

BE HAPPY – MAKE A CHANGE

Starting with Self Reflection



Third Quarter Tribe

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Introduction

Like us, you may have been working for more years than you care to remember (paid or unpaid). And probably like us, and many others, you find yourself at a crossroads in your life. It might have been caused by a sudden change in your employment status, or your health, or your family circumstances. Or you simply have reached a point where you are looking forward to the next chapter of life.

Whatever the reason, there are points in our lives where we need to simply pause and take stock. Is this what I want? Is this where I am going? And so on. Also like us you could be thinking that a change would be good for you, but you may be telling yourself there are so many reasons why not. And even if you so want to change - how do you do it?

Change is never easy. It is uncomfortable. It is unknown. It feels risky. It takes energy. It's not certain. For some of us, we reach that place in a positive way. We have already decided we want to make a change. Our outlook is positive, hopeful and we are likely to be able to move forward. Some of us recognised we need to change as the alternative of staying where we are is worse. But sometimes change is not planned or expected. It can be forced on us by circumstances. Like losing our job, something unforeseen happening in the workplace, a change in our health or the need to spend more time caring for someone else or yourself. When this happens, we are battling to overcome the negatives that the situation causing the change brings, as well as for deciding what to do and coping with the change itself.

For a lot of us, we have not really considered ourselves, or reflected on our personal needs, or invested in ourselves for quite some time. That is not to say that we haven't learned new skills or made changes in our lives. But have we haven't actually spent time looking inwards at our core, rather than outwards at the world and our responsibilities.

Jennifer Porter wrote: "Reflection gives the brain an opportunity to pause amidst the chaos, untangle and sort through observations and experiences, consider multiple possible interpretations, and create meaning."

Self-reflection is not always easy, like every skill it takes practice and sometimes guidance from others. We know, we have been there. In our experience it is a never-ending journey, discovering things that we like about ourselves, things we need to change and as we evolve through our lives more changes are needed.

We often recognise the key transition points in our lives as we physically change and adapt to the new normal:

- Birth and early childhood
- Starting primary, secondary, tertiary education
- Adolescence
- Starting work

- Leaving home
- Renting or buying a property
- Developing relationships and becoming a committed couple
- Birth of your own child, their development to leaving home
- Menopause / mid-life crisis
- Retiring from work
- Birth of grandchildren
- Caring responsibilities
- Death of parent(s) , friends and even life partners

Transitions do not often come along in a neat order. For many of us they seem to arrive in batches throwing down challenges and at times it can seem difficult to cope. In today's world, there is pressure to "put on a show". Show the world that you have a perfect life, family, holiday, lifestyle and so on. Amplified by social media and instant access to information we put pressure on ourselves to be like others. And ensure others see us as equally successful and glamorous. There is no space for rethinking, reshaping, and showing people vulnerability, confusion, difficulty and so on. We can hide it from others, and we hide it from ourselves.

However, a transition point gives us an opportunity. An opportunity to rethink, rebalance, reset. It might not be what you had planned or even wanted - but seize the opportunity and look on it a positive way.

What do you **want** to do? Note - not what I **should** do. What will make you happy? What will make you healthy? What do we want to do if we are being true to ourselves and not doing what others think we should be doing? This is not easy. Especially if you have been putting work and family first, (second and third) and yourself last. It is a process. It may not have an end. But it does have a beginning - which may be why you are here. To give it a name, it's called Self-reflection.

There are various ways and techniques for self-reflection.

- Taking time each day to think about what you are feeling - such as meditation.
- Asking yourself why?
- Looking at the situation from a different point of view (ever heard of De Bono thinking hats?)
- Listen to your intuition or gut feeling.
- Free thinking and journaling what you feel.
- Taking time to consider what you are grateful for.
- Scoring the areas of your life from 1-10 and seeing what you would like to change.
- Changing your language - for example, are you contemplating retirement or a renaissance in your life?

The most important thing is to get started and we are here to help you. The exercise below can get you moving. Have a go. There are no right answers. It is a tool to help you start thinking about you - in a way that maybe you have not done for a while. If it starts something for you - come and have a chat with us. Talking

things through with someone can be very useful. Remember there are no right or wrong answers. The way forward from here is entirely in your hands.

What are your feelings about the following? Score each from 0 to 7.

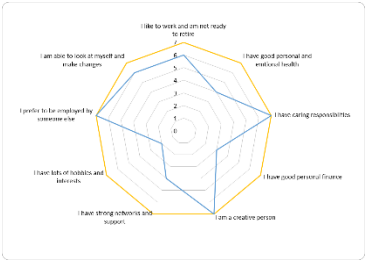
- 7 very true about me; or
- 0 very untrue about me; or
- or somewhere in between

Self Reflection	Very True of Me	Very Untrue of Me	Score	Notes
I like to work and am not ready to retire	7	0		
I have good personal and emotional health	7	0		
I have caring responsibilities	7	0		
I have good personal finance	7	0		
I am a creative person	7	0		
I have strong networks and support	7	0		
I have lots of hobbies and interests	7	0		
I prefer to be employed by someone else	7	0		
I am able to look at myself and make changes	7	0		

Use the table below to record your personal score.

Draw the points and link them on the radar like the example. What does it say to you?

Example



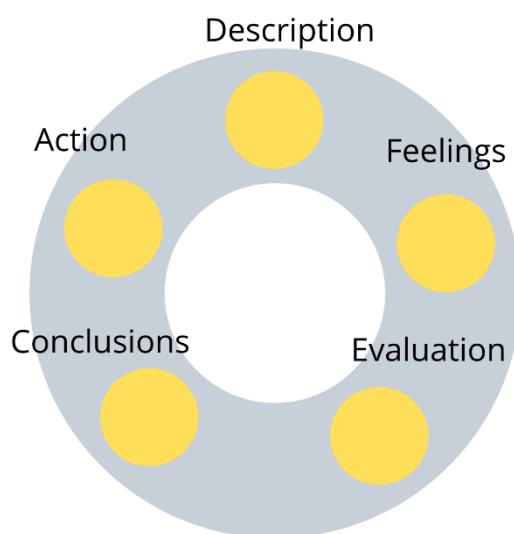
Self Reflection	Very True of Me	Very Untrue of Me	Score	Notes
I like to work and am not ready to stop	7	0		
I have good personal and emtional health	7	0		
I have flexibility with my time	7	0		
I have good personal finance	7	0		
I am a creative person	7	0		
I have strong networks and support	7	0		
I have lots of hobbies and interests	7	0		
I prefer to be employed by someone else	7	0		
I am able to look at myself and make changes	7	0		



Another tool to use is Gibbs Reflective Cycle

Try thinking through the following:

- A **Description** of what the event /situation is. What happened when, where, and why?
- **Feeling**: What were you feeling before, during and after the event/situation. What were others feeling?
- **Evaluation**. What was/is positive about this situation? What is/was negative? What's working/not working?
- **Conclusions**. What is this saying? What can you conclude?
- **Action**. What do you need to do next? How? What's the plan?



You have now started your journey to rediscovering what's important to you, and what not. What is it time to let go of? What do you need to strengthen? What new skills do you need to learn?

These topics are more fully explored in The Guided Conversation. A 7-module course that helps you explore yourself and your life from new perspectives and discover things you want to do. We help you build your own, personal action plan for change. So, you control the pace of change. You choose what you want to do. It's your life.

For more information about how we can help visit www.tqtribe.com or contact us at info@tqtribe.com