

Mid-life crisis



Mid-life Crisis: Mid-life crisis refers to the observed phenomenon of depression, low motivation and lack of purpose seen in the middle of adult lives. This crisis is seen by psychologists as a product of several factors, including complacency, boredom, hormonal changes and natural ageing process. This is especially more pronounced in men than women, as the former's social and family roles and responsibilities start to alter at mid-life. There is incentive for both psychologists and the general public to understand this phenomenon, as it affects a sizeable portion of any given population. Lifestyles adopted by people, especially in modern urban centers, as well as sedentary working styles are also said to contribute to the onset of mid-life crisis. Stress, either work related or due to strained relationships, also plays a role. (Bishop, 1999, p. 417) In popular culture, mid-life crisis is often associated with break-up of relationships, divorces, etc, especially when it happens between long-term partners. The usual age range for the onset of the crisis is 35 to 50. Identifying the crisis can be a challenging task for physicians or affected individuals, for there are usually no definite symptoms to look for. The manifestation of the crisis can be rather vague, such as sleep disturbances, excessive drinking, lack of intimacy with partner, loss of interest in work, etc. Author Karsten Siebert gives us a glimpse of what mid-life crisis entails through the hypothetical case of Frank. The following is Frank's case, which is typical of the phenomenon. " Frank, a 35 year old Caucasian male was referred to counseling by his primary care physician who, after an appropriate investigation, could not fully explain Frank's multiple complaints as a general medical condition or the effects of substance abuse. Frank has a history of many physical complaints, including head, back and joint pains that have

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worsened over the last several years. Most troublesome to Frank, though, are the sleep disturbances he is currently experiencing. He has difficulty falling or staying asleep, reports restless unsatisfying sleep and early termination of his sleep, often paired with the inability to return to sleep, sometimes after several awakenings. As a result, Frank is easily fatigued and experiences difficulties concentrating at work. While "a few cocktails at night" usually helps him to fall asleep, Frank is concerned that his alcohol consumption may be getting out of hand." (Siebert, 2007, p. 5) In popular culture, mid-life crisis is discussed in society pages, usually discussing the personal lives of celebrities. Of the spate of high-profile Hollywood break-ups that happen each year, a fair number are attributed to mid-life crisis of one or both partners. In such cases, the break-up is the result of deep-seated discontentment within oneself, as opposed to external factors, events and situations. (Ebony, 2001, p. 36) While mid-life crisis has the potential to lead to clinical depression, it usually dissipates with time. A change in career path or a daily exercise routine or practicing meditation are all suggested by psychologists as suitable remedies for coming out of the crisis. In other words, adopting a healthy lifestyle along with developing a spiritual side helps break out of the rut. (South Wales Echo, 2009, p. 16) Similarly, taking a philosophical approach to dealing with the ageing body is also helpful. In my case, if I were to face mid-life crisis, I would work on changing my perspective of the problem and try to see it as an opportunity for development and change. I would take the onset of the crisis as a cue for improvements in lifestyle and spirituality. References Are You Going through a Mid-Life Crisis? Join Mr Obama on Air Force. (2009, April 4). South Wales Echo (Cardiff, Wales), p. 16. Bishop, P. (1999). The Birth of Analytical

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