

Tweak Your Career *to Fit Your True Self*

A 6 Step Process for Exploring What Makes You Come Alive...
Change Your Career to Fit You, Not the Other Way Around

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I have been a nanny, a pre-school teacher, a weight loss consultant, and a gluten-free blogger.

(And I liked bits and pieces of each job.)

My first major in college was medieval history because I wanted to be a museum curator.

(I changed my mind.)

I once dreamed of opening a New England themed cafe filled with homemade bread, soups, and pies.

(I still think someone should do that.)

I got a master's degree in psychology with the intention of going on to a PhD in Social Psychology. By the time I graduated, I had done my internship in play therapy with children with autism and planned on going in that direction.

(I bow down to everyone who works with children in any capacity but I no longer want to do it, as much as I love them. Sometimes I still think about getting my PhD in Social Psychology, because I am fascinated by how people act in groups.)

I started a master's degree program in nutrition with the intention of becoming a registered dietitian.

(Oops.)

I wrote two cookbooks.

(Holy cow, never again.)

I wrote a romance novel once just to see if maybe I should try that for a living.

(Ehhh...)

I *really* wanted to be a soap opera star.

(But I have stage fright and am a pretty bad actress.)

I completed certification programs in hypnotherapy and past life regression.

(Yes! Finally, something stuck!)

And I tried to enlist all my girlfriends into helping me open a retreat center.

(I decided a virtual retreat center was a better fit...)

Early on in my life, I made the decision that my work was going to be something I loved, something that gave me freedom and flexibility, and something that felt like a choice, not a last resort.

That decision was both a gift and a curse: a gift because it kept me reaching when I might have settled, and a curse because sometimes it felt like I was never going to find a career that I truly enjoyed.

What I realized after many, *many* years was that most jobs - at least the way I had been approaching them - required me to squeeze myself into a mold that didn't fit me.

When I started working for myself, I made the same mistake the first few years that I did when I was working for other people. I tried to do it the way I saw everyone else doing it, without really exploring my true nature and what I needed to feel right.

Not surprisingly, I burned out. I felt like I was completely floundering.

When I got pregnant, I slowed my work down to a crawl and when I had my son, I stopped working for a year.

Nothing seemed to be working so I just stopped everything.

And when I started working again, I decided I had to do it differently this time.

I explored my past jobs to find clues. I looked at what I liked and disliked about each job so that I could apply that information to my career now.

I got real about my energy (I'm a major introvert) and how much alone time I really need.

I wrote down what my ideal schedule was, and what my financial needs truly were (pulling my head out of the sand so I had to look at my massive student loan debt...ouch...).

I allowed myself to dream big again and also to dream small, looking at what brings me joy and what I would truly love to do in my life.

And I started acknowledging and dealing with my resistance to creating this dream job and dream life. (There's always resistance or we would already be there.)

And what happened when I started to apply everything I had learned through this process?

I started changing my career to fit me rather than changing myself to fit the career.

The 6 Step Process for Tweaking Your Career to Fit Your True Self

Is your career in alignment with who you truly are? We often go from job to job, always feeling that something is off, but never knowing how to find the job that fits us just right. This worksheet asks you to explore what you need in a career to make it work just right for you. Give yourself about 1-2 hours to answer the following questions. Then step away from the process for a day.

Come back to it the next day and go through the questions again, adding any new answers that pop up. You won't need the full 2 hours the second time, maybe just 30 minutes will do.

Do it again a week later. This allows your subconscious to process the questions and come up with new answers, giving you more insight each time you work on it.

Searching your past jobs for themes:

1. Write down all the past jobs you've held, both paid and unpaid, from your first job as a kid or teenager to your current job. Then go through each job and write down everything you remember liking and disliking about that job. If certain words or ideas repeat themselves from job to job, write them down anyway. You're looking for themes to emerge here, so it's good if a certain word/idea comes up over and over.
2. Go through your likes and dislikes. What themes are you seeing? Are there certain words that keep popping up? What seem to be the most important likes and dislikes? What have you learned about yourself in relation to work through this exercise?

Energy profile:

1. What gives you energy? Are you an introvert, energized by alone time, or an extrovert, energized by being around other people? Somewhere in the middle? What do you do in your life or have you done in the past that makes you vibrate with excitement and feel like you have boundless energy?

2. What saps your energy? Are there certain activities that tire you out? What makes you feel like a zombie?
3. In what way does your current job give you energy? In what way does your current job sap your energy? What would have to change or shift in your current job to optimize it so that it gave you more energy?

Bucket List:

1. Let's have some fun! Write out your bucket list. What do you want to do in this lifetime? Remember, this is not the time to be logical. Bucket lists are for DREAMING BIG. If you had all the time and all the money in the world (and whatever else you would need for these dreams), what would you like to do? Accomplish? Where would you like to go? What would you like to learn? Think about the dreams you had as a child. Do you secretly still want to accomplish some of them? Did you ever want to be: a fireman, a movie star, president, etc.? Write them down if even a small part of you still secretly yearns for it. Put small things on the list too. Did you ever want to learn another language? Add that! Take a hula hooping class? Put it on there! You get the idea...

Can you open yourself up to the idea that these dreams might actually be possible for you? You don't have to know how you'll accomplish them - or, more importantly, what they will look like - just give yourself permission to believe they can happen.

Ideal Schedule:

1. What do you want more of in your life right now? Make a list of everything you wish you had more time/money/energy for.
2. What do you want less of in your life right now? Make a list of everything you wish you could do less.
3. Envision an ideal week. Write out Monday - Sunday, and write out what time you would like to wake up, go to sleep, and what you would do during the day. Only want to work 20 hours a week? Great! Block in those 20 hours on your schedule. Want to do yoga daily? Awesome! Write it in. Want a technology free day to unplug? Sweet! Write it in... you get the idea. ;) Play around with this. It's not written in stone so you can always write something in and then change it later. But create a schedule that feels truly ideal to you. *How do you want to spend your life?* Put it on paper and see what it looks like. (If you find yourself about to write something down but then getting stuck because it's not logical or realistic, write it down anyway!

The universe can't deliver what you want if you can't even write it down on a piece of paper.)

Let's talk money:

1. How much do you need to make/year, at minimum? Write out your monthly budget, multiply it by 12 and see what the minimum is that you need to make.
2. How much would you LIKE to make/year? Take your yearly minimum and add in those things that feel really good to your soul (like travel, massages, sending your child to the expensive preschool that you love, etc.). Throw out vague ideas of "I have to make 6 figures or 7 figures" to be happy, and actually look at what you want in your life and what that would cost. If you have debt you need to pay off, determine when you would like to pay it off and now add how much you need to make to do that. Don't get bogged down by the numbers and feeling worried that you can never make that much. Just add it all up and see what the final number is.
3. If you had an extra \$100 to spend this week just on yourself, what would you do? Be super specific.

Resistance:

1. What are the benefits of attempting to make your dream world a reality?
2. What are the downsides of attempting to make your dream world a reality? (There are always downsides or you would be doing it already.)
3. What are the benefits of not attempting to make your dream world a reality?
4. What are the downsides of not attempting to make your dream world a reality?

Remember to come back to these questions after a day, and then after a week. Read through your answers again. Allow your subconscious to work on them, and you'll find that you likely have more answers or insights each time you come back to the questions. Start taking note of where your current job fits your true self and where it doesn't fit. Are there small ways that you can begin tweaking your job this week? Small adjustments over time can lead to big changes.

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Worksheet

Ultimately, end this process with an invitation to the universe to help you discover how to create a career that will feel right for you, and start looking for clues as they come along. Trust your intuition, and trust that there is a job out there that is perfect for you (even if you have to create it yourself).

xoxo,

Iris