

# Opportune Times for Self Renewal

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With the arrival of autumn often comes new insights and perspectives. On the professional front, you might encounter career milestones, such as a large pay increase, appointment to a special/high office, or election as an officer in a professional association or group. You might be interviewed by a national publication, have your biographical information published in a “Who’s Who” type listing. At such times, you might find yourself naturally inclined to entertain self-renewal: a rethinking of who you are, where you are, and where you want to be.

## Milestones for the Taking

Non-career-related milestones that encourage self-renewal include an invitation to be on a special committee supporting your town council, a request for your written opinion from your local newspaper about a community issue, or a decision by a literary magazine to publish your poem. Whenever any of these kinds of events occur, given the new situation, you might find it fitting and appropriate to re-examine your life.

Also evaluate personal milestones in your life. For example, a four-year scholarship could mean that, instead of your son or daughter working the summer before entering college, the whole family can go on an extended vacation.

## Before and After a Mate Change

If you’re in a relationship, particularly a long-term one, and it ends, whether your heart is slightly broken or seemingly crushed beyond repair, life moves on. Having your significant other leave you is a difficult change to endure. Even if you initiated the breakup, the loss of a significant other can profoundly impact you.

Many psychologists believe that we need to learn certain lessons, so we attract partners that will help us learn such lessons. Some people believe we are attracted to others who seemingly have what we lack, so in our quest to be complete, we want relationships with these people to complete us.

Whether or not you’ve recently found someone new or you’re in a long-term relationship, you have the opportunity to view your mate in a new light. Perhaps it’s time to talk about how your relationship will be in the coming month, year, or five years. If you’re in that in-between time, looking for somebody and not sure when and where he or she will appear, then think about what you’re seeking in your next relationship.

## Preparing for the Next

Here are some questions to ask yourself before getting into your next relationship. What kind of person do you want to meet? What level of commitment are you willing to offer? What level of sacrifice are you prepared to make? In what kind of activities do you want to engage? How much energy will you devote to the relationship? Will you listen this time?

All of these types of issues can be converted to goal statements that will help ensure you achieve these renewed relationship standards. You might take the last one, for example. Ask yourself how “Will you listen this time?” could appear as an established goal.

If you are serious, once you’re in a relationship with someone, and you intend to make it last and be a better partner, share this goal with your significant other. If you are not willing to share, then perhaps you are not as serious about being a good listener as you had originally thought.

People often experience major pain before they make significant changes in their relationships. When one partner or the other threatens to leave, then, and sometimes only then, will the other partner agree to make changes. Changes under duress have a nasty habit of lasting only as long as the duress is present. What's more, while changes can be imposed on you by someone else, they have to be internalized, i.e., made your own, if they are to be effective.

### **Age Milestones**

Another useful factor in terms of self-renewal is age. The mere fact that you turn 30 or 40 might be enough of an incentive for you to buckle down and try something new. A birthday ending in zero is a huge event. When you turn 30, 40, 50, or 60, you've passed a stage in life you'll never pass again. It is a great time to clear out the old and bring in the new things in your life.

Age 40 has traditionally been a milestone, as in the expression, "Life begins at 40." Age 65 is a traditional retirement age. Age 80, becoming an octogenarian, is, in recent decades, held as a rite of passage. Age 90 is even more exclusive.

Anniversaries are also milestones in your life. Each anniversary represents the opportunity for self-renewal. A 25th anniversary is certainly notable, and every five-year interval after that is admirable. Fiftieth anniversaries are rare, but you may be among the lucky few.

Take the opportunity to renew yourself during passages through your own life cycle. Consider the opportunities for self-renewal before and after moving, when changing a job, or when changing a mate. Also, identify and acknowledge career and personal milestones that you can use to establish new ideas for your life.

Circumstances consistently present themselves as chances to renew your life. It is up to you to take advantage of them.

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