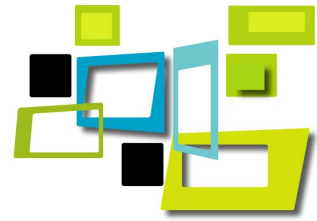




## Next Chapter NEW LIFE

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### Discovering your NEW LIFE

By Dorothy Tannahill Moran

If you are past 40, a phenomenon will take place (if it hasn't already) where you will wake up one day and wonder "What's next?" This time of questioning has become fondly called a mid life crisis. I don't think this mid life question needs to be a crisis, but as a society that loves to ignore the obvious, you will have a major shift in your mid life. How you choose to handle it, will determine if it turns into a crisis or not.

The reason why this "something" happens in your mid life has to do with a number of factors. One factor is the normal course of events that take place in a person's life. You finished school, launched a career, married, had a family, bought a house and added to your financial burdens. You gained momentum along the way and received promotions, upgraded to a nicer home and maybe have the kids in college. These are the things our first major adult dreams are made of. When you more or less have them checked off your to-do list, the natural reaction is to wonder what the next big thing is in your life.

Another factor for this shift at mid life is that now we are the well seasoned life travelers that we are, we also shift from "having" to "being". Having is mostly about having something in your life, like I mentioned above. The "being" part is now about what kind of person are you being or becoming. This concept is a bit trickier to grasp, so stay with me on this. Being is a verb in this instance. Being is about you BEING a more loving person and wanting more out of the relationships, or enjoying the work you are doing. It's at a more visceral level within a person and not always so easy to identify. That's how the crisis comes in. That's when the guys hit on the young babes and the red sports cars and the women dye their hair. Clearly, not complete lists of reactions, but hopefully you get the idea. I will separate out the concept of how to identify what these signals are from how NOT to react.

These subtle, internal signals may come in several forms, but often times have a theme of "I want more out of my life" or "I need to find my purpose". Also, don't get hung up on the statements, I'm trying to portray a concept. What is taking place is an urge for something else, to pursue something bigger than yourself, more meaningful than what you're doing right now. You might start experiencing a sense of dissatisfaction. At first, this sense may make you feel restless and unclear about your life on many levels. We don't talk about these feelings or urges and certainly our society doesn't talk openly about them, other than the mid life crisis jokes. The feelings come first, which sparks off a period of self examination. It is through this period of self examination where things go really well or you become a

cliché'. The process you must and will go through isn't a quick one, so you don't rush it. It is the catalyst for change, so you must embrace it, in all its glorious discomfort. Use this process to do your personal research. Read books enroll in classes, travel, and jump into life. Talk to people who do things that interest you. This is a rediscovery of yourself and you won't find it by watching TV.

There are some things to avoid during this period. As I said, you don't want to turn into a cliché'. Many people take this period of discomfort as a signal that their relationships are bad. So, they dump the one they're with and head off to the next thing that looks fun. They might make a big fun purchase like a car. These actions are heading you in the wrong direction potentially. They are replacing the "having" part of life, so they will never satisfy you. This could trigger even more desperate measures. Like it or not, you have to go through that internal self examination, if you don't, you rarely move forward in an exciting, meaningful way. You could stay in a loop of meaningless actions followed by personal dissatisfaction. These people will ultimately calm down to a degree but on the other side of it they keep a cynical outlook or a general sense of dissatisfaction. You can avoid this; life is and can be even more exciting on the other side of this change.

Here are my pearls of wisdom on mid life change. Know that it will happen to you, whether at 41 or 59, it happens to us all at different times. Because of where you are in life, it can move you in directions that can exceed your wildest imagination. No, the younger crowd hasn't cornered the market on excitement. We have much more freedom – fewer hang ups. Be patient with yourself and the process for change. Nothing great was accomplished over night. Learn to dream all over again.

About the author: Dorothy Tannahill Moran is a life coach focusing on change, transition and retirement. To read more that she has written check her blog or website: [www.nextchapternewlife.blogspot.com](http://www.nextchapternewlife.blogspot.com) or [www.nextchapternewlife.com](http://www.nextchapternewlife.com)