



# Future Works INSTITUTE

Creating Greater Tomorrows...Today™

Karen Sands, MCC  
Master Coach,  
Futurist &  
Career Strategist

Making  
Futures  
Great™



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## Rock On To Your Greater Future<sup>SM</sup> Easy Principles for Living in Your Groove<sup>SM</sup>

**March, 2009 Principle**  
*Power is in the Now!*

### In This Issue

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## A Note From Karen

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Will you still feed me  
When I'm sixty-four?*

~Beatles: When I'm 64

### Future Factoid

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**2009 Theme:**  
**Reinvention for the**  
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**June 6, 2009**  
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**New Morning &**  
**Woodbury Library**  
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**Friday July 17, 2009**  
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**In a Hurry?**  
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**March, 2009**  
Vol.V, Issue 03  
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birthday was a great reason to party hard. Catching up. Telling stories. Just being and having fun. [Click to see photos more...](#)

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## FEATURE

### Should I Stay or Should I Go?

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As the future gets closer, I'm accepting the fact that my old future doesn't work anymore. So to hell with that future. What about now? The work of midlife begins with this question.

But it doesn't stop here. Each of us will confront this question several times in the years ahead.

Which is why **Power is in the Now!** We can harvest opportunity from crisis, but first we have to take a step back and do some ruthless soul-searching: How did this happen? How did I get here? Where am I headed and is it still where I want to end up? Doing so will engage us from the depths as it takes courage and demands transparency. It's the only way to regain our own audacity of hope. [more...](#)

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### Karen Recommends

For those of us seeking the secrets to being forever young and rockin' into your later years--I highly recommend a film called – *Young At Heart* -- it'll make you laugh while bringing tears to your eyes.

*Meaning*, a recent film release by Wayne Dyer brings us back to our spiritual center as we journey to our own true north in mid life.

In the March 13th issue of *The Week*, I was blown away by an article entitled: "Wine, women - and cancer" which described the findings of a "...new Oxford University study of 1.3 million British women which found that even moderate intake of wine, beer, or any kind of alcohol significantly increased their likelihood of getting breast, liver and colon cancer. " So much for a daily clicking of wine glasses with the guys to ensure cardiovascular health.

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### Tools, Tips & How-To's

Here's two simple exercises to kick off your exploration so you can determine when to stay and when to leave: [more...](#)

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**WHO DO YOU KNOW THAT  
NEEDS TO READ THIS?**  
Share it with friends, family  
and associates by simply  
clicking "Forward" in your  
email program.

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## Widening the Circle

When you look forward to the unfolding of 2009, are you able to say that you will find the Power in the NOW? What are you doing to make your future rock?

Please share your responses.

To provide us with an opportunity to really address important issues that we are all facing, your input on what is relevant and timely matters. If you'd like to engage in this dialogue please email me with topics or questions you'd like addressed.

I also invite you to get some "real time" with me and your elite cohorts on one of my complimentary teleseminars and upcoming weekly Future Works® Network Member Meetings.

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## Are you a Change Agent?

**Innovation is the hallmark of our generation. We are called to be masters of reinvention in creating today's new paradigm.**

Future Works Institute is researching the critical strategies for catalyzing change and welcomes your stories and strategies for creating positive futures.

Go to the [Research Info](#) page.



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Like so many of us right now, our family's future is morphing rapid-fire. So we decided to stay close to home to celebrate my 65th. Considering we are all being bombarded with "doom & gloom" messages, my birthday was a great reason to party hard. Catching up. Telling stories. Just being and having fun. [Click to see PHOTOS](#)

Caught in a momentary time warp, I find myself outside looking in. Here we are my dearest and nearest celebrating me for still Rockin' On! I soak in the vibes. Their gift to me is that we shared this moment in time.

In a Twilight Zone altered reality, I realize that all of us at this very moment are sitting on the edge of our seats facing the same uncertain reality ahead. Every one of us finds ourselves at the mercy of a "Black Swan" epochal change. (Coined by author Nassim Nicholas Taleb, "Black Swan" refers to events and circumstances that fall outside the realm of our expectations.) Who ever imagined there was anything but white swans?!

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Unprepared for the unpredictable, we wait on the precipice to see what's next.

Startled back into real time, I hear one of my friends ask me, "What are you hearing out there? What are your clients saying?"

I reply without skipping a beat: Staying rock solid is certainly top of mind today. Everyone has been impacted by our fall from grace. Keeping jobs, doing whatever it takes to stay in business or finding new careers is at the top of the list for most. Decibels louder than ever before, I'm hearing one piercing life question repeatedly from more and more folks these days: **Should I stay or should I leave?**

Let these words guide you as they do me:

*Remember: You will have many stages of life, each a chance to re-invent yourself and contribute to the world in a different way. It's through these experiences that you will learn how to excel in a rapidly changing world.*

~Nietzsche

May your renewal be deep and sustainable. Let's rock on.

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P.S. Please visit my re-launched website to explore what's new for YOU at [FutureWorksInstitute.com](http://FutureWorksInstitute.com)

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## FEATURE Should I Stay or Should I Go?

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As the future gets closer, I'm accepting the fact that my old future doesn't work anymore. So to hell with that future. What about now? The work of midlife begins with this question.

But it doesn't stop here. Each of us will confront this question several times in the years ahead.

Which is why **Power is in the Now!** We can harvest opportunity from crisis, but first we have to take a step back and do some ruthless soul-searching: How did this happen? How did I get here? Where am I headed and is it still where I want to end up? Doing so will engage us from the depths as it takes courage and demands transparency. It's the only way to regain our own audacity of hope.

Many of us are caught in shock-- with despairing paralysis threatening from the sidelines. Some of us are hiding out in isolation, either licking our wounds or processing, not sure what to do next. Others are gestating and concocting.

As with any maturation curve, as one phase winds out, another is already in progress. Knowing when to leap from one to the other will determine your trajectory.

For many of us, our midlife malaise is colliding with our new reality. In the midst of a mid-life identity crisis we are being forced to ask some hard, fundamental questions and to re-examine who we are and where we best fit. (Midlife crisis can come at any time, even more than once -- from age 35 – 70, give or take a year or two!). Don't be lulled into "mission drift" cause mid-career turns into late-career really fast.

This intense exploration isn't only career –related. Every facet of our life

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comes under scrutiny: from the bedroom to the boardroom. What we thought we wanted or needed is changing, either because we are up against a wall or because we are choosing to get ahead of the curve of change. And, just when we think we have “it”, it will morph yet again.

The unfortunate truth is that most of us choose unhappiness over uncertainty. But nothing is certain except death, so embrace uncertainty and make it work for you.

It's still too dicey to place bets on when our current economic woes will be over. So we have no choice but to redesign our “now” and renegotiate everything.

Most of all we need to take a breath and get here now! Soon enough our “now” will be past-tense.

This is a time for great reflection and truth-telling. Some of us, like my husband and I, are getting “real”. No longer just talking about it, or getting stuck in fantasies of our youth, we are making hard choices and sacrifices so we can Keep on Keepin' On. We are not alone in our search for meaningful futures that work.

## Future Factoid

**Ninety percent of mid-lifers are Boomers.**

### Easiest way to beat the market

Jackie is a perfect example. She's not only a young Boomer, age 42, but also smack in mid-career. Not quite a Senior Partner, but well past being Junior. When we met, she was at a real low point. She had just divorced and was thankful no kids were involved. Work was just that, work. Being a traveling executive, she'd find ways to slip below the radar, just getting by. But it just wasn't good enough any longer. Totally bored and burnt, she was getting nowhere fast. Only happy on the tennis court or partying into oblivion on the weekends, it was time for a major revamping. She wanted a life and a career that mattered.

We concocted a plan that honored her desire to move on while doing a thorough inventory assessment of which skills she still needed to hone before taking off. Our goal was to leverage this time with her current firm, so she could leave with accolades and a resume that would jump off the page. We never lost sight of where Jackie is headed. Once she realized that she didn't have to stay forever, her productivity went off the charts. Now even in this severe downturn, she is “THE Wo”man”, keeping business on the books and opening up new doors she never thought possible. By the time we enter 2010, Jackie will be well into her next trajectory.

Jimmy at 54 is a super star always in overdrive, but stuck in the shadows of his Boss. Being the firm's workhorse, he runs the place but gets none of the benefits or recognition he deserves. Now's not the time to leave for greener pastures as we had planned. The current economic

downturn would make changing firms a dangerous move at this time. But not to worry, we are using this time to get him “known” and out from the shadows. Watch out world, Jimmy is about to hit his stride.

Now is the time... Do you know which it is it for YOU?... Unhappiness or Uncertainty?

Working the **Power in the Now** may mean staying on or it might mean taking the grand leap into the unknown. Best you gauge your tolerance level for the uncertain. Do you know that most people choose unhappiness over uncertainty. Which is it for you?

Risk-taking in these times is not for the faint-hearted. But for those at the helm or for those who have an in-demand specialty...and even for those still singing the blues cause they can't get any satisfaction, this may be your time to rock on out.

Get ready. Get set! ....

Since it's no longer a sure thing that tomorrow will be better than today, isn't it time to harness your promise and redirect your energies so you can honestly answer: **Should I Stay or Should I Go?**

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## Tools, Tips & How-To's

Here's two simple exercises to kick off your exploration so you can determine when to stay and when to leave:

### Exercise #1

Do these in sequence, and take your time!

- 1) Define the challenges ahead
- 2) Select one challenge to address
- 3) Use Foresight to create possible scenarios
- 4) Select the scenario that most appeals and design a plan of action
- 5) Test, test and then test some more.

### Exercise #2

Reflect on these questions:

- 1) What is the best thing that could happen if you go or if you stay?
- 2) What is the worst thing that could happen if you go or if you stay?
- 3) Will you be okay with all those possible outcomes?
- 4) Will those that matter to you most be okay with these outcomes?
- 5) What sacrifices will be made and by whom?
- 6) Are you okay with making these sacrifices?
- 7) What can you do to soften the impact?

Words to remember:

*Yes, risk taking is inherently failure-prone. Otherwise, it would be called sure-thing-taking.*

~ Jim McMahon

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