



MIDLIFE METAMORPHOSIS

THE NAKED TRUTH ABOUT MOVING FORWARD WITH YOUR HEART

JIM ROGERS

MIDLIFE METAMORPHOSIS

The Naked Truth
About Moving
Forward With Your Heart

— SAMPLE —
CONDENSED
EDITION

JIM ROGERS



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Introduction

Slightly more than ten years ago my life, as I knew it, was about to change with these words:

"Jim, I want a divorce."

While they were calmly spoken, little did I realize the transformative power contained in those five simple words. With their delivery, my life began a new phase that would eventually bring me to a more mature, informed and wise place. But, along the way, I would experience painful despondency, deep depression, and an ocean of other overwhelming and painful emotions that would ultimately lead me to a place of greater healing.

In the initial time that led to our separation, I finally began to learn a lot more about my own contributions to the demise of my marriage. At times, I felt incredibly convicted of the wrongs that I had committed, while at other times, I simply felt like a casualty of ignorance and immaturity. As my time in therapy passed, it seemed that I started to gain the sense of a new mission in life. I completely understood that the therapist I was seeing was a uniquely pivotal person for me, who unknowingly set me on a new path with a sense of purpose that had yet to be fully realized or developed. I knew that I wanted to be in a committed, long term relationship again (whether it involved full-blown marriage, or not). To eventually achieve that, I also needed to learn what I had done wrong as a man, and realize the nature and consequences of my poor choices. What I didn't know, is that the journey I was about to start, would take so long to complete.

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Part of this new journey would be spiritual, being separate, yet integral to the search for an appropriate and loving match. However, the greatest part of the journey would be one in which I had to confront my own demons, and go through a several-year-long, dark night of the soul to come out the other side a different and better man. There were times when I wondered if I'd make it; times when I wanted to run away and drop out; and times when I simply knew that I had to keep going, because someday the light at the end of the tunnel would be beautiful sunlight and not just another train barreling my way.

Along the way I made friends... many friends and many more acquaintances. Some would simply be there to help me through a difficult time while others would remain with me as lifelong friends. There were more than a few broken hearts as well, and to those whose hearts I broke, you must understand that it was not done maliciously, but out of fear, more than anything else. It was only in making my many foolish, careless and sometimes reckless mistakes that I came to learn so much, and am now able to pass this knowledge on to you.

However, along the way I also made a difference for some. And there are those who made a great difference in my life. The people who have touched my life are those whose names I may have unfortunately forgotten, but the person they are (as well as the contribution that they made) is something I could never forget. This journey of mine could be subtitled in many different ways, but ultimately it's been both a voyage of self-discovery and one of growth and of gaining a greater sense of my own life's purpose. Some would say that this has just been about my own recklessness as well as my own desire to run certain things out of my system, answer certain questions that I felt needed to be answered,

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and acquire a set of “notches on my bedpost.” In light of all that I experienced, these may have seemed to be a few of many purposes, but none of these were the primary purpose in this part of my journey.

I can say that two things I learned a lot about during this time were fear and trust. I learned that fear can paralyze you more than you could ever comprehend. I also learned that trust is not something that is easy to gain in life. Trust of others comes from a sense of trusting self. Yet, trust of self is something that comes with maturity, understanding and reaching out and up to a power that is greater than us. Along the way I finally learned to do that as well.

Where I will go from here is not necessarily certain, but in many ways I really don't need to know. All that I desire is to be able to take what I've learned and help others apply it to their lives in order to make sense of the confusion and pain that has seemingly paralyzed so many in their quest for yet another opportunity for love in their lives. If I can help just one of you do that, then all else is icing on the cake. And I do love a well-iced cake.

With deepest apologies to those I've hurt along the way... it wasn't done because I was writing a book. No, I wrote a book to make sense of why I caused the hurt and to hopefully keep others from doing the same.

While you will notice that there are a few subjects that are repeated as well as magnified throughout the book, these subjects bear repeating and are further expanded in an effort to allow for a greater understanding and (hopefully) a greater retention of them. It's simply my desire to drive home certain points... those

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points that seemed to be the most difficult, yet valuable, for me to learn and retain. With that said, while the best way to read this book is in a linear fashion from beginning to end, you can also read the first four chapters and then any chapters that initially attract your attention. Just don't miss anything, because I feel that I've covered the entire gamut of subjects in the quest for moving forward with your midlife heart.

In the end, take what works for you and leave the rest. It really is the only proper thing to do.

Jim Rogers
Chatsworth, CA
January 2009

1

SO HOW DID WE ALL GET HERE?

It could have been any Mother's Day weekend in Southern California. There was warmth in the air that brought the sand and surf lovers as well as the sun worshippers out for their first real weekend en masse at Zuma Beach in Malibu. However, it wasn't just any Mother's Day weekend, but my first one in LA. Recently separated, and even more recently relocated from Tennessee, I was lonely but enjoying the sound of the surf as I walked with my thoughts to myself, wondering what was in store for me in this new chapter of my life.

Suddenly a woman's arm shot up in the air with a camera in her hand and she asked, "Take a picture of me and my kids?"

That was the beginning of a wonderful ten-month relationship and the beginning of moving forward with my own heart in midlife.

Many books have been written about dating, finding a partner, finding love in life and many other similar subjects. However, there are few, if any, about the unique process of finding love the second (and third, or more) time around in the throes of midlife. While I am not a trained clinician, licensed professional or practicing therapist, I *am* someone who has walked this path

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and met many along the way who have as well. This writing is a result of a quest... a quest for love... beyond the second time around for me. It's the result of a great deal of reading, life experiences, crazy mistakes, more than a little heartache, and a decent amount of time. My hope is that, in reading this, you'll be guided to save some time and heartache in your own quest to move forward in life with love... again.

I ask the question in the chapter title for several reasons. In part, we are from a generation that came from "stable" homes with two parents, a stay-at-home mom and a seemingly loving family. Of course, behind closed doors many of us had much less than that with alcoholism, abuse, neglect and abandonment coloring our perceptions of what makes up an adult life. Yet, with so many of us in the same place, it's worth asking the question, "So how did we all get here?" I believe that there are several reasons for us all being in a similar situation. However, before going on, this is how I arrived at that very point in my life.

Being raised in a restrictive religion (as well as being "the fat kid" throughout my school years), I was raised in a doubly sheltered world where I learned few, if any, life skills and also missed a lot of the experiences that tend to bring a greater understanding of life that some call maturity. Whatever the case, I was twenty-five before I had alcohol or sex, and married the first woman I had sex with because I felt that I should "legitimize" my actions. It's not that I didn't love her; in my own way I did.

The greatest problem is that I didn't really know what it meant to love myself. I also didn't know how to make a good choice in a wife, based on who I am. The term often used in counseling is of one being "damaged goods" and I most certainly was that.

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After six years, I finally realized that I had made a mistake and left my marriage.

However, the real insanity here is that I was married again virtually before the ink on my divorce papers was dry. I thought that I was doing this one right because I married someone who seemed to be a great friend and, after all, aren't you supposed to marry your best friend? There was only one problem. I hadn't done anything to heal my childhood wounds (for that matter, I wasn't even aware of what they were) so I was still damaged goods.

As the problems of life started to mount, I took care of them as anyone would who is part of the "walking wounded": in exactly the wrong way! I spent money to feel better. I spent money to build my business and feel successful. I worked all kinds of hours to avoid going home. I ate to avoid the feelings of frustration and insecurity. I buried my feelings and didn't really know that they were valid anyway. I was a mess and a wreck – one "sick puppy" for sure. Eventually I acted totally out of character and had an emotional affair, which in effect ended my marriage. Yes, it *does* take two, but I'm *not* writing this to show *both* sides, but *my own* part in what happened. If you can't own and understand your part in the demise of your marriage then you have no right to move forward in life with anyone.

While the four most frequent reasons for divorce are family troubles, money troubles, differences in religion, and the stresses of children, these are simplistic answers, and I feel that the real answers are much deeper and worth examining to gain an understanding of the greater problems we face. When we gain an understanding of the issues, we also come to a greater sense of what we need to take care of *before* we move forward.

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I tend to see the reasons for failed marriages based in the five core issues listed below.

Changes In Social Mores

- The stigma was removed from divorce
- The sexual revolution of the Sixties

Values Based Issues

- Freedom of credit and the entitlement lie
- Undeveloped or misplaced values
- "Growing apart"
- Financial troubles

Character and Maturity Based Issues

- Marrying too soon
- Infidelity
- Lack of maturity

Early Life Developmental Issues

- Lack of life skills
- Unhealed childhood wounds

Mental Health Issues

- Addiction
- Personality disorders and mental illness
- Violence and abuse

Changes in Social Mores

The Disappearance of the Stigma of Divorce

Before the 1970s, divorce had a very strong stigma attached to it which kept people together in their marriages even if things were

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bad. Yet in the late Sixties and Seventies the stigma that was previously attached to divorce finally began to fall away. Once the stigma started to fade, many people realized that, if and when problems arose they had a way out, whether correct or not.

The Sexual Revolution of the Sixties

Before the 1960s, life was much simpler. While things seemed to be more innocent, the realities of life were buried beneath the surface of everyday occurrence. While "nice girls didn't" as a public perception, in actuality they did. It's just that there were certain things of which no one spoke. Then the Sixties came and the doors of perception were opened once and for all. The end of innocence crossed all aspects of society from politics to sexuality. No one would ever look at life in the same way again. Once sex became more liberated and birth control became readily available, much of the worry was removed from sex, especially outside the context of marriage. Once the worry and societal judgment were removed, the great pressure to have sex only inside the context of marriage changed for good.

Values Based Issues

Freedom of Credit and the Entitlement Lie

When we were young and with our families, the one thing that was markedly different was the inside of our mom's purse and our dad's wallet. For the most part, our parents had one or two gasoline credit cards and one or two department store credit cards... that's it. There were very few big perceived needs and there really were few, if any, malls for shopping. In fact, I can remember the first covered mall that I heard was being built in Portland, Oregon, near my hometown: the Lloyd Center. At the

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time it was touted as being the largest one, and one of few, in the country.

Since then the entire retail landscape of our country has changed. However, it's not only the retail landscape, but the realm of consumer debt as well. In my childhood, consumer debt was limited to a house and car payment for the most part, with some small credit cards around. Yet rarely did anyone get themselves into debt with credit cards. Good old gambling debt still "led the pack" at that time.

Undeveloped or Misplaced Values

While this and the next are somewhat related I wanted to separate the two. The value system that we currently live with in America is quite upside down. Our greatest value is work, our second is money and material possessions, and our third value is family. Many other cultures place family at the top and work at the bottom, making them less "productive" as a nation, but more balanced in many respects when it comes to what is important in life. Many of us experienced this misplaced set of values in our marriages, where it was all about acquiring toys – the boat, the motorcycles, the extra unnecessary car, the bigger house, etc. Now, while there's nothing inherently *wrong* with "things," when they start to own you or tax your resources enough, they begin to take you away from what *should* be most important to you, that being your marriage! Without a realignment of values similar mistakes will continue to be repeated.

[Chapter continued in book. CLICK HERE to order your copy now.](#)

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THE STAGES OF MOVING FORWARD

From my own experience and understanding, moving forward with your heart in midlife has three very distinct stages. The first stage is very important to pass through and should *not* be avoided. In this stage you heal the wounds resulting from the loss of your marriage. The second stage is where you take the time to learn the lessons that are necessary to learn. While you can choose to do this or not, the rewards for doing it are much greater than you can imagine. Third, you take the time to become reacquainted with yourself. Here's an outline of what's involved in these stages:

1. Healing from Loss

2. Learning Your Lessons

- Let go of shame
- Learning to let go, how to let go and that it's okay to let go.
- Rejection is often a blessing
- Changing your perception (lack versus plenty)
- Understanding your value as a man or woman
- Trust your instincts
- Where to "set the bar"
- Learn how to communicate again

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- Changing your frame of reference for a partner
- Understanding and breaking harmful patterns
- Ending the “candy store” mentality

3. Reacquainting yourself with “YOU”

Remember, there is no right or wrong way to go through this process, yet some approaches will work better than others. Also, remember that time is your friend in this process. If you want to hurry up and finish so you can move on, chances are that you'll take longer than you thought you would. Been there, done that! Take your time, heal yourself, learn who you are, learn your lessons, and you'll be ready to build a relationship with a much greater chance of success this time around.

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3

LEARNING YOUR LESSONS

Unlike the lyric of the Dan Fogelberg song, “Lessons learned are like bridges burned, you only need to cross them but once,” many of us have crossed the bridge, burnt it and then rebuilt it to repeat the whole process again and again. Some of us are slow learners (my hand shoots into the air on that one). We take as many times to learn a lesson as we truly need to learn it – no more and no less. Sometimes the lesson may be the same, but the circumstances are different. We may need to learn to lift the mask off the situation to see the “face” that’s really there.

Some lessons are simply benign and don’t affect anyone else, while others are important and, if not learned, potentially catastrophic. It’s very important to take the time, while you are single and on your own, to learn your lessons. The lessons listed here are by no means the only ones necessary, because we all have our individual lessons that we must learn. However, these are meant to give you cause to stop and reflect on the nature of your own lessons. As you find out what they are, take the time to write them down so that you start to see what you need to accomplish in your process of moving forward.

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LOVE RE-EXAMINED

Life's Greatest Reward

Life has many rewards. For some the rewards are material, for others they are based in free time and an active lifestyle. Yet, for most it seems that the greatest, and seemingly least attainable, reward in life is love – whether the love of family, the love of friends or the unwavering love of a wonderful life partner.

Yet, with so many having failed once, twice or more, there are too many who, locked in fear, are unwilling to open their hearts to the possibilities of love again. Even more, there seem to be so many who have a skewed sense of what love really means. Adding to the confusion, technology has created a seemingly endless supply of romantic possibilities to be pursued. This tends to feed the myth that the perfect match lies just beyond the one person currently being dated.

This begs the question with so many “out there” who are single and available, “Why are so few finding love and pairing off with one another?” While there are no simple answers, I have come to believe that the biggest reason for this dilemma is that so few understand love. So, this is where I’m going to share what I’ve learned about love over the past ten years, and what I’ve unlearned as well.

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While I could be totally off-base here, it seems to me that many of us who are single and available have a skewed view of love. Our views have been colored by 1) the media; 2) our parents; 3) the lie of entitlement; 4) the lack of maturity in American society at this time in history; and 5) the lack of grounding, a moral compass, and the decline of faith in our society.

The media has, in general, perpetrated a lie upon us that love is all happy, carefree and effortless. We can easily create feelings of affection in someone by purchasing something that will make it so, whether it's a diamond, the proper car, the bigger house, the proper life accoutrements, etc. Our fears and insecurities are played upon in order to keep the big machine of consumerism running. Please understand that, while there is nothing inherently wrong with consumerism, what is wrong is that we have all become virtually, if not completely, susceptible to consumerism to the point that it controls our lives. It seems that, what should really be important has been relegated to a much lesser position in life.

Our parents, while not being nearly as big an influence on us and our attitudes, have nonetheless colored (to a great extent) our perceptions of love. Many of us saw our parents become frustrated, give more of themselves than we thought they should, set aside their lives, disagree, argue, fight and at times silently seethe at one another. Not wanting the same thing for ourselves, we tended to discard everything our parents did, rather than adopt what often worked for them. Had our parents been equipped with the tools made available to us by present-day psychology, they, too, would have had more functional and loving lives with one another.

The lie of entitlement has seemingly permeated our lives – and our loves. We're shown the images of so many things that we

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“deserve,” that we all feel that we’re also deserving of the “myth of perfect love.” However, just like building the home of your dreams (by the time you finish it, you always wish you had built something just a little different), love viewed in a similar manner always seems to leave us wishing we had found that one last characteristic that would’ve resulted in the “perfect match” – that perfect mate. The bad news is, there is no perfect match, but only one that is perfectly imperfect.

Perfection seekers are further stymied by the lack of maturity in American society, whose members have yet to grow up – even in their late forties and early fifties. With the prevailing attitude being, “I can have it all,” the main societal disconnect seems to be the lack of understanding that life is about learning to make mature, responsible choices. Only those who have reached a modicum of maturity, and have a reasonably formed sense of character in place, are equipped to make this set of choices.

The final piece in this puzzle is the seeming lack of a moral compass among a large portion of today’s society – or, at best, an incomplete moral compass. This is most evident with those who either misunderstand commitment, or are unwilling to enter into it. The “puzzle” metaphor is appropriate when describing love, since it contains many beautifully detailed pieces, but only when fit together correctly. Commitment is one such piece, without which, the total picture can be confusing, unrecognizable, and even ugly.

So just what, pray tell, is love really all about? While I know that this question has permeated the ages and brought forth many answers, the one answer that holds merit has taken me ten years to understand. So, please follow along as my answer unfolds.

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First of all, love does not exist on its own; for it to grow and flourish it must be accompanied by other qualities and characteristics.

My second marriage taught me that love is *not* enough. You can love someone all you possibly can (and with all the love that you have), and that alone will not bring about a resolution to problems and issues that a couple may face. Love on its own is incomplete. When problems occur (and it's inevitable that they will), if two only love each other, and have no other tools or skills, the love will crumble and disintegrate. I know this from experience. However, the most important point is that, if you want to love someone else, you have to love yourself first. Without this, nothing will truly work.

From self-love, the next most important qualities to develop in yourself (and look for in another) are acceptance, compassion, trust and respect. Without these qualities you will forever continue the elusive search for someone who "fits your list," doing the same thing over and over again, while expecting different results (the definition of insanity).

So, am I saying that you shouldn't have a list? Not at all – in fact, I encourage you to have one. However, you'll be best served to understand that, the shorter the list, and the more open you are to surprise and serendipity, the better off you will be. If you know you're not that kind of person, that's okay, too! Having an open heart, as well as an open mind, is the most important requirement to finding a love for your life.

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SUCCESSFUL INTERNET DATING

The Paradigm Shift

Dating has changed a lot in a relatively short period of time. While technology is an “easy blame” for this, the reasons for this shift are many. Among the less obvious reasons are changes in values, changes in the societal attitudes toward marriage, fear, changes in the attitudes of men and women, and changes in the attitudes of the role of religion in our daily lives. Another important change is the human developmental stage experienced in midlife. In general, we tend to look for different things now than we did before. The Sixties were the beginning of the change, and the women’s movement ushered more of these changes into society, yet “the finger” cannot be pointed at any one aspect of society or life. Many very complex changes have occurred since then.

Dating Websites and the Internet

There is a proliferation of websites that have their own “angle” to draw you into them. Some feature personality tests, and others, short personality profiles. While a majority of them are pay-for-service sites, there are also some that are free. From my experience, there is little, if any, real difference in the people who appear on

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most Internet dating sites. But, some websites tend to attract certain types of mindsets. Some that present themselves as more “upscale” tend to draw people who identify with that image, while other sites draw a crowd that’s generally a more random cross-section of society. In my opinion, there is no one perfect dating site... *period!* However, when you’re new to the world of Internet dating, the best place to “get your feet wet,” and gain a seasoned sense about this aspect of modern life, is on the free dating sites.

While the Internet has opened up a world of possibilities for so many people looking for someone to share their lives with, it also tends to be a gathering place for the social misfits and societal outcasts. These people don’t feel comfortable meeting someone in person, or simply have little, if any, interpersonal skills. For them, anonymity is their best friend because it keeps them from confronting their own issues and provides them an easy forum to try to meet people. Many of these people are benign, yet there are a few who can become a very real source of trouble. However, learning a few skills can help most anyone filter through these people to focus on those who are truly worth seeking.

The “THREE People” You’ll Meet on the Net

Along with those mentioned above, all Internet dating sites seem to attract three basic types of people. First, there are those who knowingly misrepresent themselves (those who say what they think you want to hear); second, those who unknowingly misrepresent themselves (those who think they know who they are, but really don’t); and third, those who really know themselves (those who have taken the time to learn the lessons that life has brought their way).

SUCCESSFUL INTERNET DATING

While the majority of people you find on dating websites tend to be members of the first two types, it's really your job to find those who are from the third type. While it may seem to be an impossible task at times, it's really not at all. The most important task that you can do for yourself is to understand who you are, and from that place of understanding, look for those qualities and attributes that make up the kind of person you want to meet... which takes us to the next section.

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A LITTLE HELP NAVIGATING THE TURBULENT WATERS OF DATING

Red Flags and Their Meanings

Dating in our forties and beyond has proven to be a very confusing and disorienting experience. By the time we have reached this age, one would think that we'd learned enough from our lives that this should be a much easier process. The assumption is partially right – we have learned a lot from our lives. The problem is that most of what we've learned has to do with hurt and pain, and it tends to be subconsciously stored, so we're really not aware of it under normal circumstances. So what, you say! Well, a *lot*, as a matter of fact. From this pain and hurt comes a lot of avoidance that most of us don't understand.

The term "red flags" is often used in dating. Many see the issues that someone appears to have as red flags, or indicators of what could be a real problem if that person is pursued in a romantic or dating relationship. This is the time to mention a psychological dynamic known as projection. In projection we tend to take the qualities that we least accept in ourselves and project them onto others. In understanding this it makes it more interesting to see how someone we're dating views what they see as our "faults." If

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we're observant, their perceived "red flags" actually tell us how they see themselves.

Red flags tend to be something very revealing, because they tell us at least three things about someone else. First, they tell us how someone views their individual self. Second, they tell us if a person is based in fear. Finally, they tell us a lot about someone's values. In the context of meeting and dating someone, red flags reveal much about someone's heart.

From the above description, we can see that if someone's red flags are continuously indicating that they are prone to date losers, then the assumptive message would be that they just may view themselves in a similar light. However, it could also indicate that there is something wrong with their "picker," or their ability to make healthy choices in dating.

When someone repeatedly sees red flags in everyone they date, it exposes an inherent inner fear. They are actually keeping themselves from getting too close to anyone because of some perceived fear that has yet to be processed and released. The bar is constantly and conveniently set so high that no one can pass over it, thus blocking them from love. Yet, their protective mechanism will often create anger and frustration in them, since this approach to dating has them convinced that there "aren't any good ones left."

If someone tends to see a financial situation as a red flag, then there is either a value issue or an issue of past, unresolved pain ("my ex spent us into the ground and was always poor before we met"). In any case, red flags can present an opportunity to communicate and learn about each other. Communication is one

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of the most important aspects of any relationship, and the most important time to communicate is when it's the most difficult or painful to do so. However, red flags can also present a greater understanding of who someone really is, and show you that the nearby exit door is your best option.

When it comes to red flags my position is more forgiving than others. For me, once is not a pattern, but twice *is* a pattern. In saying that, I believe that everyone deserves a "mulligan" or a mistake now and then. Mistakes happen in the normal course of life. However, if someone continues to make the same mistakes again and again, that can be a problem. Yet, that's not necessarily the reason to raise the red flag. To me, those who raise red flags a lot are simply difficult, and that indicates that they're looking for a reason to let go. True red flags involve issues of character, and when those come up, it's time to communicate and find the root cause of whatever questionable issue has been observed. A forgiving heart is more important than a red flag counter that is capable of counting to infinity. A real red flag counter should be reset often, unless the issue raised indicates something obviously destructive to the relationship. In that case, counting to no more than *two* is all that's necessary.

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YOU CAN'T ALWAYS GET WHAT YOU WANT

"You can't always get what you want... but if you try sometimes, you get what you need."

— The Rolling Stones

Oddly enough, this song is a lot more truthful than any of us has ever realized. While many of us spend a lot of time looking for love, we don't understand that what we're really looking for is love on our own terms. The real problem is that, in our own "infinite wisdom" we seem to miss what we really *need* in the interest of finding what we know we *want*. While love is something that so many of us seek, the form of love we're looking for has little, if anything, to do with real love. We seek something of an "instant coffee" or "instant karma" version of love, and when we find it we're disappointed. It seems as though we've forgotten that the greatest satisfaction (Geez... can't get away from those 'Stones songs, can we?) is realized when we work at something from the ground up. Continuing the coffee metaphor, you roast the beans, grind them just at the peak of their flavor, make that perfect cup of "joe," and savor it first thing in the morning, knowing that it came from your own desire for a wonderful cup of coffee. The same thing goes

YOU CAN'T ALWAYS GET WHAT YOU WANT

for relationships. Now, don't get me wrong... I'm *not* suggesting that we all settle for a "fixer-upper" (someone who needs a lot of work, but we think we can bring them around – au contraire). However, I *do* mean that we all need to take the time to work at our relationships, no matter how well matched they seem to be, for there are always things that can benefit from being exposed, examined, and worked through.

I believe that most of us are looking for a smooth start. Some relationships will be that way, others won't. Learn that there *are* times in life when we need to look beyond our comfort zones to find what we really want. While *none* of us wants drama, at times we confuse some behaviors *for* drama and use that as an excuse to "cut and run." I believe that there is *drama*, and there is *conflict* or *turbulence*. Drama is something that people create, while turbulence is something that can occur when two passionate people start to see, and learn about, each other. Turbulence often comes from long-buried fear, and when that happens, it can have the same appearance as drama, yet its motive and its origin are much different.

Drama can originate from either being addicted to that chaotic emotional storm (due to unresolved pain, addiction issues, etc.), or from someone who simply loves attention and only knows how to get it in a negative manner. It can also come from an unrealistic attachment to expectations. In any case, what drama does, in effect, is alienate someone from closeness. Its purpose is to gain attention, yet gain it in an inappropriate way.

Chapter continued in book. [CLICK HERE](#) to order your copy now.

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CREATING AN OPEN HEART

Over the course of history, countless volumes have been written, by a great many writers, about the heart and opening it to love. I think it's a subject with endless potential, because there are still so many different, untapped perspectives concerning the heart. With that said, let's take a look at the heart in context with finding love at midlife, the subject of this book.

The Heart

Before we can see how to create an open heart, we must take a look at what comprises the heart. As I said in Chapter 9, the heart is our individual repository for emotional energy. This "heart" that we speak of is not our physical heart, but an *etheric* (or emotional) heart. We've also seen that emotions can be considered "energy in motion." For many of us, the energy that remains in motion is based in unprocessed, painful experiences that accumulate throughout our lives, from early childhood forward. If this energy is neither processed nor released through active healing, it can become what has been referred to as "spiritual silage." Silage, also known as ensilage, is something that is used to feed cattle on the farm. It consists of vegetative matter (grasses and alfalfa) that's stored in a *silo*, where it ferments or rots over time. This is the

MIDLIFE METAMORPHOSIS

same thing that happens to energy derived from the unprocessed pain in our hearts – if left there, unhealed, for a long time, it also rots.

This rotting of spiritual energy is what we see in people who act out: they take things so personally, get angry or hurt easily, have problems getting emotionally close to others, and so on. The tragedy is that these behaviors are just the product of lots of accumulated "spiritual silage." And where does all of this come from? It comes from many places: recent pain, unmet childhood needs, childhood verbal abuse or neglect, childhood physical or sexual abuse, spiritual abuse (yes, spiritual abuse), or any other accumulated, unhealthy input or unprocessed feelings. Without an understanding of the significance of these early wounds, and the importance of identifying and healing them, we tend to be driven by anger, pain and fear from sources long since forgotten. It is *this* energy filling our hearts that blocks them from filling with love.

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At a time in life when most of us expected to be married, with our kids almost ready to leave the house, and finally having the time to mend our fences and enjoy one another, many of us have instead found ourselves suddenly divorced and asking the question, 'Now what?' The disorienting world of singledom in midlife is not just difficult, it can be incredibly frightening as well.

Midlife Metamorphosis provides a unique look at the process of moving forward with your heart from the viewpoint of a man who, after two failed marriages, began to dig deep for his own set of answers. Based on a ten-year introspective journey, it breaks down the process into small, well-understood and well-communicated steps while easily conveying these to the reader through many personal examples. It also explores many aspects of the midlife heart experience that few have previously thought to examine.

Written in a conversational style, Midlife Metamorphosis leads the reader to a greater understanding of what has brought them to the bewildering maze of being suddenly single in midlife. With this approach, the reader is shown a way to find a greater, more meaningful love that will help lead them out of the confusion of midlife singledom and into fulfilling, romantically coupled love once more... and for some, truly for the first time. ♡



Jim Rogers found his mission, and true purpose in life, to be that of gaining a greater understanding of the deepest dynamics of heartfelt, healthy, and loving relationships. As his second marriage was imploding, he found himself asking many questions, and for the first time in his life, finally getting real answers. After a multi-year period of searching, studying, dating and applying all that had been learned in the laboratory of his life, Jim found himself with a unique set of knowledge that many claimed needed to be shared with all who found themselves in a similar predicament.

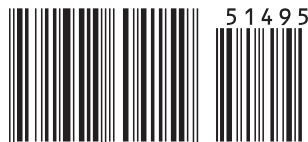
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