

Reframe, Revitalize and Reinvent: *Crafting the Next Chapter in Your Work and Life*

**Co-Facilitators: Stephanie Eisenstat, MD
& Russell Eisenstat, Ph.D.**

**Sponsored by the MGH Center for Faculty Development,
Center for Senior Faculty Affairs**



INTRODUCTION

- “Real talk”, asking the right questions:
 - At this stage of the game, how do we fully leverage our capabilities and talents?
 - Are we able to aspire to something other than just getting older?
 - How do we design life with meaning and purpose for this next chapter of our work and lives?
 - We are expert problem solvers. What resources do we have to figure all this out?



IMAGES OF OUR FUTURE— RETIREMENT OR REWIREMENT?



Russ's Grandparents- Sam and Bessie
in the "Borscht Belt"



Stephanie's Grandmother Nancy, on an
archeological dig in Africa

YOUNG OR OLD?

- What do you see?
- Perception becomes reality
- Our mindset about aging shapes how we see and react to the world.

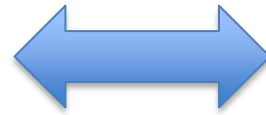


A MORE PERSONAL EXAMPLE... SAM AND THE EMPTY NEST



HOW ARE YOU IMAGINING YOUR FUTURE YEARS UNFOLDING?

A slow and steady decline
into old age?



An opportunity for renewal and
reinvention?



AGENDA

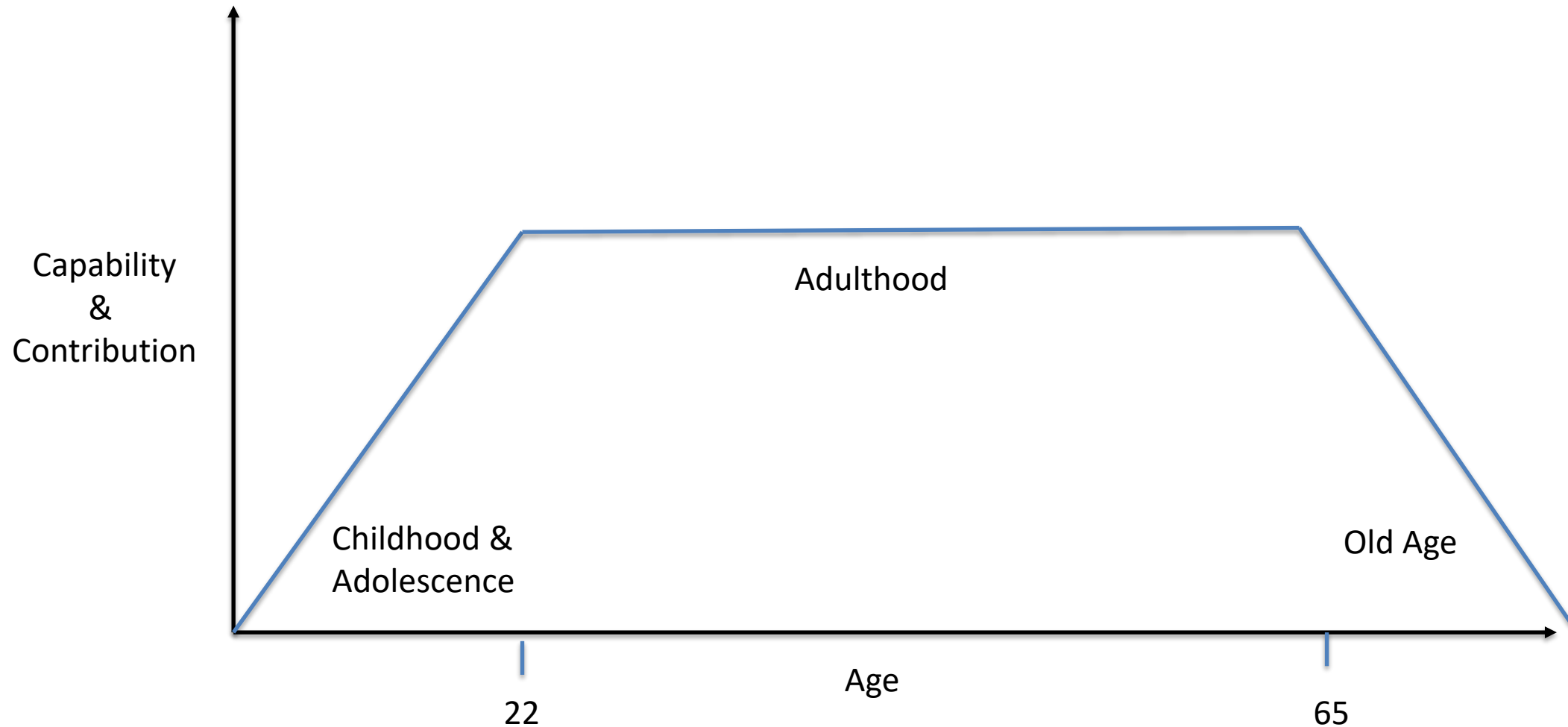
Reframe

Changing paradigms and mindsets for thinking about the second half of our work and lives

Reflect,
Revitalize
and Reinvent

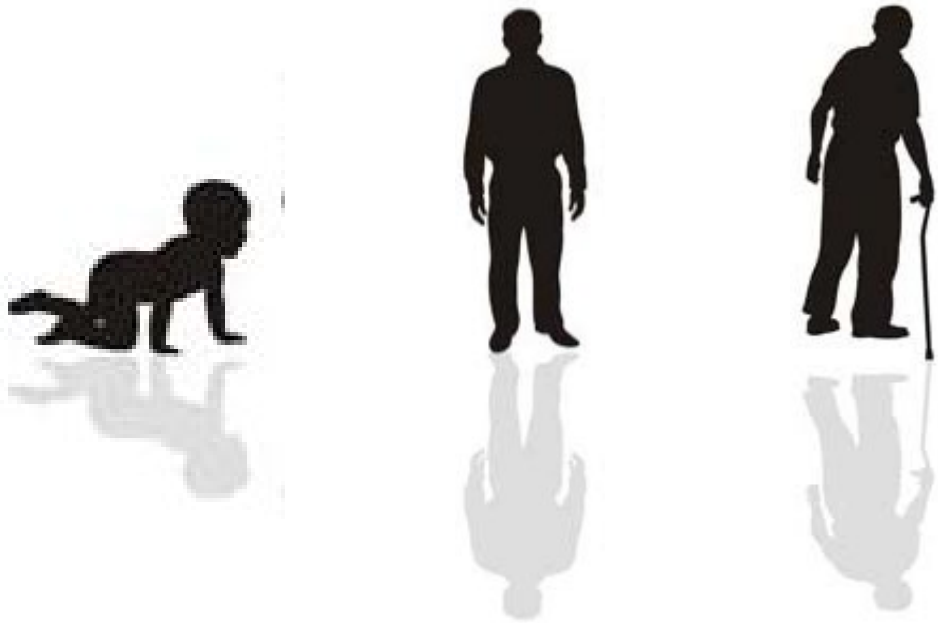
Some practical lessons learned on successfully navigating the transition to the next chapter with the support of MGH colleagues

THE TRADITIONAL VIEW: THE THREE STAGE LIFE



THE RIDDLE OF THE SPHINX

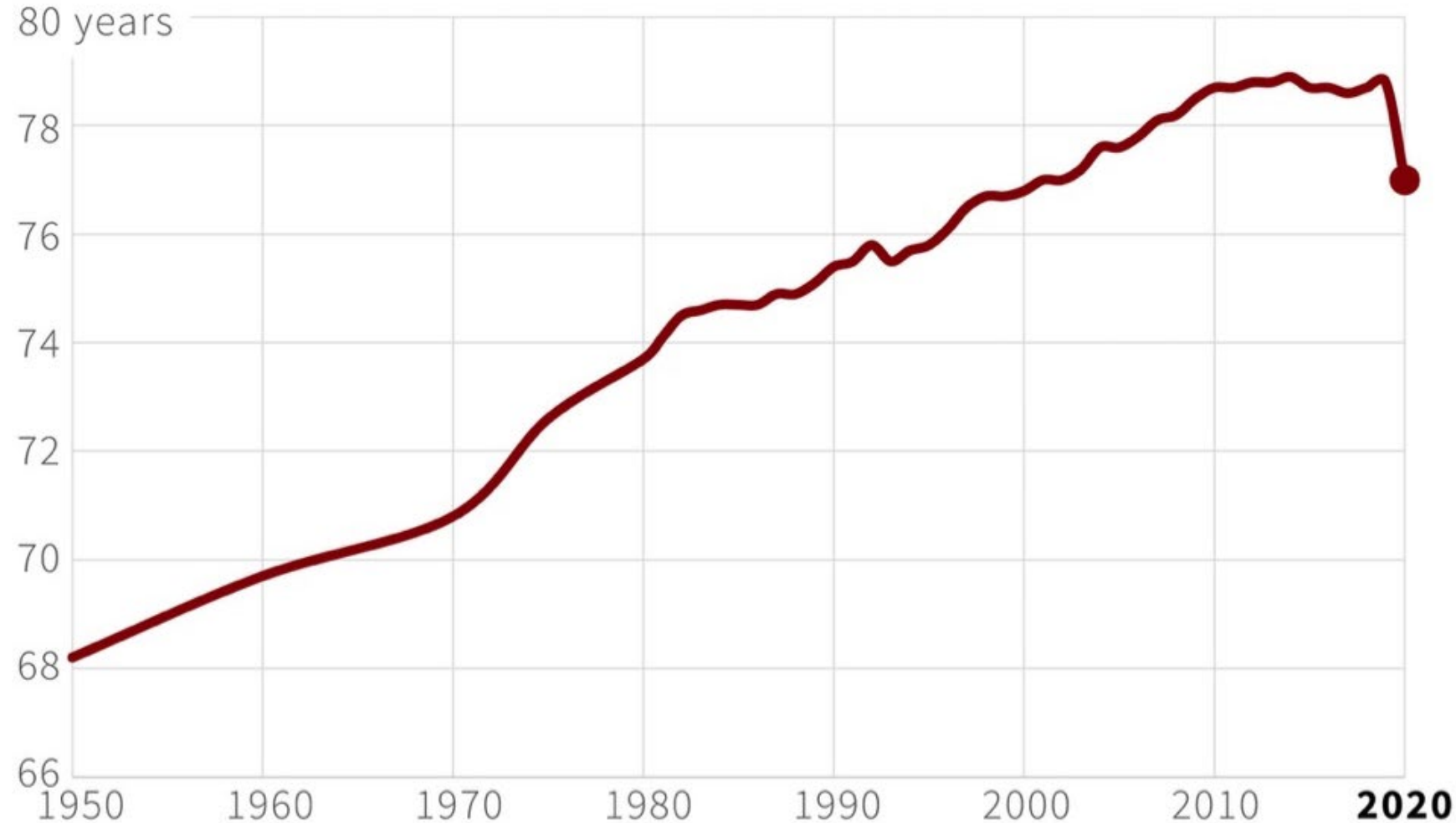
What walks on four legs in the morning, two legs at noon, and three legs in the evening?



Oedipus and the Sphinx of Thebes,
Red Figure Kylix, c. 470 BC, Vatican Museum

MOVING BEYOND “THE THREE STAGE LIFE”

Life expectancy at birth in the United States, 1950 -- 2020



Source: CDC

REFRAMING HOW WE APPROACH THE SECOND HALF OF OUR LIVES



“We have not added decades to life expectancy by simply extending old age; instead, we have opened up a new space partway through the life course, ***a second and different kind of adulthood*** that precedes old age, and as a result **every stage of life is undergoing change....**”

Bateson, Mary Catherine. *Composing a Further Life* (p. 12). Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group. Kindle Edition.

MOVING BEYOND “THE THREE STAGE LIFE”

Approx. Ages	Stage	Description
0-22	Childhood and Adolescence	Rapid physical, social and mental development in a more protected environment
22-30	Early Career – <i>Setting the Course</i>	Establishing core commitments as an independent adult, in work and in relationships
30-50	Mid-Career- <i>Delivering on the promise</i>	Building career, family, your portfolio
50-75	Late Career- <i>“Rewirement”</i>	An opportunity to rebalance, revitalize and re-imagine work and life- to explore paths not taken and pass the baton to the next generation
75+	Old age	Making peace with one’s increasing infirmity and one’s legacy

Focus for this Session



Sources: Bateson, Gratton & Scott, Lightfoot, Sedlar & Miners

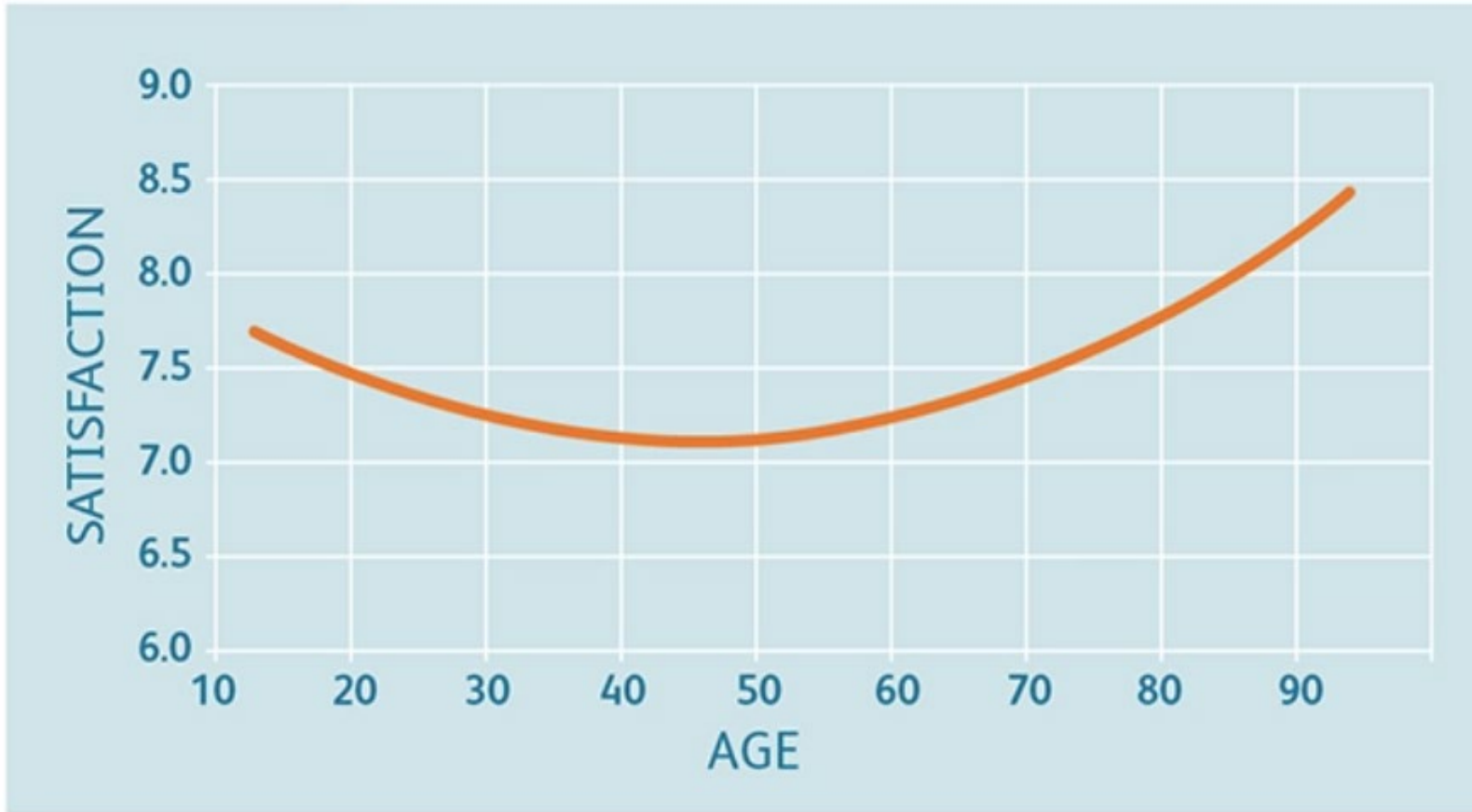
HOW DO YOU KNOW THAT YOU ARE READY TO “REWIRE”



“When you reflect that you have done much of what you hoped to do in life, but it is not too late to do something more or different”

Bateson, Mary Catherine. *Composing a Further Life* (p. 12). Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group. Kindle Edition.

MIDLIFE – A TIME OF “CRISIS” OR INCREASED OPPORTUNITY?



Life Satisfaction by Age

Sources: Brooking Institute, Gallup

Common Motivators for “Rewirement” for Mid to Senior Professionals at MGH

Finding New Sources of *Meaning and Purpose*

- Having the opportunity to take on new roles and to find new opportunities to help others
- Feeling your contribution still matters
- Continuing to remain relevant

Evolving *Relationships*

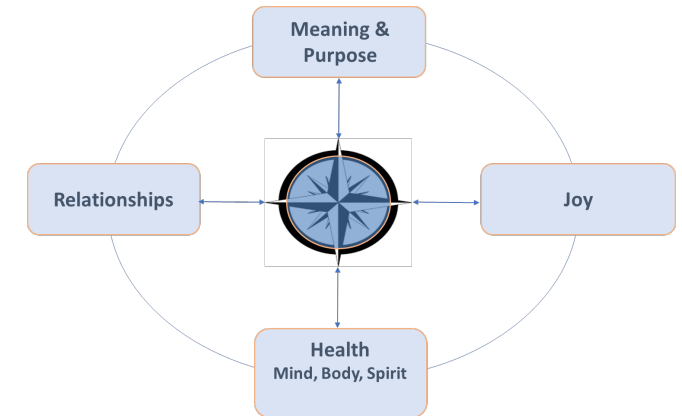
- Balancing changing needs with those of family
- Evolving work role in harmony with life partner, family and community
- Transitioning roles to others, i.e., leadership, clinic, research projects, etc.

Preserving Physical and Mental *Health*

- Decreasing stress imposed by full time work
- Overcoming fatigue
- Managing grief and loss
- Achieving better work- life balance

Creating More Space for *Joy*

- Leading a full and rich life across multiple domains- work, home, family, non-work-related activities.
- Finding new sources of excitement and renewal
- Discovering new ways to apply your skills



A photograph of a man in red shorts jumping off a dark, rocky cliff into the ocean. The sky is blue with white clouds, and the water is a clear blue-green. The man is captured mid-air, with his arms outstretched and legs bent, suggesting a leap or dive.

Some of the *Challenges* Identified With Making This Transition

- Building an identity that develops and evolves over time, beyond long time roles and relationship with MGH, Harvard and the other institutions we have been affiliated with
- Not having role models
- Feeling comfortable with the unknown and uncertainty
- Deciding on the right time
- Having the emotional and physical energy and resources to manage the change
- Having community
- Difficulty with saying goodbye (i.e., patients, colleagues, other relationships and connections...)

AGENDA

Reframe

Changing paradigms and mindsets for thinking about the second half of our lives and work

**Revitalize
and
ReInvent**

Some practical lessons learned on successfully navigating the transition to the next chapter with the support of MGH colleagues

THE COURSE: CRAFTING THE NEXT CHAPTER IN YOUR WORK AND LIFE

Week	Topic
Intro	Reframe
1	<i>Course Introduction: Exploring the Next Chapter</i>
Part 1	Reflect and Revitalize
2	<i>Learn the Lessons from your History</i>
3	<i>Take Stock of Where You Are</i>
4	<i>Understand What Energizes & Renews You</i>
Part 2	Reimagine and Re-invent
5	<i>Define the Architecture for Your Future Life and Work</i>
6	<i>Set a Future Vision</i>
7	<i>Identify and Build on your Strengths</i>
8	<i>Chart the Path Forward</i>
9	<i>Keep Energized and Stay the Course</i>

- **Next program starts Tuesday, February 7, 2023**

- Pilot group: 15 senior faculty, 10 MDs and 2 PhDs and 3 dropped out
- Representation across disciplines, including leaders, academic pioneers and front-line clinical faculty and researchers
- Met virtually February- June 2022
- Course entailed 9- Zoom sessions, every other Tuesday 4:30-6:00 PM, with preparation work for each session in between
- A mix of self-reflective exercises, provocative readings, large and small group discussions
- Included small group community building and peer to peer coaching and support post- course.
- Surveyed group before and after experience

CRAFTING THE NEXT CHAPTER: *THE POWER OF COMMUNITY*



“The course gave me the time (and permission) to reflect in a semi-structured manner with insightful leadership, in a way that allowed me to identify next steps.”

“It created a safe space for colleagues ...to share their vulnerabilities, challenges and successes.”

“The small group approach was a safe space to talk openly. “

“The course gave me permission to try something different”

“It helped me focus on what I should really let go of, and what I really *could* do, and *wanted* to do in the next few years. “

COMMON THEMES

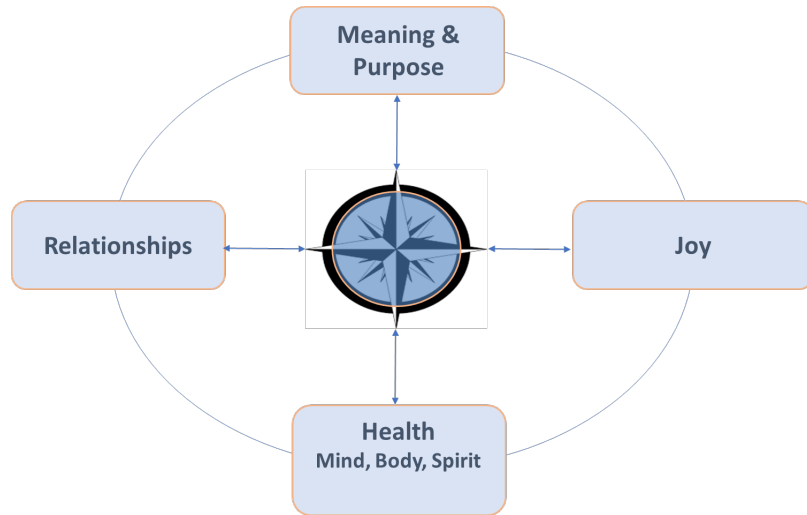
REFRAME	REFLECT AND REVITALIZE	REIMAGINE AND REINVENT
<p>We can age well.</p> <p>We can adopt a growth mindset and by doing that, open the aperture in ways we didn't think we could imagine.</p> <p>Techniques and resilience we learned earlier in life can serve us well during this time of transition and reframing.</p>	<p>We can give ourselves permission to reflect on my whole self.</p> <p>We need to recharge, practice self-care and clear the underbrush, before we can recreate.</p> <p>There is a process of grieving and for developing more tolerance with the uncertainty.</p>	<p>We have deep skill sets that we can build on and expand.</p> <p>Balance between work and life is possible with smart transition planning.</p> <p>It is scary but also actually exciting to have opportunity.</p>

A PRACTICAL ROADMAP FOR SUCCESSFULLY NAVIGATING THE TRANSITION TO YOUR NEXT CHAPTER



1. Allow yourself the time to intentionally *reflect* on where you are right now
2. Take the first steps to *revitalize* your current work and life
3. Identify where more fundamental *reinvention* is Needed

1. ALLOW YOURSELF THE TIME TO REFLECT ON WHERE YOU ARE RIGHT NOW



- Ask yourself some basic questions:
 - What's working and what's not?
 - Where do I find meaning and purpose in my work and life?
 - What relationships do I value most?
 - When do I feel the greatest joy in living?
 - Am I feeling balanced and whole physically, emotionally and spiritually?
 - What dreams have I deferred?
- Realize you don't have to do it alone
 - Explore these issues with your significant other?
 - Reach out to close friends and/or colleagues and your communities?

2. TAKE THE FIRST STEPS TO REVITALIZE YOUR CURRENT WORK AND LIFE



- “Put on your own oxygen mask first”
 - Expand and protect the time you have to do more of the things that re-energize and renew you
- Get rid of the “underbrush”
 - Assess your degrees of freedom...
 - Rebalance and renegotiate roles and commitments.
 - Dial up or dial down.

3. IDENTIFY WHERE MORE FUNDAMENTAL REINVENTION IS NEEDED



- What would you hope and expect your life and work would look like 3 to 5 years from now?
 - What do you want to preserve and build on?
 - Are there “paths not taken” or “dreams deferred” that you want to more fully explore?
 - If you had no constraints, what would you be doing?
- What are some initial steps you can take to begin to bring this future to life?
 - Conversations with others who are farther on the journey?
 - Low- cost ways to try out new possibilities?



RESOURCES

- **Leverage MGH resources:**
 - Center for Faculty Development, Office for Senior Faculty Affairs, cfid@partners.org
 - Contact us:
 - Stephanie: eisenstat.stephanie@mgh.harvard.edu or
 - Russ: reisenstat@higherambition.org
- **Learn More:**
 - Teresa Amabile, “How Retirement Changes Your Identity,” HBS IdeaCast/665, January 15, 2019
 - Mary Catherine Bateson, *Composing a Further Life: The age of Active Wisdom*
 - Lynda Gratton & Andrew Scott, *The 100 Year Life: Living and Working in an Age of Longevity*
 - George Vaillant *Aging Well: Surprising Guideposts to a Happier Life*
 - Robert Waldinger & Marc Schulz, *The Good Life*
- **Join us for our course:**
 - “Crafting the Next Chapter in Your Work and Life “
 -
 - Next program starts Tuesday, February 7, 2023 and ends Tuesday June 6th
 - Applications due: End of Day: Wednesday, January 25th , Application link: <https://learn.partners.org/course/8011/apply/8961/>



Life is amazing.
And then it is awful.
And then it is amazing again.

And in between the amazing and the awful it is ordinary, mundane, and routine.

Breathe in the amazing, hold on through the awful, and relax and breathe out during the ordinary.

That's just living, heartbreaking, soul-healing, amazing, awful, ordinary life.

And its breathtakingly beautiful.

- L. R. Knost

THANK YOU!