

Forty Ways

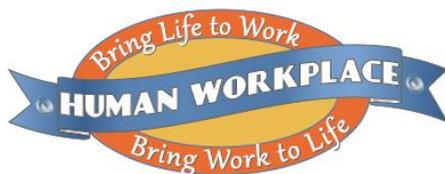
to Get Unstuck, Careerwise

A tool for people:

- at a crossroads
- in transition
- newly out of school
- rejoining the workforce
- considering entrepreneurship, or
- frustrated in their careers



by Liz Ryan, CEO & founder
Human Workplace
www.humanworkplace.com



Denver Post Reinvention Series

Part One: Forty Ways to Get Unstuck Careerwise
1.20.2013

Being Stuck is the Worst!

Nearly everyone has been stuck at some point or other. When we aren't sure what to do next, it's a big deal.

It's frustrating.

It's confusing.

It's lonely!

Everyone else around us seems to know what to do, where to go every day and how to get on with their lives. We might think,

“How come I don't know what to do next?”

HERE'S THE MEMO ABOUT THAT:

Being stuck is normal, and it happens to everyone!

We leave one situation (a long-term job, or college, or a period when we were at home raising kids, for instance) and we're not sure what to do next. We're leaving one identity and stepping into a new one. Of course it's hard to do that!

Just because change is good for us doesn't mean it's easy.

You are going to get unstuck before long. You are going to come through this change even stronger than you were before, with new muscles and mojo.

In this new-millennium working world, we need muscles and mojo more than anything else!

Being Stuck is a Step on your Path

Being stuck is one of the steps on the way to growing those muscles and that mojo. It's not always the most fun part of the deal, but it's important!

Being stuck isn't your fault, and it doesn't mean there's anything wrong with you!

Being stuck means you're GROWING OUT OF AN OLD SKIN.

Don't Panic!

New-Millennium Career Tools

This EBook is the first in a series of tools the Denver Post is sharing with readers to help them navigate career and workplace situations.

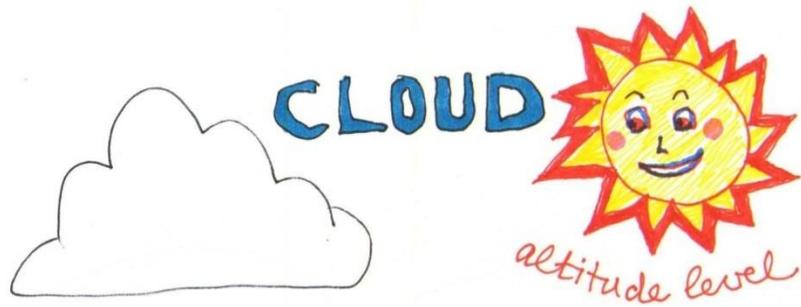
Do you know why the Denver Post produced this series of Reinvention tools and EBooks? They did it because they know that it's hard to find a job or figure out what you should be doing career-wise. They know that career topics can be really confusing. So, they asked me to create a series of EBooks and tools like this one to help people get where they want to go in their careers.

Hurrah! How awesome is that?

The Mojo Drop

When you are shedding one skin and getting a new, fresh one, it can be pretty uncomfortable. The most normal thing in the world is for your mojo --- your energy and spark and humor and emotional fuel – to disappear, fast. Then you might think, “Oh, I won't find a job” or “I can't make the career change I want after all, I'm too old” or something else that's negative about yourself.

When the Mojo Drops



When your mojo drops, you don't have the energy you're used to having and it's hard to come up with ideas for getting unstuck. That's awful enough, but on top of all that you might start to think, "Oh, I'm not that smart" or "Why did I think I could accomplish [whatever]?" That's the **mojo drop** talking!

When our mojo falls out of the picture, we forget that we have ever accomplished anything! We can think we're big losers. That's ridiculous.

Your mojo will come back.

It could take a little while, if you went through a really tough thing, like if one day you went to work and your job was gone, or something else that was brutal. You have to be patient with yourself. Losing a job is a big deal, and so is thinking about career change or re-entering the workforce. If you're on the fence about starting a business, a big daunting (scary) project, you might get stuck on that. If you've been in the same career path for a long time and it's starting to feel like an old snakeskin that really needs to fall off, you might get stuck as you think about career reinvention.

Who could blame you for getting stuck?

Even if you had a wonderful high school or college graduation and a huge party and you're totally excited about the next phase of your life, that doesn't mean you don't have stress and worry about the transition!

It is okay to be uncertain and confused. I mean, you're a human being, right?

(Please say yes.)

Of course you have human feelings. It would be alarming if you didn't.

Forty Ways to Get Unstuck

Did you think I forgot about the forty ways to get unstuck ? You might have figured I forgot all about that while I was talking about mojo and snakeskin and who knows what.

No way. I had the forty ways to get unstuck thing in my mind the whole time. I just didn't want to spring it on you too soon.

If you're in reinvention mode, you're going to experience a progression of steps. Right now, you might feel really stuck, cranky, not-sure-how-to-proceed, confused or desperate. That's the phase of reinvention I call The Desert.

The Desert is a pretty gnarly stage of the reinvention process, but amazingly, it's the Desert (where your theme song might be "I don't know, for Pete's sake! Don't ask me what I'm going to do next!") that gives us nearly all the ideas and inspiration we need for the next phase, where we start to find our feet under us and find our voice and walk into our new identity. This yucky Desert phase is where all the new ideas come in – **because for once in our lives, we don't have all the answers!**

How Do I Get My Mojo Back?

Believe it or not – and since you’ve read this far, I’m going to lean on our new friendship and ask you to trust me on this – your mojo doesn’t come back all of a sudden just because you say “Problem solved! I’m going to go to school for a certification in XYZ” or whatever you might be thinking about doing, making a quick move just to get out of the Desert where you have no idea how to proceed.

You know the old saying: you can’t fool Mother Nature. If you’re in reinvention mode, just saying “Well, I’ll take Path X” or “I’ll go back to school, and that’ll solve everything” won’t work out very well. At least, that has been my experience working with thousands of people in job-search and transition mode over the years. Reinvention has its own timeline. We can try to rush through it, but we are not calling the shots.

Your mojo comes back when you start to trust your gut (your instinct and your heart) and start to find your voice.

It comes back when you try things. It comes back when you step out on a limb and go after something that is important to you.

That is the message of this EBook, more than anything: please listen to your instincts. You know you have something to offer the world and any company or organization that will be fortunate enough to employ you. You know you bring employers and clients something fantastic. In a mojo-depleted state, you might not feel all that wonderful or valuable. But you are, I guarantee.

Forty Ways to Get Unstuck

Don't think that you have to find a quick answer to the question "What do I do now?" The answer is more likely to emerge on its own than for you to force it.

Instead of trying to solve the puzzle called **What Do I Do With My Life?** in your head, try some of these forty activities and ideas to start your brain and heart moving in the direction of your next career move.

How to Use the Forty Ways to Get Unstuck Tool

Here's how to use the **Forty Ways to Get Unstuck** tool to fill your mojo fuel tank up again:

1. Write about the 'stuck' place you're in now. (There are lines for you to write on, on the next page.)
2. Later, you'll re-read what you wrote today about feeling stuck, and you'll think "Man! That was bad. Things are much clearer and easier now." You'll see how you came through the Desert brilliantly, shed your old skin and slipped into an amazing new one. Hurrah for you! I see you in that place, already.
3. After you've written about being stuck now, look over the **Forty Ways to Get Unstuck** tool. Glance around at the forty ideas and let your mind wander.
4. Choose a few of the **Forty Ways to Get Unstuck** ideas that appeal to you. Write them down on the exercise below the 40 Ways to Get Unstuck drawing.
5. Try your first 4-6 getting unstuck ideas in the week after you read this EBook. What do you think? Are you feeling a little less stuck yet?
6. Jump over to the Human Workplace blog at <http://www.humanworkplace.com/blog> and leave a comment to let us know what you think of the Forty Ways to Get Unstuck tool and EBook. We can't wait to hear from you!

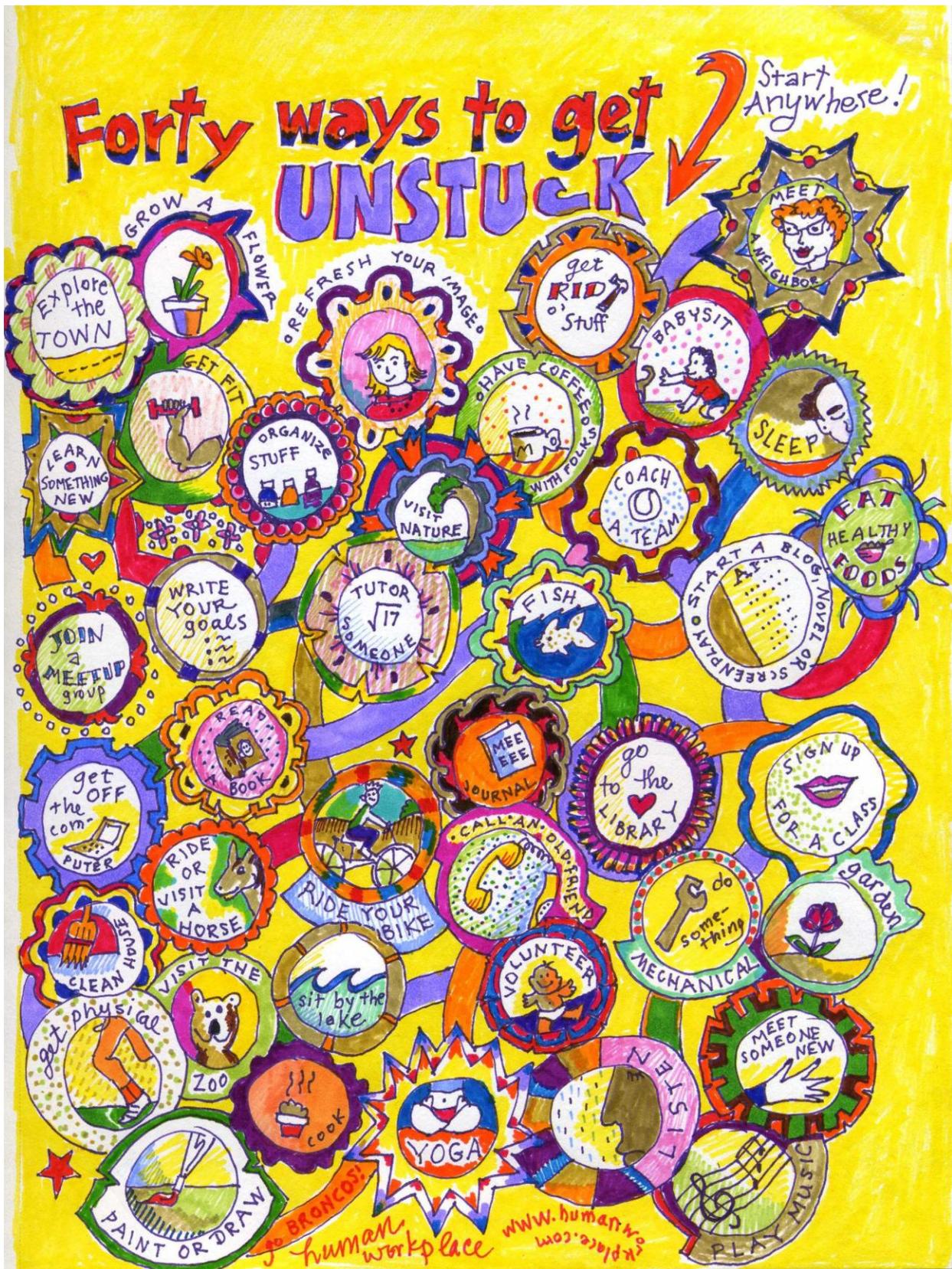
Keep reading the Denver Post to get more downloadable tools and EBooks like this one, to help you navigate your new-millennium career.

Let's start! Let's write about what feels stuck, first:

Here's what I feel stuck about:

Here's an example:

I feel stuck about what to do next in my career. I was a nurse for eighteen years and then I stopped working to take care of a family member. Now I don't know whether to go back into nursing or try something new. Trying something new feels very scary since I don't have experience in anything else, except for nursing.



Forty Ways to Get Unstuck, Careerwise Author: Liz Ryan, CEO & founder, Human Workplace
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From the Forty Ways to Get Unstuck tool, which ideas for getting unstuck seem like the best ones for you to try first? Write them here!

Now what?

Try some of your favorite 40 Ways to Get Unstuck this week. You can use the list you wrote (just above this paragraph) as a starting point. You could try one of the getting-unstuck ideas today! Try a few of them and see which activities help you open up some space for reinvention.

HURRAH for you!

Great job!

WHO WE ARE

Human Workplace is a think tank, online community & consulting firm. Our mission is to reinvent work for humans, and to put a human voice into business and career education.



Liz Ryan is CEO and founder of Human Workplace. Liz is a former Fortune 500 HR executive and one of the country's most widely-read and well-respected career, workplace and branding authorities. Liz's columns for Kiplinger's Finance, Business Week, TIME.com, the Harvard Business Review, Yahoo!, the Denver Post and the Huffington Post reach 30 million readers per month. Liz leads the popular Northwestern University webinar series "Your Journey, Your Career with Liz Ryan" and teaches career strategy and branding at the Leeds School of Business at CU-Boulder. She's an opera singer, lives in Boulder with her husband Michael and has five kids.

Molly Campbell is Director of Strategy at Human Workplace. Molly is a former Wall Street money manager and MBA who looked after \$750M of other people's money, then shifted to health care, became a holistic healer and grew a business naturally healing people and animals. Now Molly designs partnerships with Human Workplace clients from universities to government agencies, startups and international corporations. Molly is the leader of the Human Workplace Search practice. She has placed professionals with Peat Marwick, Owens Corning and Bacardi among other blue-chip firms. Molly lives in Boulder with her husband Jim and their two border terriers, Alex and Tommy.



Michael Wilcox is Operations Manager for Human Workplace. Michael makes sure our clients, candidates, friends and new acquaintances get what they need.



REACH US:

www.humanworkplace.com Michael@humanworkplace.com
(303) 440-0408 Boulder office

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