

In this interview, Tim Crowden answers the statement of people who say “I never want to retire!”

If you are shouting in the face of a long career ‘I never want to retire!’ The great news is, regardless of how you got to this point, you don’t have to because you now have the unique opportunity to create the work you really want.

Here are some questions to help you clarify your thinking.

Many paths lead to retirement from redundancy to illness or a life-changing event. Sometimes it’s planned, sometimes it’s forced. Sometimes it feels like an arbitrary point in life set by the tongues of superannuation funds or government retirement ages.

However, given that these days 25% of people who are 65 years old will live to 90, retirement in your 60’s seems crazy. That’s 35 years of retirement which is a long time to resort the shed, paint the kitchen, go shopping and look at your partner at lunch.

Career advice for 50+ career

When someone comes to me for career coaching around retirement age I like to ask them to do a little visualisation on what the work they really want to do and it goes like this:

‘What if your work in the second half of life will be combined with a continued income and have greater personal meaning and greater social impact?’

‘I want you to visualise your favourite rock concert or favourite musical performance. That one where you really let your hair down and were transported by the music. You hear the last song and watch as the curtains are drawn. The applause is rousing and cheering the artist on to come back.

Then after the while, the curtains reopen and the music starts again! and even though it’s only for three or four songs, they are the best songs - the best part of the performance. The musicians are more relaxed, they know their audience after engaging with them and are enjoying the performance much more. They get to play.

To me, this captures the idea of what is possible post-retirement. It’s the encore career where you take everything you’ve learned from the first part and bring it into this nice little burst in the second part where it is far more enjoyable.

5 great things about the encore career

1. It allows you to follow your energy and your interests and your values.

2. You get to use your wealth of skills and experience you've built over your lifetime.
3. They are exciting and personally rewarding.
4. They can be more financially rewarding.
5. They are usually successful.

There is also so much support and structure for making and creating a career that you really want regardless of the stage you are at.

- You can work at home or almost anywhere else.
- You can enjoy flexible hours.
- You can gain professional development and learn just about everything from the comfort of your home, at anytime of the day.
- You can now access technology that makes jobs so much easier and you don't have to be 'tech-savvy' to embrace it.
- Time is actually on your side. Thanks to your previous work history, you do have knowledge and skills and networks that can open doors to roles not usually available to younger people like mentoring or board positions.

What makes this next stage exciting is the hindsight, foresight and insight on your side. You know what your capacity is and when you combine it with that thing that transcends you like music, you start to see possibility in things you never thought you would do.

- Run a small business
- Work from home or online
- Be a mentor to someone
- Start a side hustle or five
- Become a consultant of your industry
- Work overseas.

This, in turn, gives you new skills, growth, renewal and energy.

Remember, like everything, success takes time

There was some research done in 2011 out of the US around people who were interested in encore careers. On average, they started to think about the encore career at age 50 and took about 18 months to make the transition. In my coaching, I've also seen this to be true.

Creating your next career might require an indirect path. A client of mine for example, who was retired, not thinking about the encore career at all, had to do a little job in between to get their next career going. And everyone who starts a business knows it takes a little while to get going - but then suddenly it all kicks off.

Final word

Retirement can be a really interesting and exciting phase. Get connected with your hindsight, your foresight and your insight - and the career that is music to your ears.