



talking about...

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... designing better relationships for better outcomes

Feeling Trapped at Work?

"You and I are essentially infinite choice-makers. In every moment of our existence, we are in that field of all possibilities where we have access to an infinity of choices"

... Deepak Chopra (b. 1949) Indian physician and author

Do you know someone who is disillusioned with their job? Maybe it is you, maybe someone with whom you work or maybe a friend or family member. There are a lot of people out there who are not happy in their work life and as more people find themselves under increasing pressure at work then no doubt more people will join their ranks.

There are many reasons for feeling disillusioned in life and they all lead to a mood of resignation or resentment and neither are a pleasant place to be. Yet, despite their disillusionment, many people stay where they are. Why is this?

I have worked with many people as a coach over the years and have found myself asking this question of them many times. I have been given many different answers but the subtext of all of those answers is that they feel they have to stay there. The result is a sense of being trapped with no real options to find their way out.

The feeling of being trapped and the moods of resignation and resentment all have one thing in common. A feeling of being powerless to change their situation. In other words, they have no choice but to be there.

Over the years I have helped people explore this type of situation in a different light and the key is choice. I would like to invite you into this space.

Let us begin with couple of questions.

- What is your value to prospective employers and to your current employer? and
- When was the last time you actively chose to be in your current job?

If you do not have a clear answer to the first question or if you have not considered your job options recently, then maybe it is time to make a choice. I am not suggesting here that you have to leave where you are, simply that you consider some options and consciously choose to stay or go. In choice, lies a sense of control.

The key to having a choice is to have options and options involve exploration. So to actively choose to be in your current role, you have to have options from which to choose. Here are some thoughts on what you can do:

- Consider the question, "Why do I work?" Consider this question in the context of your life and your future life as it is important to understand why you choose to do what you do;
- Build and maintain a network of contacts in your field and be aware of ideas and opportunities as they show up. More jobs are found through networks than through the job search market;
- Seek to determine your value - what are you worth? You may be able to better establish this if you have a well-established and involved network;
- What options do you have? If you cannot find any, look harder and talk to others;
- Go through a considered process and choose what you want to do;
- Do this regularly. I suggest that at least once a year, you should actively make a choice about your work situation, particularly if you have been in that role for some time.

A great many people who feel trapped have just lost perspective. Consciously making a choice, helps them find some perspective and they will often choose to stay. When they do, it can shift their mood and sense of disillusionment. After all, they are choosing to be there!

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"Your work is to discover your work and then with all your heart to give yourself to it."

... Buddha (563BC-483BC) Indian religious leader

Some Unanswerable Questions...

Another one from the internet.

Why does rain drop but snow fall?

What disease did cured ham have?

What's the difference between unique and very unique?

We put in our two cents, but only get a penny for our thoughts. Who gets the extra penny?

When do you become important enough to be considered assassinated and not just murdered?

Can you cry under water?

Who decided that a round pizza should be put in a square box?

When you get to heaven, are you stuck for eternity wearing the same clothes you were buried in?

Why did we put a man on the moon before we realised it would be a good idea to make luggage with wheels?

Why are actors IN movies but ON television?

Why do toasters always have a setting that burns the toast?

Why does grass grow where you do not want it and not grow where you do?

Why do we say we slept like a baby when they wake up every two hours?

Why do we pay to get to the top of tall buildings, then pay to use binoculars to look at things on the ground?

Why does Goofy stand upright and Pluto stand on all four feet? They're both dogs.

Do "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star" and "The Alphabet Song" have the same tune?

On Gilligan's Island, the professor could make a radio out of a coconut. Why couldn't he fix the hole in the boat?

If Wile E. Coyote has enough money to buy all that stuff from ACME, why doesn't he just buy himself dinner?

Can you drive in the car pool lane if you're driving a hearse with a corpse in it?

Why does a dog get mad at you if you blow in his face, but then stick his head out the window when you take him for a car ride

Fear is a question. What are you afraid of and why? Our fears are a treasure house of self-knowledge if we explore them.

... Marilyn French (b. 1929) US writer

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