

THE INTERVAL



"**The Interval**" is an interesting topic of discussion. Formerly referred to over the ages as "The Midlife Crisis", "The Frantic Forties", "The Transition" and the "Red Sports Car", it continues to rear its ugly little head even when we spend thousands of dollars trying to become aware so that we may be spared of the uncertainty that manifests in our chattering mind during this time. The truth is it starts at age 35 and ends at 42, just like clockwork. Periodically we may experience a slightly longer or shorter version just like in pregnancy but the reality is, Mother Nature is in charge when it comes to THE INTERVAL. The only control that you have is in developing an understanding of it. And the good news is if you don't develop an understanding of it, life will wake you up anyway once it passes. It is a

gestation period. Whether you liken it to a caterpillar gradually experiencing greater degrees of confinement in a cocoon winding tighter as time progresses or carrying a fetus until such time you experience the labor of birth, both reference becoming more uncomfortable as the end of your new beginning nears.

One of the injustices that man has imposed upon himself since first beginning to speak, is the notion that he or she is an adult at or around 21. The reality is, he is mature, he is in perfect bloom, he is full term and brand new, he is fully assembled and road worthy. He is not an adult. He does not KNOW HIMSELF. Adult implies that he is ready, well-equipped to make intelligent choices while existing in an ignorant world. This is like trying to see clearly underwater in a muddy lake. Intelligence requires self-knowledge beyond likes and dislikes. If one enters THE INTERVAL slimed by life, it is likely that a great deal of disillusionment, hardship and even self-destruction will take place. It's important that one try to remain clear-headed during this time. Marriages frequently fall apart (80%) and children are left to suffer the effects of it all. Some remarry and others simply leave town looking for something outside of themselves. Careers begin to have a lack luster appeal and many often feel trapped by their own vain imaginings. Some feel sorry for themselves and others fear the sky is about to cave in on top of them. Nothing is as it seems during this time. Knowing that this is completely natural and that one's energy is likely to diminish, and

life appears to be pedestrian, routine and annoyingly repetitive, it's vital that intelligence prevail and you not throw the baby out with bath water.

The life you have created up until this point has been a co-operative effort and even though it may feel like you are on the escalator to nowhere, you will arrive at a new destination and you will be pleasantly surprised. Back in the day when marriages lasted for 50 and 60 years, there was little to distract one from merely surviving. The bonds that formed in marriages and in the family institution were strong because they saw and intermingled with each other daily. Prior to that era women died during this interval because at age 39, which represents the eye of the hurricane, many would get pregnant for the last time and their bodies could not take it given the demands of a pioneer lifestyle. Consequently, the men that remained behind experienced change. And change is what this interval is all about. There is no other interval like it. It changes YOU forever and the people in your life. If you are wise and intelligent enough to hang onto the baby while making efforts to clean the water then that which lies on other side will be paradise. If you choose to throw the baby out, you will be faced with loneliness, intermittent friendships, hidden guilt and having to reinvent yourself. It's a very selfish time and most of us just don't know how to handle it. The voices in our head are louder than usual and the discontent and sensitivity to all that was once familiar (people we loved, places we call home and once favorite pastimes) all become close to intolerable. We are not feeling like the same person. We are essentially a trapped caterpillar inside an ill-fitting sleeping bag.

In spite of the fact that it may feel like suffocating or being held prisoner in our world, it's vital we not discard anything or anyone during this time. Infidelity and hair brained schemes will pound upon your door. Should you decide to open the door, there will be consequences that will impact every moment of your existence from that point on. Total peace becomes a long way off and self-discovery introduces new painful realities of life that otherwise would never have come about. As age 40 commences, our thought processes become more refined providing we haven't fallen prey to drugs or alcohol trying to sedate the voices in our head. This means common sense begins to whisper in our ear as a new sense of reality begins to manifest. New opportunities that before never seemed possible show up in your life and eventually, life as you know it, is changing rapidly.

At age 42, you get to catch your breath, rest, recover and heal from the trauma that was imposed NATURALLY upon you during this time, regardless of whether you chose to wait it out or not. It is a birthing process. This survival brings about a great gift. This gift is ADULTHOOD. It is not until we reach 43 that we can truly call ourselves an adult. In fact, many of us stay in denial right up until our 43rd birthday. But just like the sun rising, so does our welcoming of adulthood as we begin to viscerally understand we only have one body and one life in this lifetime and that making history with someone requires total commitment. IN absolute TRUTH you wake up to a new YOU and become as aware as you are clean. If you are in this interval, know that it is only

temporary. Do not discard, dismiss or degrade anyone or anything during this time. Stay calm, stay clear and stay true to yourself in knowing that change is taking place and you are to do nothing but lie still in the cocoon until such time Mother Nature urges you to emerge and fly. Remember, "it is not a straight-jacket" but just another womb. Those that feel confined and emerge prematurely suffer greatly in the days that follow. Don't fight it or blame others for your discontent. You have to fake it till you make it. I call it the bridge of pretending.

For the most part, the human being is an interesting creature. It operates in three modes...Intelligent, Ignorant and Pretend. When it takes good care of itself, it exhibits signs of intelligence and when self-maintenance is overlooked, it begins to exhibit symptoms of ignorance. Unfortunately, we live in a fairly toxic world even in the most remote pristine areas of human existence. Consequently, the ability to maintain an intelligent presentation is almost impossible thus, we have created a third method of performance called Pretending. We do this to keep moving forward and to manage our physical energy wisely. We are in the Pretend Mode every time we pretend we like something when in truth, we don't. How many times have you pretended to enjoy a meal, an activity or an event when in fact in you didn't care for any of it? The reasons for not being honest is multi-faceted but truthfully it boils down to remaining energy efficient. Very few people are privileged to live in a world of constant intelligence simply because ignorance permeates every fiber of our environment. Words of ignorance are often woven with threads of disease and

ill intent. We find ourselves manipulative, intimidating, negligent, and self-absorbed almost daily. Pretending is choosing the middle road, mediocrity and being average in a world where few have respect for intelligence. Intelligence is not "being book smart". It is knowing how to stay clean in a dirty world. It's understanding the significance of bringing yourself to center daily and the role that meditation, taking long quiet walks and singing in the rain have to offer. Journaling, jogging, and making faces out of the clouds as you lay down on a blanket of grass, are all methods of bathing one's self. We have to do those things that maintain the integrity of our being. It's a dirty world out there and if you don't know how to dust yourself off regularly, you'll become a proponent of toxicity and contribute only disease to this lifetime. The interval is when our immune system becomes most vulnerable in terms of making intelligent choices. It is very easy to subscribe to ignorance simply because we no longer have a clear view. Mother Nature wants us to be still and discover our self but society and family demand our presence as usual. This requires that we stand strong in our mode of pretend until such time nature allows to proceed with a more enlightened understanding of life and how it really works.

Life in this interval has you restless, unhappy, and making excuses for why things are no longer satisfying. If you feel trapped and stifled by the very lifestyle you have helped to co-create, then you must begin to seek ways to calm your anxiety and distract your thoughts. Tell yourself, "This is only temporary" and that "I can choose to love and be happy today" or "I can choose to embrace those who love me deeply."

Be in the moment. Live only for today and not a minute longer. Do not look at tomorrow for a single second and do not look over the fence at how much greener your neighbor's grass is in comparison to yours. Your ability to judge during this time is veiled by nature's cocoon. Use this time to explore and expand your own inner understanding of what you are about to become and how you can be the best you can be. Should you take this advice, the rewards that come on the other side of this interval are many and most importantly offer a history of commitment and love. Be strong enough to endure the insanity of this growth period. Growing pains make us incredibly uncomfortable in our own skin.

Don't give up the history you have created with another, you lose a part of yourself when you make this choice. Stay whole, stay true. Focus on being love rather than being in love. Love is the oxygen of life. It will keep you in check during this very natural and temporary time of life. There's a lot to be said for, "And this too shall pass" because it is absolutely TRUE!

The majority of all divorces occur during the interval of 34-43 years of age.

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