

## MIDLIFE CRISIS

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- Common belief is that it occurs somewhere between 35-45 years of age
- This is where people start to gain an awareness, perhaps for the first time, of their remaining time
- Questioning one's life can be disturbing, leading to major job changes or divorce, but it can also be a time for healthy changes that lead to a fulfilling middle and older age
- During his/her 40's if a man or woman has been hard working, the fruits of their labors (home, family, material possessions) will surround them
- Then some nagging doubts may appear, perhaps followed by a series of dramatic, apparently irrational events leading up to great change
- The questions arise: *Is this all there is? Am I a failure?*
- At midlife, depression, suicide, poverty, smoking and alcoholism rates all rise
- Worried increase around everything from jobs becoming dull, to lack of energy
- The social pressure also climax during this time
- Many persons have had some reasonable career success in their eyes some education and made some money, added to this are the continuing pressures of balancing act between family and work, aging parents, and a renewal of work
- This time often leads to the divorce rates increasing, spouses having affairs, falling into depression, experiencing declining levels of energy and an overall feeling of not knowing what to do
- Very few of us openly confront the issues of midlife because of a fear of change and the fear of what one might discover about themselves
- Midlife is a time to let go of the past emotional events and move forward
- It becomes harder in midlife to take risks, yet we start to question our life's scripts and ask is this current role is satisfying
- The good news is that midlife is the start of the longest period of our lives
- It can be used as a chance and choice for renewal and growth

***Coping with Midlife Crisis:***

1. Accept and share your feelings
    - Aging is inevitable, but decline is not
    - With acceptance, you can allow yourself to grieve losses
    - By sharing your feelings you can relieve fears and frustrations
  2. Regularly spend time thinking about your life
  3. Rediscover your spouse as a friend and lover
    - Spend time each week, even if it is only a few hours, away from children and distractions
  4. Set new goals which are both realistic and exciting
  5. Try new things – sports, hobbies, college classes
  6. Volunteer for a non-profit organization
  7. Spend time each week with your children
  8. Improve your nutrition, stop smoking, and get your body in shape
- Allow your midlife to be a time of creative change
  - Although it may be painful at first, it can be your greatest opportunity for having the life you want or gaining a sense of peace