

The VICTORIOUS WOMAN PROJECT

You CAN have more of a life you'll LOVE LIVING!

Victory Tips for Your Marvelous Mid-Life Makeover



Do you feel like you're running out time?
That it's almost too late to fulfil those dreams of yours?
Don't give up yet!

No matter what's happened, you can still **take control of your life** and stretch into the fabulous-ness that your soul is yearning for. Here's where you can get you started ...and keep going!

Your Top Ten Tips for Making the Most of Your Mid-Life Makeover

You're ready! You're tired of things as they are and have been. You want to BE MORE of who you really are, DO MORE that satisfies your soul and HAVE MORE of the life you'll love living. Still, as much as you want it, you're nervous about the change. You might be asking yourself questions, like: What will happen? What will people say? Will they like the new me?

Equally scary is that you don't know what to do or how to get started. And so you don't do anything.

Don't cheat yourself out of the rest of your life. Here are ten things that will make your Mid-Life Makeover doable:

#1 – Can You Picture Your Makeover?

When you look toward your future, what do you see? The answer really matters. How can you do a makeover if you don't know what you want different?

Have you ever seen one of those on-air makeovers. You know, the ones where someone is plucked from a tour group for the station and offered a beauty makeover. They agree, sign some papers and then they're whisked away for an hour. When they re-appear, voila! They look like a different person.

The trick to those on-air makeovers is choosing a woman who is ready. Usually producers choose a woman who looks like she's still wearing the same look she's had for a long time. Think about it. When have you seen them choose a well-dressed, put-together woman? They don't.

The woman who says 'yes' to an on-air makeover is one's looking for a second chance. Maybe it's a second chance at love or in her career. Sometimes it's a second chance to live life on her terms, like the guest who lost weight or beat a devastating illness. Many times she's the proverbial good girl who is simply tired of the same old same old.

Once away from the camera, the makeover crew asks a lot of questions. Based on the answers, they develop a picture of the new look, something that's a better fit for the guest's goals or deep desires. The makeover artists are able to see the woman as she *wants to be* instead of how she is. They work their magic based on that picture.

Can you imagine what would happen if they could only see the woman the way she is that day? The makeover would be a bust. It's seeing the woman as her future self that makes the makeover magic.

Here's another way to think about it. Not having a picture of what you want is like going to the bank with a blank check and asking them to cash it. The teller would look at you like you have six heads. S/he wouldn't be able to do anything with it.

Television makeovers and cashing checks are good examples of how you get what you want in life. When you want something more and better than you already have, you need to be clear about what you want. If you aren't, who knows what zigzag path you'll take or where you'll end up. You don't need to know all the steps right away. But if you don't have a big picture of what you want, how will you know when you get there?

Here are some ideas for how to get to your own big picture:

- Think about things that make you feel happy - what do they have in common?
- Think about what you don't like now - what would be the opposite?
- Picture yourself living your best life...
 - What are you doing?
 - How do you look?
 - How do you feel?
 - Who are you with?
 - Where do you live?
 - What does your neighborhood look like?
 - Where are you working?
 - What's your office look like?
 - How are you getting to work?
 - What kind of car do you drive?

Don't be concerned if you don't know all the answers just off the top of your head. Take some time. Brainstorm your ideas on paper, jot down some key words, or tell yourself a "story" about your new life. Have you ever made up a story for your kids to help them get past a tough time? It's the same thing. Don't edit...just go with it.

Then, look for pictures that reflect that new story. When you have 5-10 pictures, make a Vision Board. It doesn't matter if it seems like an impossible dream. Just get started. Your picture will go through some refinements, but trust yourself. Eventually you'll whittle it down to exactly what you want.

What's most important is giving yourself the gift of a successful Mid-Life Makeover. BRAVA!!

Want to know more about Vision Boards? Author Annmarie Kelly, Victory Strategist and Founder of The Victorious Woman Project, has been using Vision Boards for over 20 years. She's helped hundreds of women get inspired and motivated to live their best life, starting with their Vision Board. Annmarie won't just show you what to do, but tell you why it works and gives you the secret to using your Vision Board. Learn more about Annmarie's next Vision Board Class: <http://victoriouswoman.com/vision-board-class/>

#2 – Keep Your Mind Open to New Ideas

The mind is like an umbrella, it only works when it's open. When your mind is closed to new ideas, it's like walking around in the rain - all you get is soaked.

You can't reinvent your life, career or relationships by doing the same old same old. After all, "if you always do what you've always done, you'll always get what you already got." You have to open the umbrella of your mind. That means you have to move out of your comfort zone, and try new things.

Here are two ways to open your mind:

- When someone suggests using new behavior or action (like being more assertive), don't discard it immediately because you think "I can't – that's not me." Instead, give the behavior a fighting chance. Will it take you out of your comfort zone? *Of course it will!* Yet isn't that the whole point of a makeover – you want to stretch into your greater, fuller expression of who you really are. If you could have done it by doing what you are doing now, you would already have grown into that person. You haven't...that's *why* you want a makeover, right?
- Go someplace you might never have gone before – and go twice. The first time you go to any new environment or are in a new group, you're likely to feel like a fish out of water. Your first reaction is to run the other way. Don't. Stay and get a feel for the place. Then go back again. The second time you'll know what you're walking into and feel more at ease. Then you'll be able to enjoy the experience and reap the benefits. If you like what you do, keep going. Each time you go there, it'll get easier...and be better and more fun.

KEY: VICTORY is when you s-t-r-e-t-c-h you make out of your comfort zone and into that greater, fuller, richer expression of who you *really* are. It's what enables the "you" who's been hiding on the inside come out and be happy.

#3 – Don't Get Caught with Your Panties Down

When you're having a makeover, you'll find yourself in new and different situations. You won't know what to do a lot of the time. Nobody likes getting caught off-guard. So prepare for shifts, changes and disappointments.

Are you a person who likes to be in control of what's going on around you? Are you used to following a set agenda or time schedule (your own or someone else's)?

We like patterns. We like routine. If you disagree, just try brushing your teeth with your other hand. There's something comforting about familiarity.

During times of change, however, *even when you choose the change*, the lack of sameness can be disconcerting. There's a lot of uncertainty that can happen while you're forming new routines. As a result, you're likely to feel upside down, confused and/or stressed to the max.

While, during change, you won't have control over a lot of things, you can do some things to be prepared for that part of your Mid-Life Makeover. Preparation makes the transition a little easier. Here are two things that can make a huge difference:

- Find two or three "go-to" things that always make you feel safe and relaxed
 - It might be a favorite TV show, a certain kind of music, meditation, a favorite scent, candles or something else. Whatever it is, make sure you have it readily available so that you can get it when you need it. Warning: if it's a certain food, you are likely to regret the end result. The same with drugs. Choose something that won't damage your health.
- Focus on peace

- When Michelle came to a Vision Board class, she had just lost her finance, the love of her life, to cancer. At the same time, she had a health issue the required surgery. The only sameness was her regular job as a nurse; everything else in her life was in disarray. All she wanted was peace.

When putting together pictures for her vision board, Michelle found pix that made her feel peaceful: blue skies, ocean scenes, sunflowers, flower-filled fields, etc. She put it in her kitchen and looked at it every chance she got. She encouraged her kids to do the same.

It took a few months, but that feeling of peace became her reality. Soon her energy and enthusiasm for life got her to create a new vision board. Today Michelle's life is richer and fuller than she ever dreamed it would have been during those dark makeover days.

If turmoil is all you've got, focus on peace.

#4 – Self-Care Makes the Difference

Makeovers demand work, time and energy. Make sure you get a self-care plan in place. You must make time to take care of yourself, physically and emotionally. If you don't, you'll burnout before you victory yourself to success. Try these tips:

- **Breathe.** Sounds silly, doesn't it? However, the reality is that, in the midst of change, like you Mid-Life Makeover, chances are you're breathing shallow breaths, maybe even hyperventilating. So, three times a day, take one minute (or 3-4-5 minutes) to breathe deeply. Belly-breathing is your best bet.
- **Exercise.** Do something that gets your heart pumping and do it at least thirty minutes, three times a week. You don't have to join a gym. You can walk or jog around the block, dance (in a class or just around your living room), spin your hips with a hula hoop, workout with an exercise CD, or play tennis or racquetball. Whatever you choose, make sure it's something that you enjoy. If you do, you'll do it. If not, you'll make excuses to get out of it. And then you'll cheat yourself.
- **Get a Massage.** There's a lot of research about the health benefits of massage. In addition, according to the Mayo Clinic, "some people enjoy massage because it often involves caring, comfort, a sense of empowerment." Yes...that's the ticket!

If you don't have the money to go to a Licensed Massage Therapist (LMT), find the nearest massage school. They have massage clinics where the students practice their skills. The cost is very low and you can count on being in a safe environment with people who want to give you a good massage.

- **Walk.** Get up and walk around – even if it's just walking around the dining room table two times on your way to the bathroom. This is especially important if you're on the computer a lot. Even just that small amount of movement helps your brain.
- **Drink water.** A glass of water every hour will keep your body and mind refreshed – and it'll give you a reason to get up and walk...even if it's just to the bathroom.
- **Laugh.** In the midst of change, it's really easy to forget some of the basics. Laughter doesn't just make you feel better. There's a lot of research showing that laughter has a multitude of benefits, both mental and physical. And it's not just one of those polite ha-ha smiley laughs. We're talking a full-throated belly laugh. What makes you laugh like that? Is there a TV shows or movie? How about a comedy club, or a funny book? Maybe it's your sister's kid. Whatever it is, make the time to connect with something that makes you laugh every day.

#5 - Get Advice...*From Sensible Sources*

When you're starting over, getting advice is just like when you were pregnant the first time, everyone has advice for you - even people who never had children. Some of the advice is based in good sense but much of it is opinion-based and some of it is political. That is, it's based on a particular ideology...which may not be your ideology.

Here's the thing about opinions: *opinions are the cheapest commodities in the world*. You don't need anything to have an opinion, including a fact basis. The only thing you need for an opinion is what you think or how you feel at any given moment. Everyone can have an opinion - and they do!

So, in your makeover, getting advice is good, maybe even critically important.

Here's whose advice you can ignore:

- The family member or "friend" who has a lot to say about what you do but *doesn't* really support you. That means s/he is long on criticism and short on praise
- Third party hearsay stories: Someone who knew someone who did it
- The person who says, "Here's what I did and it wasn't a good idea; if I was going to do it over, I'd do this..."
- Someone who read about "this kind of thing" in a magazine
- Websites with private chat rooms. Anybody can make up anything when they can't be seen or held accountable.

Here's who is more likely to help you:

- The woman (or the man) who has done it successfully. Lots of people will say, Find the person who has been there, lived through the trials and tribulations, and came out better on the other side.
 - That's something I looked for when I interviewed women for my first book, *Victorious Woman*. Lots of women had great stories and I talked to them. However, I chose women who had *both* great stories *and* who demonstrated that what they did took them to a higher and better place in life. They're the ones who already practiced what they are preaching.
- A family member or friend who has a track record for having your best interests at heart and who has more than an opinion. You want someone who can back up what they say with fact and experience. And love for your highest and best self.
- A professional: a counselor, priest, minister, coach, etc. But, while these professionals are worthy sounding boards, when it comes to advice, the same rules apply: they have to know what they're telling you from their own experience.
 - Did you ever wonder why a woman, man or couple would go to a Catholic priest for marital advice?

Once you get their advice, follow Mid-Life Makeover Tip#6...

#6 – Trust But Verify

A LinkedIn discussion started with the question: *Do you trust your gut in making big decisions or do you have a process that you follow?*

I was surprised by how many business women trust their gut *exclusively*. I believe that's a mistake. Not the trust your gut part, but the exclusively part. And I say that coming from a lifetime of being pretty intuitive. I can

honestly say my "gut-o-meter" is better than most. Still, in times of stress, I know how easy it is to confuse a gut feeling with fears and wants.

Over the years, and all too often, I've listened to women who tell stories about jumping into something because they had some feeling that says "yes" even when everything else says "no" or "wait" to get more information. They are willing to get involved with that "bad news" guy or get talked a business partnership that could never work out except on paper. When asked "what would happen if..." questions, too many women are willing to say something like "I'll worry about that if it happens." Later, when something goes bad, most women admit, "I had a feeling about that, but I ignored it."

Trusting your gut is easier when you've looked at all sides and faced potential problems. Yes, it's true you can spend too much time weighing pros and cons and lose an opportunity. What's more likely, however, is that trusting your gut will help you stay out of trouble.

If your gut is warning you about something, listen! It's better to look at all the things that could go wrong and make a plan for how you will handle them if something happens. Once you do, you can either dump the plan or the person or be free to focus on the good potential outcomes.

On top of that, in the middle of your Mid-Life Makeover, your intuition can get clouded by stress. It can also get clouded by the desire to get something over with or the pressure to make a decision. Any of those can gunk up the channel to your higher self.

How do you avoid that? Look at what you want to do, then:

- List of all the good outcomes
- List all known obstacles
 - Get input from people you trust. It can be your family and friends. A coach or counselor will also help.
 - Brainstorm how you could handle those obstacles
 - Be honest with yourself about your physical and emotional ability to deal with the obstacles and its remedy
 - Let's say you want to buy a house. You find one you really love and the realtor says you can afford it. But you know how you are and you're concerned about the stress of being at the very high end of your price range. Still, you really, *really* want it.

On the upside, it's in a great location so there's a 99% chance it will appreciate in value. On the downside, it needs some work. You think your gut is telling you to buy it, telling you how happy you'll feel living there.

As you list the obstacles you figure out that they include living in the home for a while before you can redecorate, furnish and upgrade. Between time and money, it may take 2-3 years. Ask yourself: Can I live with that? Will the stress put a strain on my marriage or family, or my primary relationship, and maybe other relationships?

- Once you know the obstacles you could be facing, figure out how you'll handle them. Maybe you realize that, between starting a new job or adjusting to a new location, the stress of living with years of renovations is more than you want. Or, you love renovations and the idea of them makes you excited. It can go either way, but you need to know upfront what you're facing.
 - In my success workshops I teach women to list out whatever obstacles they can so those can be dealt with up front, or at least prepared for in advance. That preparation can relieve some stress and, as a result, let real intuition float into consciousness and be helpful.

- Once you list them out, sit down and study the pros and cons. Most likely you can work out the logistics. Then, without those question marks, you're better prepared to make an intuitive decision. That's the best time to let your gut talk to you.
 - If you feel a 'yes' then go forward. But pay attention and be open to a 'no' if it comes up (that is, don't ignore your gut).

#7 – Embrace the Change - Give it a Big Hug!

Change is a forever part of life. No matter who you are, where you live, or what you do, change happens.

Every Mid-Life Makeover in life begins with a change. Maybe the change happened outside of you, like the death of a loved one, a move to a new house, your company merging with another, or even your favorite TV show going off the air.

On the other hand, *YOU* may be the change catalyst because you decided you want something different than the empty relationship or the unfulfilling job.

Either way, whenever change happens, you experience grief. Of course, the grief you feel will be very different if it involves the loss of a loved one vs. your favorite TV show being cancelled. And it's easier to manage if you initiated the change instead of having it thrust on you.

No matter how change happens, the one thing that is as constant as change itself, is the sense of loss. Loss is accompanied by grief. Grief has five stages: denial, anger, bargaining, depression and acceptance.

When it comes to dealing with change, it's safe to say that most women get stuck in one of the five stages of grief. The most common “stuck” places are anger and depression. Here's an example: You're angry over a divorce or losing your job. You bargain in your head, thinking, " maybe if I do this...or that...I can still keep my marriage together or hold onto my job." When that doesn't work, you get depressed. There is much research that supports the idea that depression is anger turned inward.

So what do you do? Stay angry for the rest of your life? Some women do. Or do you go into a depression that you don't get out of without medication? That happens a lot.

While change is constant and grief has its stages, in the middle of all that, you have some control. No matter what happens, you control your reaction to change.

Once you understand the stages of grief, and recognize where you are, you have a better shot at moving through the stage if you let go of the past and embrace the change. Of course, it's easy to do when you're reading it and not so easy when you're living it. But resisting the change doesn't do anything for you except make your makeover transition harder, maybe even more painful.

The faster you recognize, deal with and move through the stages of grief, the sooner you'll embrace that fact that your life has changed - and the faster you'll get to the good stuff.

So...what are you waiting for?

#8 – Find Your New Tribe

OK, so you aren't a native American. But you've heard it before – birds of a feather flock together. That's because they have something in common. A tribe, in today's culture, is the group of people you resonate with -

your birds of a feather. Your makeover will go much easier if you're with people who understand what your experiencing.

Between in-person groups and online groups, you have no excuse for not finding people with whom you can connect and share experiences. There are groups for the divorced, for the loss of a loved on, singles, new business owner, ballroom dancers, scuba divers, hikers...just about anything that you're feeling or anything want to do or learn, you can find a group.

When Regina went through a very nasty divorce, she joined a group at her church. It helped her connect with other people who were in the same kind of pain. Gradually she got more comfortable being by herself at social events. After a while, she remembered her love for dancing. So she joined a line dancing group at the local night school - no partner needed. She learned new dances and, from time to time, went out socially with the people she met at class. Little by little she found other dance groups and learned other dances. Finally she took ballroom lessons and found her passion. Last time I heard, though still single, Regina goes dancing a couple times a week, goes to ballroom dancing weekend workshops and even does an occasional "showcase" – all with partners who are happy to be with her.

You can find online groups easily with a few clicks. "Live" groups aren't much harder. If you're stuck for ideas, go to meetup.com. There you'll find hundreds of "tribes" and the places where they hang out. Research them...then GO and Enjoy!

#9 - Find a Coach or Accountability Partner

We all have good intentions when we set a goal. But, as the saying goes, the road to hell is paved with good intentions. That's why, especially in a makeover, you need someone who will hold you accountable to your commitments.

A coach is a good choice. There are different kinds of coaches. If you want to meet someone new, you can find a relationship coach. If you want to change your lifestyle, do something new or achieve a specific goal, find a life coach. Whatever change you want to make, a coach will help you do it.

Most coaches will do a baseline meeting to determine if you are a good match. Those first meetings are usually at no charge but the coach will talk about how much, how often, what you expect from the coach and what the coach expects from you.

If the cost is too much, or if you really just need to be accountable, find an accountability partner. S/he is someone you meet with regularly. You might meet weekly, every other week on just once a month. When you meet, you and your partner talk about what you've done since the last time you talked and what you are committing to do by the next time.

If you can find someone who is also working on a goal, the two of you can help each other. Or you can have a group of people who are all working on goals. As a group, you figure out the time, the frequency, the location and establish rules that you all agree to for participating in the group.

At the Victorious Woman Project, we have "[Victory Circles](http://victoriouswoman.com/victory-products/victory-circles/)" of six to eight women. The members help and challenge each other to their next victories. Most Victory Teams last anywhere from six months to a year. That's pretty common for accountability partners too. (Learn more about Victory Circles: <http://victoriouswoman.com/victory-products/victory-circles/>)

To get started, find one person who is interested in making some personal or professional change. Establish your ground rules and get started. You'll be amazed at what you get done!

#10 - The Power of Focus

A recent Victorious Woman survey indicated that distractions are a woman's biggest goal-achieving challenge. Not surprising - women are so used to multi-tasking and giving their time to help others, that they often get side-tracked.

But it's not just other people that create the distraction. Most women have many interests and talents. It's easy to pay attention to that "shiny penny over there" instead of focusing on that boring, tedious thing right in front of you. And that's how your life gets to feeling fractured and unproductive and lacking the satisfaction of purpose.

Fifteen years ago I joined a behavior modification program for weight loss. It became the focus of my life. My B-mod program and my work were the main things I worked on. I gave those two things about 80% of my attention, time and energy. The rest went to my relationship with Joseph. Over the course of twenty-four months I lost fifty pounds. I maintained that weight loss for over ten years.

Then my mom got older and needed progressively more care-giving. Though I'm one of four children, I felt more and more like I was the only child (maybe you know what I'm talking about!). I lost my PPF - personal positive focus.

When my mom died, and I got fully back to my work, my business felt like a hobby and I was twenty pounds heavier. Though I had no regrets for using my time the way I did, at the same time I had to start over - not what I anticipated at that stage of my career. And taking off twenty pounds in Mid-Life is not a piece of cake.

Still, difficult doesn't mean impossible. You can trust me and my experience when I tell you that you can only manage a challenge by staying laser focused on your end game.

In any Mid-Life Makeovers you get a second chance at life. But you **must** order your priorities, be crystal clear about what you want to do (your goals), how you'll do it (your strategy) and laser-focused on completing tasks. When you do, step-by-step, you turn your life around and experience the joy that a Mid-Life Makeover promises: *the life you love living*.

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**Annmarie Kelly and The Victorious Woman Project will help you with your Mid-Life Makeover. Find the latest teleseminars, webinars, workshops, and Victory Circles: <http://victoriouswoman.com/midlife-makeover/workshops/>**

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## About Annmarie Kelly



Annmarie Kelly has firsthand knowledge of the transformative power which determination & motivation can have in a person's life. While growing up in Havertown Pennsylvania, Annmarie was shy & introverted. She became a teacher at a local Catholic School and started to come out of her shell. She was engaged at twenty-two and was on course to follow a "traditional" life path. But a few months before the wedding, she broke off an engagement and started rethinking her life course. During that time, Annmarie realized she was following a path that could only lead to disappointments, regrets & lost opportunities. She made significant changes & her persistent efforts paid off. They enabled Annmarie to BE more, DO more & HAVE more of the kind of life that, on her old course, would only have been a dream. Now Annmarie helps other women do the same, helping them get inspired and empowered while building the skills they need to:

- handle adversity
- transform obstacles into opportunities
- achieve positive change both at home and at work, and
- become leaders in their lives, careers and communities.

With energy, empathy and a "yes, you can do it" attitude, Annmarie helps her audiences, readers, and clients find inspiration and direction and build skills so that they can shape their challenges into new beginnings...and fabulous victories.

Annmarie Kelly is the CEO of The Victorious Woman Project for women's empowerment and SkillBuilder Systems, focused on leadership and management development and communication skill-building. Annmarie is the author of three books: *Victorious Woman! Shaping Life's Challenges into Personal Victories*, *Victory by Design* and *Five Year Marriage* (2016), Host of the Friday Happy Hour on WCHE1520 in West Chester PA, founder of the annual Victorious Woman Writing Contest (October) and The Girlfriend Gala (May), a Literacy Hero nominee and has received the:

- ASTDPHL Leadership Award
- International Women's Day Outstanding Service Award
- President's Call to Service, awarded by President Barack Obama

Annmarie grew up in the Philadelphia suburbs living in Havertown, Aldan and Drexel Hill. As a kid and young adult, Annmarie enjoyed being "down the shore" in Wildwood, Avalon or Cape May, New Jersey. That's still where she goes for getaway weekends. But a part of her heart is always in Maine, where she and her spouse, Joseph, have been vacationing for the past twenty years. Annmarie is an avid Phillies fan and has been since her father first took her to a Phillies game when she was five years old. Since moving to Chester County in 1998, she's been active with the community, including supporting local charities through the annual Girlfriend Gala, held each year during May's Victorious Woman Month. She loves traveling, ballroom dancing and spending time with Joseph and her friends

To book Annmarie for a Keynote or an interview, call her at 610.738.8225, [Annmarie@AnnmarieKelly.com](mailto:Annmarie@AnnmarieKelly.com)

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