



Renée Cooper of One Journey Consulting was interviewed about the upcoming What's Next: Navigating Mid-Life Transitions workshop series starting January 5, 2011 (with second quarter beginning in April).

Q: How did this course evolve?

A lot of our work at One Journey Consulting is focused on helping people through relationship transitions. We were noticing these life changes prompted the reflections of "What do I want to do with the rest of my life? How do I get more clarity around what I want to do? What is possible for me?" The What's Next class is in response to those questions.

Q: Who is the intended audience?

Men and women in the age range of 35-65 years old -- that period of midlife when people have accomplished some goals, hit some bumps in the road, and might be reassessing what's next. There's a lot of reality to the 'mid-life crisis'. There comes a time when people reevaluate what they've done with their life to date and where they want to go. So it's really for anyone who wants structure, support and coaching around moving forward in their life.

For example, we have one client, a single woman in her 50s who left her job a few months ago and is questioning what she wants to do with her career. She's also been reviewing her own personal development goals and plans to use the What's Next class to take an inventory of who she is, what she's done, what's important to her and where she want to go in the next 20+ years of her life.

Q: What can participants expect with the curriculum?

The What's Next program is segmented into quarters, which are designed to be stand alone, but when put together are most powerful as a year-long program. The first quarter is focused on *Clarifying Your Purpose and Passion*. A lot of people don't know how to get started because they don't know how to identify what they are passionate about or good at, or may have lost touch with some personal or career desires. The second quarter is about *Personal Empowerment*- once you have an idea of where you want to go, how do you start bringing those ideas, goals and directions into reality. In the third quarter, *Getting Into Action*, we will introduce some very specific tools and techniques for moving forward. We'll have some processes for holding each other accountable, pushing through blocks and celebrating successes. Then the final quarter of the program, *Moving Beyond*, will help you develop skills to overcome obstacles and continue moving yourself forward.

The program is structured for people to join in at any quarter of 2011. So if they can't start in January, they can sign up for April, July or October. We will offer discounts for those who participate in the entire year-long program.

Q: What do you hope people take away from this program?

We are hoping participants take from the program four things. The first is clarity around where they want to go. The second is skills and techniques to get them there. Third, forward motion and momentum, and finally, renewed enthusiasm and excitement for their lives.

Q: Why do you think this course is so needed?

Midlife is a time when family and relationship structures are changing. People are experiencing divorce or widowhood, children leaving the nest, and other shifts which prompt people to re-assess their lives through a different lens. Also there are significant career changes that happen in midlife. Once you've completed your education and maybe climbed the corporate ladder or started your own endeavor and pursued the goals of your career, there comes a point when most people either have accomplished their goals and start questioning what else they want to do, or they realize the goals are not what they want anymore or aren't attainable. So there's a lot of reevaluation of what they want to do with the time left.

There's also the heightened awareness of the passage of time. When you reach 40, 50, 60 years old, you're faced with the reality that time does not stand still. Time gets more valuable and people start to question what they want to do and how to use the remaining years in a way that fulfills them and makes a difference.

Q: How is the economy or current world situation influencing the need for this class?

Particularly in our current economic turmoil, where people are losing their jobs or dealing with that potential threat, or having the dream of retirement postponed or altered, we all feel significant anxiety and loss of power over what is coming next. In situations like this we think the opportunity to actively take control and design what you want to do is extremely empowering and uplifting.

Q: What is the value of the group setting?

Besides the practical benefit of it being more economical than one-on-one coaching, there's a lot of support, encouragement and enthusiasm that comes with being a part of a group of people who are working on the same things. You have a chance to share your own experiences, be inspired by other people, and have them support you in your commitments to yourself. There's a power that comes from working in community that we have seen over and over in our other workshops.

Q: Advice to those in midlife transition?

My overall piece of advice and encouragement to people going through this time in their life is to not be reactive, but to take advantage of the changes happening around you and use them as a springboard to intentionally create the life you want.

More information and registration for the What's Next workshop can be found at <http://www.OneJourneyConsulting.com>