____ | x3.33= _____ |

- **Your above score gives you a stress ratio up to 99% in each of your life areas. Use the following scale to see your current stress levels:**

- | | | |
|---|------------------------|---------------|
| • | Low stress | 0-33% |
| • | Moderate Stress | 34-66% |
| • | Severe Stress | 67-99% |

Body Remedies

**It is not the years in your life
but the life in your years that counts.
Adlai Stevenson**

In working with clients who are under a great deal of stress, I first ask them about the essential aspects of their health; sleep patterns and diet. Healthy sleep patterns are fundamental to your soul's health. Since 1900 people have cut back on the number of hours spent sleeping by 20%. When people lived mostly on farms, they were more in tune with nature. Now most people live in cities. In our technological society, people are getting fewer hours of sleep as they attempt to juggle all the demands of living in the modern world. People also suffer from a lower quality of sleep due to the stress they face in the day, consequently feeling less rested upon waking.

The reduction of sleep is believed to be a contributing factor to a wide variety of psychological ailments. According to the U.S. Surgeon General's 2000 report, 15% of all Americans now seek professional assistance for psychological ailments such as depression or anxiety. Many more suffer but have not yet found help.

Try to get at least eight hours of sleep per night, and avoid using sleeping pills. If you are involved in daily meditation for more than one hour during the day you will find that your need for sleep is less. You will find that eating a healthy diet and getting regular exercise will improve the quality of your sleep. Since you will spend about one third of your life asleep, make this time as restorative to your health as possible.

Food is probably the most commonly used substance for self-medication, with sugars, fats, and processed white flours being the key intoxicators toward lethargy. A person who abuses food is like one who abuses drugs. One quarter of Americans are obese (more than thirty pounds overweight) and tend to be less physically active. Excess weight drains energy from the body. It is also a contributing factor to many diseases including, diabetes, heart disease, and cancer.

Food can enrich and nourish every part of your physical body, or it can ruin your health and wellness. Choose wisely. If you are unable to do this, then get support

from self-help groups such as Overeaters Anonymous, Weight Watchers both which have good records of helping people change, or try individual or group counseling.

The condition of your body is like a metaphor for your life. What is it expressing? What does your body say about you? Do you love your body, or are you trying to control it? Do you battle with your weight? Do you nourish your body or are you poisoning it? Is your body usually filled with energy and stamina, or do you often feel fatigued and depleted?

Good physical health is integral to your well-being. Exercise will build the energy of your soul in the following ways:

- Your heart will be strengthened.
- Your relaxed pulse rate will be lowered.
- Your resting blood pressure will be lowered.
- Back or other body pain may diminish.
- Your blood circulation will improve.
- Your self-esteem will be lifted.
- You will have more energy.
- Your mind will be clearer.
- You will feel more relaxed.
- You will sleep more restfully.

Exercise can be boring or it can be fun. The choice is yours. First, it is important to exercise in a way that is enjoyable to you, doing something that you like, or even better, love to do. Strenuous physical exercise at least twenty minutes a day for a minimum of three times a week will greatly build your energy and enhance your sense of well-being. But don't push your body beyond what you are ready for or the results will backfire. Build up to a higher level slowly as your strength develops. Most people can handle a strenuous walk, preferably in an enjoyable, peaceful setting with good company. If you need solitude, exercise alone. Gardening, skating, biking, swimming, rowing, and roller-blading are also fun kinds of exercise. The choices abound. Simply choose something that appeals to you.

Thought Remedies

**Man is made up of belief.
As he believes, so he is.
The Bhagavad Gita**

We all have an inner critic which is sometimes referred to in the plural as the “committee” or the conflicting voices within. Your critical voice is rooted in fear and usually goes back to childhood. If a parent or childhood authority figure was overly critical of you, then you will likely be overly critical of yourself or others. The more severe the criticism, the more ingrained the inner critic. It was learned and can be unlearned.

Your critic is that part of you which seeks to tear down or negate your dreams or aspirations. If that part of yourself is in charge, you will hold yourself back from living your dreams. Your inner critic, or negative mind, is rooted in your ego. How do you allow your fear to keep you from your unfulfilled personal power?

How does your critical mind hold you and others in captivity? Your critical self is the gate keeper of your happiness. Your inner artist or creative self is bound by your inner critic. As long as the critical self maintains control over your freedom of expression, you will remain imprisoned with a steady trail of negative thoughts. This leaves little room for your soul to breathe. Like a child yearning to be free, your creative energy may be caught up in the web of your ego. There is always the potential for freeing this creative energy simply with the willingness to let go of the need for control which the critical self thrives on. Are you willing to let go of being critical?

What are the times and places that you find yourself being most critical of yourself and others? _____

If your vocabulary is ruled by the words *should, can't, have to, must, I'm bored, I ought to.....*, then you are likely critical of yourself and others. On the other hand, if you

tend to use the phrases *I want to*” *I hope to....*” *I would like to....* *I aspire to.....* then you are more likely to be accepting of yourself and others.

What are the negative thoughts which hold you back in life? When and where did you learn to think these negative thoughts? How do they serve you now other than to hold you back from success and happiness? What are the negative tapes which you feed your mind over and over again? Write the three negative messages which are most powerful in your life. (ex. *I am....., I won't....., I can't.....*)

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

For each of the negative messages that you listed previously write down a positive affirmation. For example; I am full of potential and I am embracing success.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

You will need to work hard with these affirmations to create a new habit of more positive thinking. It usually takes years to learn negativity, the more energy you put into thinking positively, the more likely you will be successful in living that way.

Gratitude for Life

Be thankful. Positive thoughts lead to positive feelings and positive behaviors. Think positively. You have control over your thoughts. Your thoughts will impact how you feel, either positively or negatively. The choice is yours. If the first thought in the day is negative, then your day is likely to be negatively impacted. If you think positively, then you are more likely to feel positive in the day. What you see is what you get. Why see anything less than the best? Emotional energy always follows thoughts.

rather than turn it into jello. Take a class on something that interests you. Don't wait until you retire; make the time now. One of the reasons that so many people die of a heart attack within three years after they retire is that they have little or nothing to look forward to. Decide now that you have everything to live for. Where you point your mind, your life will follow. This is a basic point in cognitive psychology which holds that if you wish to feel better, then think more positively.

Heart Remedies

**Here is my secret. It's quite simple: One sees clearly only with the heart.
Anything essential is invisible to the eyes.
Antoine De Saint-Exupery**

The heart is said to be the seat of emotions. During tough times in life you will experience painful emotions such as anger or sadness. Severe challenges will propel you into emotional chaos. Such chaos can pull you into a defensive life stance. This might be through smoking, overeating, using drugs, blaming others or rationalizing your behaviors. These defensive responses to chaos will strengthen your ego. Your ego is how you project yourself for others to see. Don't rely on what is false or you will be trapped in fate and become a victim of circumstances. If you live stuck in your fate, you will be tempted to view yourself as a victim.

Your heart calls you to be a victor and rise above all your circumstances through honoring every feeling you experience. Honoring feelings requires you to feel them, and this is hard work when they are painful. There is no way around feelings. Try to push them down and that energy will surface in distressing ways elsewhere in your life, perhaps even through illness.

Be a positive presence in the world and surround yourself with others who love and support you. Think of all the positive people in your life. Make a list of them. Then write down if you enjoy being around them. Are they pleasant to be around? Or are they stuck in their own critical mind, often bringing you down?

Spirit Remedies

**The idea of God is different in every person.
The joy of my recovery was to find God within me.
Angela Wozniak**

Prayer and meditation come in many forms and are common spiritual practices in most religious paths. Every religion and spiritual approach has its own teaching and suggested or required methods of prayer. What is most important is that you discover the approach to prayer which is most comfortable and meaningful for you. God rejoices in all spiritual activities that are grounded in Love.

It is said that there are many roads to Rome. Consider the fact that there are over six billion unique human relationships with God and thousands of different spiritual paths. Each path leads to God at the center and love is the way to the center. There is no right way to meditate, pray, or commune with God. The experience of God in Nature, whether by the sea or in the woods, is equal in the eyes of God to the most devoted repetition of prayer in a mosque, synagogue, church, or other spiritual shelter. Find out what works best for you to commune with God and follow that path.

Meditation

Meditation will empower your soul and assist you in making healthier choices through building your inner knowing. Inner knowing is your sixth sense, or intuition. Meditation is the experience of being. It involves doing nothing other than breathing and being.

Every religion and spiritual tradition has its own approach to meditation. Meditation is a universal method of connecting with the pure spiritual being inside each of us. Below is a basic outline of how meditation is practiced:

1. Sit in a comfortable position with your back straight and your feet touching the ground. Sit in a place free from distractions and sounds.
2. Allow your body to relax and gently close your eyes (if you are highly visual when your eyes are closed you may find it easier to keep your eyes open and focus on something in front of you.)
3. Sit and follow your breath. If thoughts arise, simply acknowledge their presence and let them go. Breathing deeply will help in this process of letting go as

- oxygen will cleanse and relax your body.
4. You might find it helpful to imagine yourself breathing in peace and serenity, and breath out tension and stress.
 5. Continue to breathe and relax. Simply be.
 6. Start with five minutes in the morning and five minutes in the evening. Many people find that twenty minutes in the morning and twenty minutes in the evening is a comfortable time to meditate as the practice develops.
 7. Be gentle with yourself. If you tend to live in thoughts or actions, it will be challenging for you to simply sit and breathe. It takes practice and like any skill it will come easier to you over time.

The Benefits of Meditation:

- You will experience less stress in your body, feeling more relaxed and peaceful throughout the day.
- You will have more energy throughout the day.
- Your heart and cardiovascular system will grow stronger over time since you will be greatly strengthening your lungs' capacity to breathe and increasing your supply of oxygen to the body (on the average, people use less than one half of their lung capacity).
- You will experience a greater ease in your daily living.
- Your relationships will reflect greater harmony as your own inner peace develops.
- Your physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual health will improve over time.
- Your inner knowing or intuition will grow stronger, allowing you to make healthier decisions.
- You will learn to be in the moment, letting go of fears and anxieties about the past and future.

Prayer

Prayer is a way to connect to your soul and empower your spiritual side. It has been used as a way to communicate with God throughout history. It strengthens divine energy within ourselves and around us in all forms of life. The vast majority of people in the world believe in the power of prayer. Over 80% of Americans believe in its power to affect change. Today the healing effects of prayer have been proved through scientific studies. People with a variety of diseases who are prayed for by others (even when they know nothing of this) show measurably more recovery than people who are not prayed for. People who pray have improved wellness and personal fulfillment as prayer always benefits the person who prays.

Simplicity is the key to effective prayer. The greater the simplicity, the less involvement of the ego there is. Truest prayer occurs from the heart. Prayer is directed by the mind, yet transcends the mind and diminishes the power of the ego.

Relationships Remedies

**Bless Those who challenge you for they remind
you of the doors of yourself that remain unopened.
Angie Arien**

When you hold resentments, your heart is held in captivity. Resentment is a spiritual toxin. It is the dark force of judgment toward others in an effort to mask one's own perceived or unrecognized weaknesses. You can free yourself from the bondage of your ego. Have the courage to heal from all your resentments. You will be amazed by the resulting love and goodness which come into your life.

When you resent others, you cultivate a negative energetic force which depletes your energy. This will eventually manifest itself in physical or psychological distress. Some people are so resentful with pent-up hostility that much of their identity is about resentment. We all know people who appear to be perpetually angry. Such people have a habit of talking negatively about others. This is how they cope with their own self-loathing. They have not found the strength to forgive and let go. They have not found the courage to transcend their suffering and remain trapped in their bitterness, resentments, and fears. They may carry their suffering to their grave, being unaware that they can be free, or are unwilling to be free.

Resentment shows you the places you lack self love. To the degree that you find it necessary to hold resentments or judgment toward your fellow human beings, you project your own brokenness onto others. When you accept yourself, you are likely to find it much easier to get along with others. When you love yourself you will naturally feel love for those around you. Make a list of all the things that you like about yourself. Then list of all things you like about your family and friends.

Self _____

Family _____

Friends _____

Home Remedies

How does your home environment reflect the needs of your soul? Is it cluttered or is there spaciousness? Is it clean or dirty? Is it formal, casual, playful or serious? Look around your own home. Your living environment speaks volumes about the state of your own soul.

It is important for you to assess whether you can change your current environment to better meet the needs of your soul. Can you make it more peaceful or more comfortable in some way? You may need to move to a different location.

Get back to basics. Simplify your life. Simple living is one of the most common of all spiritual practices. Do without the things you don't really need. In doing so you can experience life's simple pleasures.

Spend some time in each room in your living space. Notice how you feel as you move from one room to another. How are memories triggered as you experience the space and the objects in each room. Do they bring up positive feelings or negative one. Does your space keep you trapped in pain from the past? Why is this the case? For what purpose does your current living situation reflect your past?

Other things you can do to enhance the healing aspects of your home environment are to filter your water or air supply. Avoid spending too much time around highly charged electrical supplies. Let fresh air in through open windows and doors.

Beautify your home inside and outside in a way that expresses your soul. Plants can be used to bring the feeling of nature inside your home. They can also bring beauty and pleasure to those who see them. Let the sunshine in. Put things on the walls that express your interests and uniqueness. Place pictures of loved ones around your living space to enhance positive feelings in your home as well.

Work Remedies

Never turn down a job because you think it is too small;
you don't know where it can lead.
Julia Morgan

It is important that you enjoy most of the people with whom you work and that you enjoy your work as much as possible. If you don't, you are likely to be unhappy in other parts of your life. The greater your unhappiness at work, the greater will be your own personal distress.

Avoid burnout. Today one third of the American work force is in career transition -- deeply dissatisfied with their work or work conditions. Waves of corporate downsizing, which gained momentum in 1975 have carved away at worker benefits and consolidated jobs. Americans on average worked six weeks more per year in 1998 than in 1989 with longer daily hours. Employee pensions and retirement benefits once provided by most employers gave way to Individual Retirement Accounts. The employee is now responsible for developing his own retirement. One person who was an engineer of downsizing told me that the beginning premise in the first round of downsizing is that two people can do the work of three. The rounds continue until workers begin to leave the company, and the signs of stress among those who stay begin to affect productivity.

Some people who are benefiting from the *new economy* are technological workers. However, people who make over one hundred thousand dollars sometimes become enslaved by jobs that they dislike. "I am making too much money. It would be stupid to quit", is a common complaint I hear from high tech workers and executives. When people make over \$100,000 per year, it is often referred to as having *golden handcuffs*. Quality of life suffers if people become enslaved to money. They are under great pressure and work up to eighty hours a week. Weekends are spent simply recovering physically and psychologically from work.

Is the new economy burning you out? Do you feel tired and even exhausted after work? Does it take a quiet weekend of doing nothing to get your energy back?

Do you dread Monday mornings or the thought of going to work? Guess what -- you might be experiencing burn-out, which if ignored will result in some sort of physical or emotional distress. Your body, mind, heart and soul are trying to let you know that something about your work life needs to change. If you don't listen, you are heading for trouble and may even be flirting with disaster.

Make your own health, wellness and happiness the number one priority. Nobody else is going to look out for you -- so you have to do it yourself. Your company is likely racing after greater profits or productivity, and often at your expense. Now it's time to look after you. Do your best for those whom you work for as a way of honoring and respecting everyone.

Make sure that your work is not the source of your identity. You must have more in your life than work. Ask yourself, "Who am I?" and see what you come up with. Hopefully your life is multi-colored and balanced with friends, family, hobbies, interests, and recreation, as well as how you earn a living. Hopefully you wish to live long and happily past your retirement.

Leave your work at work. Set boundaries between your personal and professional life. When you are alone or with friends or family, unplug yourself from the global mind by turning off your cell phone or beeper.

Reduce your stress at work by prioritizing tasks, delegating what others can do and taking on only the projects that feed your soul when you have the option. Try not to procrastinate. It drains your energy and contributes to feelings of guilt, shame and low self-esteem. It's a very useful way to beat yourself up. Work stress can negatively affect your personal relationships. If you wonder if you are burned out or stressed, then ask your friends and see what they say.

Money Remedies

**Chase after money and security and your heart will never unclench.
Care about people's approval and you will be their prisoner.
Tao Te Ching**

Perhaps nothing develops the ego as powerfully as money. Money and wealth can lead to the accumulation of power in society, or it can lead one to give for the sake of helping those in greater need than oneself. Dollars are not good or bad. It is how we spend our dollars which shapes our spiritual condition.

Economic freedom in the new millennium comes not necessarily through earning more money, but through smart spending and saving. People are working harder and longer hours with less to show for it. Therefore, spend wisely.

The way you spend your money can be like a spiritual discipline. This is especially true if you help those in need with your money. The more you give to those in need, the better you will feel. This may sound simplistic, but try it. Starve selfishness by giving to others. The way you spend your money says a lot about the state of your life.

Financial wellness is easy and simple, but it requires you to take action and learn fiscal discipline. Lower and eliminate your debt in order to achieve financial independence. Get rid of your debt as soon as you can. Hiring a professional financial consultant can save you money in the long run. The best recommendations for good financial planners come from your family, friends, or coworkers who are happy with theirs.

Put together a budget. Identify your fixed monthly expenses and avoid spending beyond this amount. Make sure that your income is greater than your expenses. It sounds simple, but many are blind to this simple fact. Cut back on your monthly expenses. Create more money in your life by advancing in your career. Develop a sound financial plan for you and your family. Build a comfortable retirement. Eliminate credit card debt ASAP. If you choose to use credit cards for convenience, pay them off monthly.

PART III

CREATE A VISION FOR A PASSIONATE LIFE

Write down what you want in your life. This is a time to dream and clearly identify what you want in your life. Be as specific as you can. If it is a relationship, describe the other person. If it is a job you want or a house, or a business write it down as clearly as you can see it.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

10. _____

ENVISION YOUR LIFE FIVE YEARS FROM NOW

Describe what you want in your life **five years from now** in as much detail as possible. Include: housing, relationships, family, children, work, free time, creative projects etc.

Body: _____

Mind: _____

Heart: _____

Spirit: _____

Relationships: _____

Home: _____

Work: _____

Money: _____

ENVISION YOUR LIFE ONE YEAR FROM NOW

Describe what you want in your life **one year from now** in as much detail as possible. Include: housing, relationships, family, children, work, free time, creative projects etc.

Body: _____

Mind: _____

Heart: _____

Spirit: _____

Relationships: _____

Home: _____

Work: _____

Money: _____

ENVISION YOUR LIFE SIX MONTHS FROM NOW

Describe what you want in your life **six months from now** in as much detail as possible. Include: housing, relationships, family, children, work, free time, creative projects etc.

Body: _____

Mind: _____

Heart: _____

Spirit: _____

Relationships: _____

Home: _____

Work: _____

Money: _____

Prioritize your goals for this year_____

- 1.** _____
- 2.** _____
- 3.** _____
- 4.** _____
- 5.** _____
- 6.** _____
- 7.** _____
- 8.** _____
- 9.** _____
- 10.** _____

Now write your goals next to each month

- January** _____
- February** _____
- march** _____
- April** _____
- May** _____
- June** _____
- July** _____
- August** _____
- September** _____
- October** _____
- November** _____
- December** _____

PART IV

FIND WORK YOU LOVE

THE TIMES OF YOUR LIFE-WHAT STANDS OUT?

Write down the most meaningful things (work-paid or volunteer, and recreation) that you have been involved in throughout the course of your life. These are the time you have felt most alive and happiest. Also write down your own personal achievements. Noting achievements will give you an opportunity to see the areas of your life which you value from your past. (note: educational and work experiences, special projects, volunteer work, and hobbies) Use additional paper as necessary.

AGE

Birth-10

11-20

21-30

31-40

41-50

Circle the five things you are most proud of.

DEVELOPING A VISION

What do the people who know you think that you do particularly well?

More than anything I would love to

If I won ten million dollars I would

I have always dreamed of

The causes I feel most passionate about are

My heroes or heroines are

I admire them because

I lose track of time when I

My parents wanted me to

What did your parents do for work? _____

Mother _____

Father _____

How did they feel about their work and how did this affect you?

What did your family teach you about following your dreams and aspirations?

What messages did your teachers give you about work?

Who inspired you and made a strong impact on your life?

With my remaining years on earth I want to

What are the three most important things you learn about yourself when answering the above questions?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Besides making money what is your motivation for working?

What things in your life bring you the most life?When does time fly for you?

What have been the high points and low points of your career?

How do you wish to be remembered?

What characteristics do you like to have attributed to you by other people?

What would you like to do on a regular basis if there was no need for money?

WHO WOULD YOU LIKE TO WORK AROUND?

Who you wish to work with (co-workers) and for (if serving the public) is one of the most important considerations in finding work you love. Your relationships with people at work can make work enjoyable or create stress in your life. Think about who you are and the people you have enjoyed working with in the past before listing your preferences.

- Both sexes
- Women
- Men
- Individuals
- Couples
- Groups (less than 8)
- Groups (more than 8)
- People of all ages
- Age 1-3
- Age 4-10
- Age 11-18
- Age 19-25
- Age 26-35
- Age 37-50
- Age 51-65
- Age 65 and older
- People that are easy to get along with
- Difficult people
- People in need
- Frail people
- People in crisis
- People who are stable
- Immigrants
- Survivors
- Very intelligent people
- Students
- People of all sexual orientations
- Heterosexual people
- People of all economic backgrounds
- Poor people
- Wealthy people
- Cultural background_____
- Social background_____
- Educational background_____
- Religious background_____
- Blue collar
- White collar
- Physically injured
- Psychologically disturbed
- Addicted people
- Abused people
- Homeless people
- Powerful people
- Scientific people
- Political people
- Military people
- Academic people
- Artistic people
- Creative people
- Inventive people
- Healthy people
- Physically fit people
- Serene people
- Positive people
- Wise people
- Well traveled people
- Driven people
- People seeking justice
- Friendly people
- Competitive People
- Egalitarian people
- Cooperative people

WHAT VALUES ARE MOST IMPORTANT TO YOU?

- 1 _____
- 2 _____
- 3 _____
- 4 _____
- 5 _____
- 6 _____
- 7 _____
- 8 _____
- 9 _____
- 10 _____

WHICH OF THE ABOVE VALUES DO YOU LIVE BY?

- 1 _____
- 2 _____
- 3 _____
- 4 _____
- 5 _____
- 6 _____
- 7 _____
- 8 _____
- 9 _____
- 10 _____

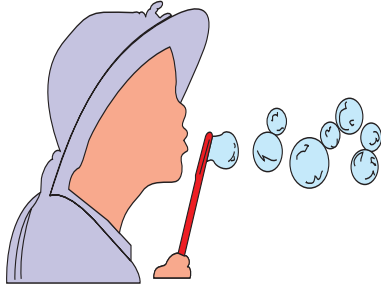


YOUR PERSONAL QUALITIES

From the following list of personal characteristics choose those that describe who you are in relation to work. After you have checked all those which reflect who you are, circle the **five** that best describe you.

- adaptable
- adventurous
- alert
- analytical
- assertive
- astute
- aware
- authentic
- brave
- calm

- clear
- cheerful
- compassionate
- competent
- concerned
- conservative
- contemplative
- cooperative
- courageous
- confident
- curious
- creative
- critical
- decisive
- defensive
- dependable
- detailed
- diligent
- diplomatic
- direct
- disciplined
- dynamic
- eager
- easygoing
- effective
- efficient
- emotional
- energetic
- enthusiastic
- entrepreneurial
- extroverted
- firm
- flexible
- friendly
- fun
- generous
- good judgment
- helpful
- honest
- humorous
- imaginative
- independent
- initiative
- innovative
- inspirational
- integrity
- intelligent
- introspective
- introverted
- jovial
- kind
- logical
- loving
- loyal
- nurturing
- objective
- open minded
- optimistic
- orderly
- organized
- open
- patient
- perceptive
- personable
- persistent
- practical
- punctual
- persuasive
- poise
- polite
- precise
- receptive
- reliable
- resourceful
- responsible
- self starter
- serious
- sociable
- strong
- spontaneous
- talented
- tenacious
- tender
- thorough
- tolerant
- trustworthy
- versatile
- warm
- welcoming
- _____
- _____
- _____

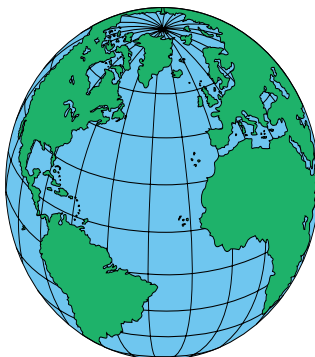


MARKETABLE SKILLS & TALENTS

Identify your greatest marketable skills. Check all the skills which you have. Then circle the **five** skills you most enjoy expressing. These skills which connect you to your heart are your greatest talents.

- Acting
- Administering
- Advising
- Analyzing
- Appraising
- Building
- Buying
- Coaching
- Communicating
- Composing
- Computing
- Conceptualizing
- Conducting
- Constructing
- Coordinating
- Copying
- Counseling
- Crafting
- Debating
- Designing
- Detecting
- Developing
- Devising
- Diagnosing
- Directing
- Discovering
- Drawing
- Editing
- Empathizing
- Empowering
- Enforcing
- Establishing
- Estimating
- Evaluating
- Examining
- Experimenting
- Financing
- Fixing
- Forecasting
- Formulating
- Founding
- Growing
- Guiding
- Helping
- Hypothesizing
- Identifying
- Illustrating
- Implementing
- Improving
- Influencing
- Inspecting
- Installing
- Integrating
- Interpreting
- Interviewing
- Inventing
- Investigating
- Leading
- Listening
- Managing
- Massaging
- Mediating
- Monitoring
- Modeling
- Motivating
- Navigating
- Negotiating
- Performing
- Persuading
- Photographing
- Piloting
- Planning
- Predicting
- Preparing
- Prescribing
- Presenting
- Presiding
- Printing
- Prioritizing
- Problem Solving
- Producing
- Programming
- Projecting
- Promoting
- Protecting
- Proving
- Publicizing
- Purchasing
- Reasoning
- Reconciling
- Recording
- Recruiting
- Rehabilitating
- Remodeling
- Repairing
- Reporting
- Researching
- Sculpting
- Selling
- Singing
- Sketching
- Summarizing
- Supervising
- Synthesizing
- Teaching
- Team Building
- Testing
- Trading
- Training
- Translating
- Trouble Shooting
- Uniting
- Upgrading
- Visualizing
- Writing
- _____
- _____
- _____

WHERE DO YOU WANT TO WORK?



Region-where in the world

Country_____

State_____

City_____

Describe the environment or geographic setting. Imagine the place where you would love to work. _____

What does the location of the business look like. Describe the kind of building as specifically as possible. _____

Describe your work space or office _____

How many people work there? _____

Is there contact with the public? _____

How do you feel working there? Is it a relaxed or competitive environment?

How do you and your co-workers dress at work? _____

CHARACTERISTICS OF YOUR WORK

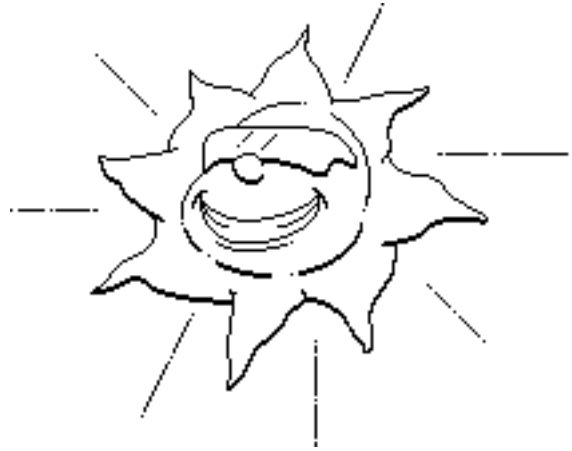
(circle your preferences)

- Full Time.....Part Time
Independence.....Supervision
Low Level of Responsibility.....High Level of Responsibility
Solitude.....Sociability
Open Schedule-Own Pace.....Clear schedule
Generalist-Variability of Tasks.....Specified Routine Tasks
Creative.....Structured
Physically Challenging.....No Physical Challenges
Mentally Stimulating.....No Mental Stimulation
Emotionally Charged.....Quiet and Stable
Personally Growthful.....Steady and Routine
Formal.....Casual
High Stress.....Low Stress
Advancement Opportunity High.....Advancement Opportunity Low
Work at Home.....Leave Work at An Office
Training Options.....No Training
A Quiet Place..... Busy Place
Prestige and Status.....No Prestige or Status
Indoors.....Outdoors
Close to Home (within 10 minutes).....Commute Within ____ Miles
A Cosmopolitan Environment.....Small Town
Small company-less than 10 people.....Mid sized company 10-100 people
A Large Organization-Over100 people.....A International Corporation
Self Employed.....An Organization
An Established Company.....A New Venture

From the above section rank ten characteristics most important to you:

- 1 _____
- 2 _____
- 3 _____
- 4 _____
- 5 _____
- 6 _____
- 7 _____
- 8 _____
- 9 _____
- 10 _____

REWARDS FROM YOUR WORK



What is your desired salary range? _____

Put a check by each of the benefits you wish to have in addition to your salary.

- Medical Insurance
- Dental Insurance
- Optical Insurance
- Paid Vacation
- Paid Holidays
- Paid Sick Days or PTO
- Retirement Account (401K or other investment Account)
- Life Insurance
- Stock Options
- Short or Long Term Disability Insurance
- Accidental Death Insurance
- Profit Sharing
- Compensation Rate for Overtime
- Expense Account
- Health Club Membership
- Employment Contract
- Company Car
- Other

What is your ideal work schedule? How many days a week and hours per day do you work? _____

YOUR DREAM JOB-PUT IT ALL TOGETHER

VALUES: What are the five most important values you wish to honor in your career?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

YOUR PERSONAL QUALITIES: From the previous exercise, write down the five personal qualities that best describe you:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

YOUR TALENTS: Write down the five talents which you identified and circled from the earlier skills and talents section:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Summarize your results from the previous sections:

WHERE DO YOU WANT TO WORK

CHARACTERISTICS OF YOUR WORK

REWARDS FROM YOUR WORK

In 40 words or less write down your vision for your dream job.

Clarify and refine your vision even more....describe your vision in less than 25 words.

PLANNING AHEAD

List the steps you need to take to begin to develop your vision for your **dream job** (i.e., further training, create resume, informational interviews, etc.):

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

YOUR BEST PLAN TO FIND WORK YOU LOVE

In *What Color Is Your Parachute*, Richard Bolles describes how the traditional approach to gaining employment is seriously flawed in that most people rely on resume as the primary vehicle in finding work. In general, people seeking employment invest time energy and money in approaches that are a waste of time. According to Bolles two thirds of the people seeking employment spend less than five hours in the job search, which takes an average of 16.7 weeks to land a job. This is a total investment of 75 hours of time and energy. In addition he states that people on average contact only two employers per month. Nationwide, there are an average of over one thousand resumes for each job opening.

Your most effective job search

Step One: Write down your career goals

Create your top ten list.

Make a list of the ten businesses, organizations or professions that you are most interested in. This is a running List. As you do you research, you will be changing your list (crossing some off, and adding new ones as you discover them) the yellow pages and the internet are some of the best places to start finding out what might interest you as well a business and professional directories. Look under the main headings to find the businesses that interest you. Talk with your local chamber of commerce or reference librarian.

List the **top ten** companies, businesses or organizations that you would most like to work with.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

Step Two: Develop your network.

Your network will include all the people who know you personally or know you through another person. Seventy-five percent of all new jobs are never advertised. They are filled simply by word of mouth. The larger your personal network, the greater your chances are to find what you are looking for. Write down all the people you are willing to contact to let them know what you are looking for. The people who work in a career you are interested are your best place to start. Here are some other ideas:

FAMILY: spouse, partner, in laws, siblings, parents, aunts, uncles, even grown children.

FRIENDS: All your friends and neighbors who might be able to be of assistance.

EMPLOYERS: Bosses, co-workers, colleagues, professional contacts from your past and present employment.

TEACHERS: Your current or former teachers, classmates, counselors at career centers from schools you attended, and alumni association.

GROUPS: All your professional organization, civic clubs, clubs, and even counseling groups you might participate in.

PROFESSIONALS: All your doctors, lawyers, dentists, barbers, massage therapists, etc.

RELIGIONS: The leaders and members within your church, mosque, synagogue, or temple, or spiritual groups.

Write down the names of ten people who can best support you in the job search through contacts or referrals. Include a phone number, fax or e-mail address.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

Step Three: Contact your leads and discover new ones through interviews.

Once you have created your ideal job description and have written down your personal referral network, then you are ready to begin to generate job leads and conduct informational interviews. The informational interview is the most successful job search method and leads to the greatest number of job offers. An informational interview is conducted simply to explore particular fields, or jobs and get to know people within such fields. It is talking with another person informally about a particular field or business. It is not a job interview, but it may lead to one. If you present yourself as a job seeker you will likely be screened out. Tell the person you are exploring their field to see if it is the right one for you. Express your interest in exploring that particular field. If your interview goes well and you like the field or business, then you can ask about job openings in the future or other people in the field who might be willing to talk with you.

Through this method you will be creating your most powerful contacts. You will gain information that is accurate about a particular field. You can learn of the positive and negative aspects of the job or field and industry trends are often learned about.

First you need to **identify who is the best person for you to talk with** at an organization. Such a person is called your contact person. If you are seeking a job in a particular department, then identify who runs the department. This is usually a manager or director. Call the main phone number and speak with the operator or administrative assistant. Explain that you are updating your mailing list and ask the person for the contact information for the person you wish to talk with. Ask for the correct spelling and be sure to get the mailing address and phone number. Be sure to thank the person you are talking with. You should be able to get the name, mailing address, e-mail address and phone number this way.

Now that you know who to contact, there are a variety of ways you can contact the person. **The best ways are direct approaches.** Use the phone or simply drop in. Again you will may find it useful to have script. Or you can mail, e-mail or fax the person, through it is not as beneficial as talking directly with the person.

Create a calling script. Outline the basic information you wish to discuss with your contact person. It is best if you can memorize it, but if you have to use notes, that's fine.

Call your contact person. Be relaxed and friendly. If they are not available, ask when the best time to call them is. Have your pen and paper ready.

Introduce yourself once you know you are talking with the right person. Let the person know who you are, why you are calling.

If you have a direct referral through a mutual acquaintance, tell them. Get to the point. Tell the person that you are seeking an informational interview, preferably in person, but on the phone is ok. Express your interest in the company or field and let the person know you would like to learn more about it. Let them know you have done your homework. If you liked something you read about their company on a website or

in an article, tell them. Have definite and reasonable objective for the meeting. Let them know what you are looking for in meeting with them.

Step four: Interview well

To do well in an interview, here is a list of guidelines:

- Have your resume with you at an interview, but only offer it if the person is interested in what you have to offer.
- Dress appropriately for the environment you will be in.
- Be relaxed. You will interview best when you are rested and relaxed.
- Bring a notebook and to write down notes.
- Have the persons name and title with whom you will be meeting.
- Have the names and contact information of up to five references. This should include the persons current title, contact address, phone number, even e-mail address. Be sure your references are ready to speak on your behalf.
- Arrive early. Respect the time limit that ho been set for the interview.
- Remember that everyone you interview will have different ideas and opinions.
- Be assertive-not passive or aggressive. Be straightforward with appropriate eye contact.
- Have a list of questions prepared ahead of your meeting.
- Use humor if possible to relax the other person and yourself.
- Do you homework in knowing some things about the filed you are inquiring about.
- Monitor you feelings in the interview and evaluation the workplace in part based on your visit.
- Be honest, curious and excited, but not overbearing.
- Listen and ask questions. Remember, you are trying to see if this is a good fit for you.

Are you ready to move forward in your job search? From the list below, note whether you have more assets or liabilities in your job search. The more assets you have the better your chances of being successful and landing the work you will love. If you have more liabilities than assets listed the consider some form of personal counseling to improve your chances of being successful.

Are you ready for an interview?

Not ready-Liabilities

Stern
Dishonest
You have no enthusiasm
You don't know the job
No relevant experience
You lack confidence, passive
Talk negatively of past employers
Just seeking a job
Egotistical, sense of entitlement
Poorly dressed, disheveled
Poor eye contact
Not able to talk about difficulties
Excessively nervous
"wet" or "limp" handshake
Poor manners
Talks too little, too much
Unwillingness to be flexible
Does not ask questions
Defensive, makes excuses
Late to appointment
Indecisive
Know some things about the job
Shy about promoting yourself
Need for notes to get through
Lack of purpose of goal
Overly concerned with money

Ready-Assets

Friendly
Honest
Enthusiastic
Well qualified for position
Plenty of experience, training
confident and positive
Focus on the positive or challenges
Passion for the position
Be friendly, realistic
Be well groomed, appropriately dressed
Appropriate eye contact
Ability to learn from challenges
Be relaxed
Firm handshake
Good manners
Good communication skills
Demonstrate flexibility
Curious about the job and company
Responsible
10 Minutes early or on time
Know what you want
Ignorant about the organization
Ready to promote yourself
Calm, clear and ready
Goal oriented with purpose
Focused on the position and company

Employers look for workers that are:

- Honest
- Reliable
- Honest
- Pleasant/friendly
- Intelligent/common sense
- Loyal
- Responsible
- Hard working
- Efficient
- Thorough
- Organized
- Calm/stable
- Work well with others
- Problem solvers

For an informational interview here are some suggested questions for you to ask:

1. How did you get into your job or career?
2. What do you like most about your work?
3. What does your work day look like?
4. What would you suggest to me to further explore your field, or future employment at your company?
5. Can you suggest other people who would be beneficial for me to contact?
6. What are the people who hire in your industry looking for?
7. Do you see a career path for someone with my qualifications at your company?
8. What are the advancement opportunities like in this field or with your company?
9. Would you be willing to review my resume and make suggestions on improving it?
10. May I use your name when contacting the person you referred me to?

At the end of the interview, thank the person for their time. If you are interested, ask about how you might get into that particular field, or about job openings. If you really like the organization, don't be afraid to start at an entry level position. People with passion move up the ranks quickly and are usually rewarded for hard work. Remember, the informational interview is the most effective way to get hired. It also keeps you sharp in your interpersonal skills.

SUCCESS

What does success mean to you?

Expect success. Visualize success. But before you do, determine your own definition of success. Motivational experts state that more than 85% of success is based on having a positive mental attitude. In addition to holding a positive vision for your life, your willingness to change and level of motivation are the key ingredients to making the changes you desire.

Develop a positive mental attitude. Motivational tapes, seminars and books can shape you in positive ways. Hang out with the winners -- people who are successful in the way that you would like to be. Such people can form the basis of your all-important support system. Study successful people and learn from them.

Start off small and grow personally as you achieve success and experience setbacks. Studies show that people tend to remain only as successful as their "success comfort zone". People need to be emotionally comfortable with the new life that

develops. Old habits die hard but new habits emerge to the degree that you invest in them.

- **Think Positively, Value the Truth and Be Honest**
- **Progress Step By Step and Be Willing to Change**
- **Believe in Possibility and Know There Is A Solution**
- **Be Flexible and Avoid Perfectionism**
- **Do Your Best and Let It Go**
- **Don't Take Yourself Too Seriously and Enjoy Life**

Ideas To Nurture Yourself and be Successful...*Breath deeply--Buy yourself a stuffed animal--Practice an anonymous act of kindness--Be--Eat healthy food, especially fruits and vegetables--Wake up at dawn and watch the sunrise--Go to a bed & breakfast--Buy yourself a present--Light some incense--Go to a worship service--Feel--Take a warm soothing bath or hot tub---Practice gratitude for what you have --Slow down--Take yourself out for a gourmet meal--Go sit at a park and watch the children--Take a relaxing walk--Sleep in----Ask for a hug--Sit near the ocean---Take yourself to a movie--Sing a song--Get a massage--Read what you enjoy--Listen to a meditation tape--Get some exercise--Think of a happy childhood memory--Do something you have wanted to but have put off--Ride a bicycle--Walk barefoot on a beach--Play your favorite music and dance--Watch cartoons- on a Saturday morning--Think about what is good from your ancestry---Make a list of what you do well--Put a fire in the fireplace--Drive into the country--Start a garden and grow flowers or vegetables--Get a facial, manicure or pedicure--Give yourself a positive affirmation--Call or invite a friend over---Pet or cuddle up with an animal---Be still --Remember that you are loved and totally accepted by your Higher Power---Call an old friend---Take a nap--Consider how fortunate you are--Take a day off work and play--Dress comfortably---Pack a special lunch--Be hopeful---Go for a swim---Dress nicely---Take a bubble bath by candlelight---Practice acceptance---Love--Fantasize--Express yourself through art--Say I love you to someone you love--Fly a kite--Go out dancing--Paint---Buy a family member or friend flowers---Smile---Notice what season you are in---Eat chocolate--Wish upon a star--Take a ride in a hot air balloon--Occasionally treat yourself to a special dessert--Give to others in need--Buy a lottery ticket and fantasize how you would spend the money--Play--Accept yourself--Tour a vineyard--Go to a carnival or circus--Light a candle and sit in the dark--Go for a ride in a sailboat---Watch a sunset---Buy your favorite kind of girl scout cookies--Draw on the sidewalk with colored chalk--walk barefoot in the grass--Say thank you--Say hello to a stranger and smile---Be optimistic---Make no plans today---Stretch--See a stand up comic--Don't take yourself too seriously--Laugh often--Rejoice--Create something--Do something silly--start a journal--be childlike--Go hiking, backpacking or camping--Ride in a glider--Meditate---Embrace your dreams--Think of peace*

I am interested in your feedback. Please let me know how the mid-life manual has helped you. If you have any comments or suggestions for future copies please let me know.

For more information see

www.BestJob.org

or contact John Prindle at 510-594-1222

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