

"It takes courage to grow up and  
become who you really are."  
e.e. cummings

Hello Authentic Lifers!

I hope you're enjoying your summer. This can be a season to celebrate the harvest of whatever your life has brought you up till now. And if you're starting to feel the itch to make a career change –this article is for you! Wish me well as I complete a journey by taking my oral panels the first week in August to become a licensed minister. And then I begin a new journey! I look forward to sharing it with you.

### **Changing Direction Without Losing Your Mind or Your Money**

Are you considering a career change? Are you thinking you'd like to be self employed but don't know where to start? Each of you may be in different stages in the change game. Let me describe the possible stages you may be in right now and what to do right now, right where you are. Wherever that is, acknowledge that it is perfect for now – everything you have ever done, learned, experienced will be valuable to you in your next adventure.

Stage 1: An ending with no clear view of what's next. This may be a stirring within you – a divine discontent. It may have just started or it may have been grumbling within you for years and you've chosen to tell it to be quiet! Or you may experience an abrupt change in your career – a layoff, an illness, a geographical move that may be unsettling and can also be a gift: You now have the opportunity to ask, What do I need to face before I move on? What do I really want to do?

Stage 2: Acknowledge the past. Honor all your previous career experience or the one you are considering leaving. Remind yourself of all you have learned and how you have changed. Think about who you have been and who you want to become. Consider which skills you enjoy in your current or most recent work that you would like to continue using. Ask yourself? What am I going to need to give up as a result of this change? Be as ok as you can with not knowing what's next –this is a fertile, amazingly creative time if you allow it to be.

Stage 3: Vision the future. Be guided by your “north star” –that internal compass that tells us when we are feeling joy. Allow yourself to dream, to create a vision of your ideal life that includes work you love. Talk to others who are doing the kinds of work you might like to do. Share your ideas with only those people around you who will support you.

Stage 4: Choose a direction. It will probably not be your last one –trust me –I'm on career change number eight and am in the midst of embarking on number nine –only now I do several simultaneously! Make a decision to identify one clear direction that fits with what you want to do in life and with the realities of what you can do. Make three lists: what you love doing most, your experience and contacts, and trends and unmet needs you

notice around you. Brainstorm ways to combine elements of the three lists so that you blend your heart's desires with real-world reality. What are you willing to commit to at this point?

Stage 5: Take action. What steps will it take to get from where you are to where you want to be? How will you use your time, money and energy to make the changes you want to make? Can you take a flying leap into your new world? Maybe you'll need a slower approach - moving one small step at a time - maintaining elements of your current work as you step into the new. Don't be afraid to ask for help from those you trust to help you get going. What are you ready to commit to? What is your very next step?

Stage 6: Make it happen! Set specific goals to accomplish each day. If you are jumping in full time, initiate at least five things a day and five follow-up things each day—some may be small, like a phone call—others may be bigger, like writing copy for your website. If you're not ready to take this on full-time, initiate five new things and five follow-up tasks each week. Or if you really need to take it slow, try five new things and five follow-up things per month – you will still be moving in the right direction and by being persistent and consistent, you will reach your goal of doing work you love.