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Finding Purpose in Mid-Life

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"Honey? It's Dad. I'm at the emergency room with Mother and the doctor wants her to see an oncologist before she leaves. They think she has cancer."

I had no clue how Dad's words would change my life.

I was absorbed in family life as a stay-at-home mom. Volunteering at schools, church, and neighborhood defined me. Mom's news made me drop every bit of it except one project so I could help care for her. I'll never regret it.

The diagnosis was cancer. She chose treatments and they sucked the life right out of her. She survived seven heart wrenching months. The Lord took her Irish soul to dance the streets of heaven on St. Patrick's Day shortly after we feasted on corned beef and cabbage in the next room.

I felt a void and lack of purpose following Mom's death. No longer volunteering or caring for Mom, my days were long. My oldest was soon leaving for college with the two younger ones flying the coop shortly behind him. What was I going to do with my life? I felt empty. What did I want to be when I grew up?

I've always looked at life as seasons: a time to work, a time to raise children, and a time to... well, what exactly? That was the question.

I recall the time my husband and I wanted to start our family. We endured four years of infertility. That was another time life was on hold. Aching to have a baby, we adopted our son and got pregnant while waiting for our little girl to arrive from Korea. We had three children in

three years. Life has been a wonderful roller coaster ride, but the ride's coming to a halt. I'm at the other end and find myself searching again.

What do you do when life throws you for a loop? It happens to all of us at some point. Women divorce, lose jobs, have kids move, lose loved ones, and life goes on. **How do you find your purpose?** Here are five tips that helped me through my soul searching and gave me a renewed sense of meaning.

Spend time alone

Set aside time each day for quiet reflection. Journal, pray, and consider your purpose in life. What is important to you? Why are you here? Make lists and work it out on paper. Listen to what God is whispering.

Focus on your gifts

Consider what brings you joy. What makes you tick? What are you passionate about? Is there something you can do with that passion to rejuvenate your life? We are all given gifts. Tune in and decide how to use them to fulfill your life purpose. Work isn't a hardship when you align your passions with your profession.

Open up to others

Don't be shy. Tell loved ones what you are going through. They know you best and can share your strengths and weaknesses. They can help you discover what to do with your life. Rely on them for advice and guidance.

Research

Get online and do career searches. Today's technology allows you to post a few words in a program and have a list of careers at your fingertips. Use community colleges' occupation data bases. Sign up for a class that piques your interest. Go to the library. Hit bookstores. Wander the aisles until something strikes you and read ferociously.

Get busy

Be diligent until you have answers. Work at your future with enthusiasm. You are the one in charge. Make changes. Soul search. You'll be glad you did!

I realize the pause in life after Mom's death was serendipitous. It prepared me for the empty nest staring me in the face.

I applied the above tactics and am now blessed as the Executive Founder of BoomerWomenSpeak.com and the National Association of Baby Boomer Women. I'm passionate about education and empowering baby boomer women. I believe every woman has a story and when we share them, lives are changed. There is no need for us to feel alone. We have more similarities than differences. We are capable of healing one another by sharing our stories. Knowing another woman has lived, survived and thrived through a similar circumstance gives us strength.

BoomerWomenSpeak.com is a safe and therapeutic haven to share what's on your heart anonymously and without judgment. Wise, warm, and witty women with kindred spirits share

thoughtful insight. Women feel appreciated, affirmed and needed by others in the community. Women connect, encourage and support one another daily. [The National Association of Baby Boomer Women](#) is the only association devoted to addressing issues concerning 38 million of the healthiest, wealthiest, and best educated generation of women to ever hit midlife, baby boomer women.