

*Craig Nathanson is the author of P Is For Perfect: Your Perfect Vocational Day and a coaching expert who works with people over forty. Visit Craig's online community at thevocationalcoach.com. Call Craig at 707.775.4020 or email craigthevocationalcoach.com*

# GUEST COLUMNIST

## The Top 10 FATAL mistakes people make after age 40!

by Craig Nathanson

### Mistake # 1: Doing work that brings no joy or happiness

Who made up the rule that says work should bring misery. Go ahead and add up the hours of "work" left in your life. Calculate up to the day you stop breathing, not the day you retire. A big number, isn't it? Now, how will you spend those hours? The choice is yours.

### Mistake #2: Doing work that does not align your abilities and your interests

This is huge. Think about it. If your work does not include an alignment of your abilities and your interests, no wonder you feel burned out. Better to be interested in something that you don't have abilities in than to work a lifetime at activities you are good at but have no interest in.

### Mistake #3: Working for someone else

When you are working just to pay the bills or to support your family or to please your spouse or your parents, you are dying a slow death. Just like the frog in the slowly heating pot, you won't notice at first. Of course you love your family and want to help them. After 40, you have served society's calling. Now it is your turn to finally do what you love and enlist those around you for support. If you don't, the pot will boil over before right before your eyes.

### Mistake # 4: Staying in work that is empty and without meaning out of fear

Many of us fear what might happen if we take a chance. I suggest you instead look at what you have at stake if you don't change. Your life!

I can guarantee you won't die or become homeless if you follow your passion and figure out now how to do what you love. I can also guarantee, that you will live an empty

life without happiness if you continue to spend 8 to 10 hours a day at just a job. And your unhappiness will affect everyone around you.

### Mistake # 5: Staying in a job JUST for the money and the perks and the title

Many people do this. The money is nice. It enables us to buy stuff and stay out of debt. The free coffee or laundry or discount coupons - or the big office with real wood - makes us feel important. The title, of course, helps us tell people what we do.

The problem with this strategy is we avoid becoming self-aware and knowing WHO we are. When we find out, it's a much better story.

### Mistake #6: Working in a job that does not align with what is most important to you

What is most important to you in your life? Is it your work? The bigger the gap between your daily activity and what is most important to you,

the greater the opportunity for emptiness, a quick death or even worse, RETIREMENT.

### Mistake #7: Waiting for permission

Those who wait for permission to change and do the work they love will have a long wait. Permission must come from within you. It is not easy but it is the only way to an authentic life.

### Mistake #8: Becoming comfortable but not happy at work

You know the signs. You know exactly when the boss's report is due each week. The biggest things you look forward to are Friday night or the Christmas bonus. Deep inside however, you know you are fooling everyone but yourself. The first step towards change is acknowledging the inner signal and doing something about it.

### Mistake #9: Waiting for retirement to be happy


So much can happen between now and retirement - and it will. The ONLY people who retire (get ready to die) are people who don't love their work. Want to slow down the aging process? Do what you love now!

### Mistake #10: Deciding to pursue happiness outside of work

I hear this one all the time. The problem with this strategy is that your quality of life declines. Eight to ten hours of working in an empty job, or worse, an empty career, leaves you with very little energy left over for anything fun.

The other day someone asked me how often I worked, and for how many hours. It was such a strange question for me. I didn't know what to say. It was like asking me, how often do I breathe? Years ago, I did give a numerical answer, but not anymore.

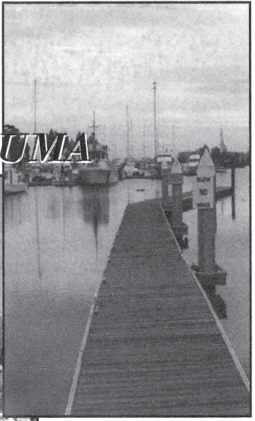
So how about you? Are you working? Or are you breathing life and all that it has to offer?



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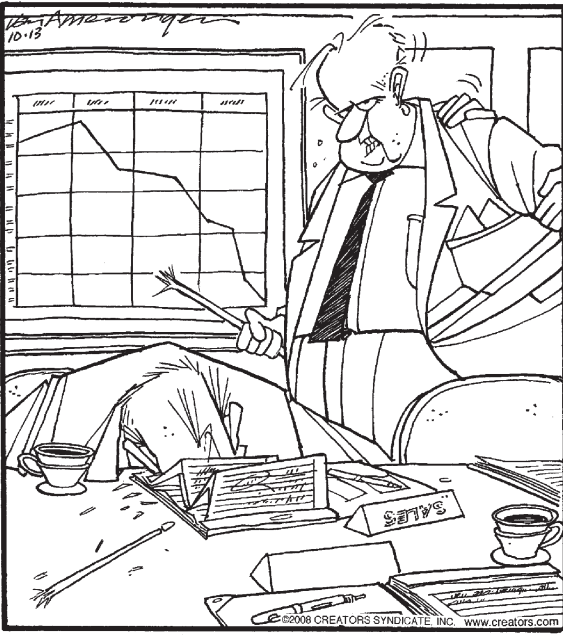
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by Jerry Van Amerongen



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