



By Silver Rose

When a piece of art is moved from one frame to another, it gives it a whole new look and the viewer an entirely different perspective. The same holds true when we reframe our attitudes and beliefs.

In our society, we hold contradictory beliefs about the topic of work. On the one hand, we desire work; we want to make a living. On the other hand, once we find a job, we mark off how many days are left until we can stop doing it. Psychologists call this *cognitive dissonance* and define it as an uncomfortable feeling caused by holding conflicting ideas simultaneously.

What is most important about the definition above is the word *uncomfortable*. Discomfort is a negative feeling and provides a clue that you are focused on something that is not serving you well.

Always remember that you get more of what you focus on. The more you focus on how unbearable work is (else why would you be counting the days?) the more you attract circumstances that make life even more unbearable.

If you are one of the many who are holding contradictory beliefs about work, why not reframe them? It is one of the most important things you can do to relieve stress and enjoy life.

We all know people who are marking time—counting the *seconds* until retirement. There are so many things amiss about that it takes one's breath away:

- *What if you never get to retirement?* I had a friend in her early fifties who passed away very suddenly a few years ago. The last conversation we had was all about how much she hated her job and was considering retirement. That memory deeply saddens me, even today.
- *Are you missing opportunities to have your life be satisfying?* Closely examine why you want to retire. What do you plan to do? Are there opportunities at work to do some of that? Could you use work to prepare yourself for the day

CHANGE YOUR FOCUS CHANGE YOUR LIFE

Reframing Work

when you retire? If, for example, you want to do volunteer work when you retire, why not pretend you are a volunteer at your job? How would you do things differently?

- *Are you creating unnecessary and unhealthy stress?* I can't think of a better laboratory than a job to figure out tools and techniques for managing stress. If you think stress will melt away once you retire, I invite you to think again. Once you acquire the habit of worry and pressure, it continues even when the perceived danger has lifted.
- *You will miss your social network.* Don't kid yourself that you will continue to see the people you work with after retirement. It rarely happens, especially if they are still working. So why not fully enjoy them now? For those you want to continue to see post-retirement, use this time to deepen your relationships so they are based on more than shared work. If you do, you will continue to see them even after you leave.

Most importantly, and I cannot emphasize this strongly enough, **the retired you will be a mirror reflection of the working you.** Please read that sentence again.

If you are happy at work, you will be happy in retirement. If you are miserable at work, you will be miserable in retirement. You see, work has little to do with your moods. It is you who controls them and the same you who shows up at work every day will be the same you who doesn't have to anymore.

Let's face facts. The world is in economic disarray. What used to be certain is not anymore. We may all have to work well into our golden years and, if we do, it could turn out to be the best thing to happen. In order for that to be true, it may be necessary for you to reframe your beliefs about work. If you've already done so, bravo!

Having an excuse to get up everyday is what breathes life into us. Given a choice (which you have), why not opt for enjoying what you do? Don't do it because I want you to, or the boss wants you to—do it because it is an amazing gift to give yourself. The rewards will be so great you'll wonder why you waited so long.

October 20, 2010

Silver Rose works with individuals who want work that they love and organizations that want employees who love their work.

Reach her at Silver@SilverSpeaks.com or 877-840-5416