

“Successfully Navigating through Life - Work Transition”

By Patricia Varley, MHSA

As never before in my career as a business and personal coach and national speaker, people are coming up to me with stories of personal challenges and lives in transition, often caused by a national economy that is in a downsizing and layoff mode. It is important to keep perspective and remember that this is a time ... an opportunity ... for us to take control of our lives and chart our own courses.

Here's what I share to guide and support you through these times of change, uncertainty and possibility -- Ten Tips for Navigating through Professional and Personal Transition...

1. Focus on the inside first, allowing time to discover personal priorities, values and what inspires you professionally and personally. Whatever you are passionate about will fuel your motivation to move forward.
2. Choose to focus on the positive. See this experience as a gift that will move you into something better. Viewing an unanticipated career or life change as the worst thing that could happen will block progress. Remaining expectant and exuding positive energy will attract people who can help forward new ideas and opportunities professionally and foster fulfilling personal relationships.
3. Be patient. Understand that moving into a new career or personal shift has stages. These include: Endings, or letting go of the past; a Void, or period of uncertainty; and New Beginnings in starting a fresh career, personal relationship or creative endeavor.
4. Define a professional and personal mission. The more they are in sync with one another the more integrated your life will be. Identifying unique talents and skills and ways you can share these with others lays the groundwork for effective marketing and professional and personal success.
5. Take the Focus Off Yourself and commit to being a Contributor rather than a Survivor. This may seem like odd advice, but consider how attractive "needy" looks. Ask others how you can support them and they naturally want to support you. Remember that life is like a boomerang - you get back what you give out.
6. Know what you love. Discover clues in a wealth of helpful books and tapes. Examples include:
 - *Live the Life You Love* - Barbara Sher
 - *I Could Do Anything If I Only Knew What It Was: How to Discover What You Really Want and How to Get It* - Barbara Sher
 - *Now, Discover Your Strengths* - Marcus Buckingham and Donald O. Clifton, Ph. D.
 - *Do What You Love the Money Will Follow* - Marsha Sinetar
7. Clarify new goals and intentions. Develop a strategy to take you where you want to go. Transition presents a prime opportunity to create satisfying work, develop fulfilling personal relationships and live a balanced life.
8. Take care of yourself by practicing extreme self-care. Whether or not you chose to change jobs or a relationship at this juncture, it can be a stressful time. Do one simple thing each day that revitalizes and

brings joy. Invigorate the mind, body and spirit with exercise, meditation and reading books such as *Transitions* by William Bridges.

9. Reach out for support and guidance to a trustworthy friend, colleague, family member or professional coach who is comfortable to talk with. You do not have to navigate through change alone.

10. Send Thank-you notes. Send thank-you notes to everyone. Express gratitude for ideas, leads, insightful advice, or just for being a sounding board. You'll be appreciated and remembered!

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