

Finding Joy in Transitions

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Tis the season for graduations. Children will soon move from one grade level to another. College graduates will head into the “real world” from

the safety of all-inclusive dorm life to paying rent, electric and cable bills and budgeting for discretionary spending.

Other life transitions are more dramatic. Whatever the cause, perhaps there is a career change to a different employer or a larger pivot to a new title. Transitions can cause anxiety, even good ones. How do we turn these transitions into positive experiences?

Elle Pendry, from 1LifeCoaching shared advice that she uses with her clients to help with major life transitions. "Take time to explore guiding principles." Asking clients to honor their own values is a way for them to channel their path forward into uncharted territory.

Elle speaks from her own experience. She started her professional career as a lawyer. Despite years of education and investment of time, she knew early on that walking the legal path for thirty years was not how she envisioned her future. She was no longer satisfied with the competitive environment of the practice of law and lack of creativity billing clients in six-minute intervals. Like most, she was brought up to do the "sensible thing" and follow through with the career she launched for herself. Elle keenly felt the pressure to consider what everyone would think if she abandoned such a prestigious profession.

To assuage her discontent, she took baby steps by teaching entertainment and corporate law to post-graduate students. Even with this pivot, Elle knew there was something else she was destined to do. She engaged in therapy to learn what triggered the panic attacks she experienced. In this work, Elle began to focus on behaviors and feelings. She discovered that she yearned to learn more to help others heal from the fallout of choices that no longer brought joy. She explored her own set of values and what really mattered. She selected life coaching as her focus for transformation. "Coaching isn't about fixing people" she explained. "It's about bringing people into alignment and helping them find joy."

Deciding to separate or divorce is no less a crucial life transition. Many people remain trapped in unhealthy relationships because they feel shame or fear what others will say. Elle worked with a recently divorced client. The client was experiencing anxiety about doing the “right thing” for her children. What about herself? The key piece that was missing was the client’s recognition of her own value and accepting that she was entitled to joy. The client learned to honor her own set of values. Providing permission to open ourselves to lightness gives space for joy to step in.

Transitioning from coupledness to singledom is a huge emotional undertaking even if the breakdown of the relationship is mutual. It seems an impossible task to discover joy in the cyclone of emotions that swirls during this time. Elle’s advice is to attack each transition and demand joy based on your own set of values. Shed the weight of what people will think. Every transition is as an opportunity to honor your own values and experience personal growth. While separation or divorce is a serious transition, it can be a time to reward yourself with the joy that you deserve.

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