

RESTARTING AFTER MAJOR LIFE CHANGES



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As you go through life, you'll encounter many precarious situations. Some of these situations can turn your world upside down and make you feel like things will never get better again.

Some people get mentally paralyzed by these events. They panic or freeze, unable to figure out a solution on how they can get back to normal. Many families have experienced some common major life changes that force them to adapt to new circumstances.

Whether it's trying to restart your life after an unusual life-changing pandemic, a divorce, a health ordeal or something else, you can discover how to begin anew and maybe even create a life better than you had before, if you're willing to think strategically about it.

Beginning Again After Pandemic Life

Experiencing the changes the pandemic brought to the world caused many people to divide their life between a time of before and after. The way that they lived before the pandemic was vastly different to how they lived after it hit.

Before, these people were sure how their days would play out. They went to their jobs, they came home, and during their time off or recreational time, they went out and enjoyed entertainment venues and being with others.

Then, job security became an issue. Some of them lost what they once thought was a job that would last. The way that they lived with their schedules changed. Suddenly, that balance was upended, and the cycle was no longer one they'd planned out.

This new routine lasted for months or years, depending on where you lived, and people rose to the challenge and created a new schedule for themselves. However, the world is opening up again all over – and now you may be called back to the office, find yourself having opportunities again, and a fresh start can be unnerving.

During this time of returning to normal, there must be changes made to their routine once again. It was stressful recreating life due to the pandemic and if you're not careful, it can become stressful as you try to plan your life to begin anew, too.

Getting into new habits can become a challenge and you want to do everything you can to minimize the stress involved. It's not just you that may have to deal with this stress. Your partner or spouse can experience it and so can your kids.

Even pets can pick up on the stress! To restart after living a pandemic lifestyle, you can implement some changes to make the transition easier on everyone involved. You can start by developing a schedule.

This way, everyone knows what's going on at specific times of the day or days of the week. You can begin by talking to each family member to find out what they have going on and what projects may occur in the future.

Talk to them about how changes affected the family due to the pandemic and how you're trying to get everyone back on a routine to help the house run smoother. Open communication can go a long way toward dispelling the effects of scheduling stressors because sometimes it can be caused when others don't know what it is you're trying to accomplish for the family.

Remember that your schedule doesn't have to be set in stone. It's okay to tweak it to make it work for everyone involved. Instead of sleeping in now, you may have to set an alarm and wake up a bit earlier to get everyone ready for work and school, or a long commute.

You can minimize the time stress by doing things like packing lunches the night before or meal prepping family dinners once a week so you don't have to come home after a long day and cook for everyone.

Restarting After a Health Issue

Regardless of whether a health issue is a short term or chronic one, it can upend your life balance. Most people don't realize that when they get negative health news, they experience the stages of grief.

You've been thrust into a new normal with a diagnosis and there are some emotions that you'll journey through. One of these is denial. You may not want to face what you've been told.

You might push it to the back of your mind and try to carry on as you usually did. It's not uncommon to become angry about a health issue. You might feel that your body let you down.

You might seek to blame something or someone - even yourself. If the condition is one that's going to be chronic, you might enter into a depression. You don't want to face anything to do with your health problem.

Bargaining is part of having a health issue, too. At this point, you understand you're having problems, but you're not yet willing to concede that this is part of your story. Finally, acceptance arrives.

At this point, you realize that things are what they are with your body and you begin to make peace with it as you find the strength to take the next step and do what needs to be done.

These emotions are all involved in restarting after a health issue. But the thing about dealing with something like this is it doesn't just involve you. It also impacts your family. That's why you need to bring the family onboard through discussion and input as you make decisions on what to do about your health.

There may be changes that affect them such as changing a job because you're no longer able to do the one that you used to be able to work at. You may have to change your schedule to be able to work in doctor or treatment appointments and that can affect the lives of your family.

Important steps to take after a health issue include making sure that you manage the stress that can be part of a new normal. Not just your own, but the stress that arises when loved ones may struggle to deal with the problem.

You need to focus on eating in a way that benefits your body. There are some eating plans that are beneficial toward helping manage or heal certain health problems. Continue or start to exercise as a way to boost the feel good chemical in your brain and help to relieve stress.

Seek out support so that you have someone to turn to on the days when it might feel overwhelming to deal with that you have to do. Keep a positive mindset and look for things that make you feel good or bring you happiness.

There are some things you must go through, and you won't have any choice in that matter, but you *can* choose how to restart. Sometimes, the changes might be learning how to live normally after a health issue is over.

They're not always chronic or terminal. Sometimes it might be something a surgery or lifestyle change cures or alleviates. Take time to find a schedule and routine that you feel comfortable with – and give yourself a chance to get used to doing things you once did, but haven't been able to participate in for so long.

Picking Up the Pieces After Financial Devastation

Financial devastation can wreak havoc on you and your family. When it happens, there can be significant loss. Some people lose their vehicles because they can't make the payments any longer.

Others lose their homes because they can no longer make the mortgage payments. You may have experienced one or both of these. Or you could be like some people who either lost or spent their life savings.

It could be that you burned through everything you'd put aside because of expensive medical bills. Perhaps you're someone who lost hours at work and you just couldn't make ends meet until finally everything fell apart.

There are many reasons for financial issues like these. They can also be caused by making investments that were too risky or by not taking into consideration emergencies and you had something happen that wiped you out financially.

You can go through a range of emotions when something like this happens. Some people grieve. Others develop a high level of stress or anxiety. Some people can't sleep because they're too worried about what to do.

No matter what was behind your loss, you can rebuild your finances and restart again. Just because this happened to you doesn't mean that it's the end. The first thing that you need to do is to explain to family members what's going on.

Don't try to wear a mask and pretend that everything's okay. Don't attempt to continue the same lifestyle. That will only add to your pressure. Instead, get everyone onboard and let them know that there will have to be some differences in the way that you live so that you can restart.

Then take a look at where you truly stand financially. Take stock of all your assets and how much money you have to work with, if any. If you can't pay your debts because of your situation, concentrate on your survival needs.

Your food, shelter and things like your electricity, water/sewer should come first. Don't give in to panic or the belief that nothing will get better. It might take you a few months, but you will bounce back.

When the paralyzing thoughts hit you, remind yourself that you're only in a temporary situation. When you're calm, the people you live with or care for will be as well. Make a recovery plan.

Begin by setting your fresh start goals. These might be ones such as rebuilding your emergency fund. That should be first because that way if an emergency hits, you won't stress about what to do.

Over the next several months, put aside enough in your savings to pay for between 3 and 6 months' worth of living expenses. Because financial devastation can be difficult mentally and emotionally, make sure that you take care of your mental health and check in with your family to make sure that they're getting the support they need as well.

Recovery After a Job Loss

Losing a job is harder on more than just your financial outlook. It can throw off your routine, your security and make you feel adrift. It can also make you feel betrayed if your coworkers or work friends knew what was coming and didn't give you a warning.

Some people link their self-esteem with the career they have - especially if it's one they spent years working toward. So when they lose it, they lose their sense of self. Most people get angry, anxious or depressed when they lose a job.

But there are ways that you can recover after a job loss. Begin by looking at your finances. Most people avoid doing this, but it's actually more beneficial to know where you may need to tighten up in order to make it than to worry and wonder.

Even if you know that you don't have enough money to pay your debts, you're still better off knowing exact figures. See how long you think the money you have will allow you to make it and if you believe you'll go under financially, set a plan in motion.

For example, if you know you can't pay the rent in a couple of months, set up a place to go before it reaches that point. To recover from losing your job, create a work overview of yourself.

This means that you make a spreadsheet or write down what you're capable of in the workforce and what you may lack that needs improvement. Having a master list of what you can do and the expertise that you have can be appealing to new employers.

If you've been out of the job search for awhile, it's time to update your resume. If you're not good at this, either search for examples of how to do it online, or get someone who is good at it to do it for you.

Tap into your network to see who might have some leads on jobs within your field. Level up on anything that you feel might hold you back. For example, if you haven't updated your ability to work with certain computer programs and you see these requirements over and over again in job searches, then study it.

Even if all you pick up are the basics of how to do the program, you're still a step ahead of where you were. Look for jobs within your field on professional networking sites such as LinkedIn.

Join social media groups that are specifically for job hunting. Sign up with a job recruiting service. Discuss with your family the possibility of having to move if there are no suitable jobs in your area.

Also talk to them about the possibility of changing schedules in order to find a job. For example, some companies may be looking for third shift workers. That might not be something that you've done in the past because of your family obligations.

Recovering and Restarting When You Experience a Divorce

The end of a relationship that once started out happily can be devastating. You'll deal with a lot of heavy emotions. You'll worry about the future. You may grieve that the relationship has broken.

A divorce can affect you financially, emotionally and mentally. Emotionally, you might have fear or resent the life change. Mentally, you might struggle with self-esteem issues - especially if you weren't the one who initiated the divorce.

Financially, you may experience a loss of income or a loss of retaining the same lifestyle you once had. When you've experienced a divorce, know that you can recover and you can restart – no matter what age or what the circumstances are.

Your life after a divorce can be beautiful if you're open to it. Recovery involves taking the time to understand who you are. Some people (both men and women) lose a sense of self.

If it was a long term marriage, this can be a difficult process. So much of your life involved another person. Start by loving yourself. Don't beat yourself up when you have a bad day.

When you don't feel strong, give yourself permission to just exist without judgment. Give yourself space to fall apart so that there's room to rebuild or find yourself again. Provide for your needs.

This might mean that you need to see a counselor. You might need to also take any children involved to counseling. If you're considering moving because you can't afford the mortgage on your own, or you want to go to a different city, weigh the pros and cons but make sure you talk to your family about it - especially children.

Make sure they understand it's not their fault and that a fresh start doesn't have to be a negative thing. They may be reluctant to change schools and are upset at the thought of leaving behind the familiar.

Let them know that you are, too - but that it can be an adventure. But let them know it's okay to feel sad. The key is to communicate with your family so that you all find the new balance together.

After a divorce, you may want to consider changing jobs. If the old job doesn't provide enough income or if there are too many memories, finding a new job can help. Begin a restart with your finances.

If you had "couple friends" now is the time to make new friends, too. While a restart in any area of your life isn't easy and can be stressful, any change is filled with the possibility that something even better is beginning for you and your loved ones.