

# Is this all there is?

**The 3 biggest mistakes  
smart women over 40  
make that keep them  
feeling  
busy  
directionless  
and  
wondering if  
life is just  
passing by**



# Is this all there is?

The answer is No!

But life can feel like that if you're stuck making some common mistakes. It might feel like something is missing, something is a bit off track. But there is **so** much more living to be done, once you realise what is keeping you stuck, and what you can do about it.

**'Is this all there is?'** Some women push the question down, only to find themselves wondering how they will manage to live through all the years that lay out in front of them. So they keep busy, but still feeling distracted, directionless and wonder what will make their life feel meaningful. Maybe that's you?

But we distract ourselves from living our life with a few common mistakes and it turns out they are all connected.

Curious? Ready to find out more?

## Mistake #3 You haven't got any goals you are working towards

And not having a goal leaves you feeling directionless.

If you don't know where you are heading, you'll never get there.

Goals are the first step on any journey.

By midlife many women can look back and tick off having achieved the big goals they set earlier in life. The goals around work, partner, house, the kids, travel..... Some women discover that they've set these goals by default, they were goals that society deemed important and they just went along with it. That they never really thought very much about what they wanted from life.

Now having achieved these things they wonder *'what now?'* They look into the next stage of life and see a hole. What Vicky told me might sound familiar to you.



*It feels like my whole life up to now has been about achieving things – an education, the house, the kids, about accumulating things, going places, working at my career. Now I’m wondering what it is all for. It’s like Middle age success meets an empty room..... Now what?”*

Goals give you focus, they can motivate you, shape meaning in your life. They are the first step on your journey. They ensure you get the best out of life.

Time passes whether you want it to or not. Drifting along might feel like a rest for a while after the busy years of striving and caring for others and juggling so many things, but after a while feeling directionless loses its appeal. It leaves you feeling listless and flat. You might feel a vague longing for ‘something’ but realise that you’ve never really thought about what **you** want, what lights you up in your life.

And you don't have a map for the next phase of life.

Not having goals leaves you feeling adrift, not fully engaging with life. Not really living life. Having a guide to help you can make all the difference.

Having a goal will help you clarify your purpose, and clarity gives you a direction in which to travel. You need a road map when you travel anywhere new. Life is the same.

Clarity gives direction to your life. The goals are like milestones along the journey, keeping you on track in a life that feels meaningful.

I’m sure you’ve heard before that goals are most effective when you write them down and review them regularly. But working out what your goals will be for the next phase of life is a little more complex than it was when you were younger and striving for the usual big things. It’s time to think about what really lights **you** up, what **you** want from this next stage of life, what could be a large chunk of your lifetime. Having a guide can be invaluable.

So how do you know what goals to set? How do you work out what matters to you?

The best way I have found to do this is to be **fully present**. There are many ways you could try to be present, to be in the moment. I’ll talk more about the best way I’ve found soon, but in the meantime, think about what goals you are



working towards. If, like so many women, there don't seem to be any, be OK with that for now.

Being present enough to work out what those goals might be is part of a program I run so you won't have to do it all on your own. But in the meantime there's a more worrying problem I want to talk about.

## Mistake #2 You aren't making time to nurture yourself

When was the last time you did something just for you?

Do you feel you've lost yourself in caring for others? Are you struggling to find time for yourself after you have cared for all the other people in your life? Do you feel guilty or selfish if you take time to do something to nurture yourself?

So many women I speak to feel exactly the same way.

I know it's hard to see the things you do for yourself as being as important as the things you do to help and nurture others. But if you don't put yourself on your TO DO list, sooner or later you run out of steam and have nothing to give those around you. You might notice you get short tempered, don't sleep soundly, never really feel calm or still.

Here's what happened to me.

*I used to feel that if I wasn't productive every single moment of the day I was being lazy, that I was 'wasting' time. Eventually I realised that by filling every minute I was doing a lot of organising and a lot of observing, but not a lot of 'being'. I wasn't building in time for me and that meant I wasn't being all I could be for the people around me. Like a lot of women, when things got stressful, the first things to go from my schedule were the things that nourished me. I stopped going to yoga classes, I stopped walking by the beach, I stopped standing on our balcony and watching the sun slide at sunset. And that meant I had less in reserve to share with those around me. And I completely emptied my cup before I realised. Then I was unable to do anything. At all. For months. Brushing my daughters' hair was all I managed to achieve many days. It was a long and slow road back to good health and new habits.*



The woman you see in the mirror is the person you spend the most time with in your entire life. It makes sense to look after her.

When life feels directionless, or really busy, you can easily overlook the importance of doing something lovingly for yourself.

What was the last thing you did that was purely about nurturing you?

What are the people around you missing out on because you aren't making yourself a priority?

Here's what I've learned. It need only take a few minutes. It doesn't have to cost a lot of money or be elaborate (although it could be, if that is what makes you feel nurtured). It can be as simple as stopping. Stopping to watch the sunset, drink enough water, go for a walk, pick or buy some flowers just for you.

Or just stopping for a moment and noticing the pattern of your breathing. Mindful breathing is a great way to be present. Just being fully present even for a few moments is one of the greatest gifts you can give yourself.

If, like the old me, you fill your life with action and busyness, you'll want to check out the deeper, more worrying mistake women make to keep them feeling busy, directionless and wondering if life is passing them by, and what you can do about it.

## Mistake #1 Being addicted to 'busy'

She told me

*"What fired me up has gone. I feel like if I stay busy I might not notice how that feels."*

The kids have grown. You are needed a lot less than when they were young. Maybe they've left home and there is a lot less that needs doing.

You fill the hole left by not being needed so much by being busy. It's **so** common.

Some women join every committee they can to feel useful, only to find they still have no time for themselves and are no closer to living a life that makes



them feel alive. Others get addicted to volunteering, shopping, endless fitness or yoga classes, or getting lost in Facebook. Maybe you can think of another way you fill the hole?

When we are busy, addicted to doing, to filling our every minute, we can't hear what we really need for all the noise. We're busy thinking about what has to be done next and we're can't hear what our heart is whispering to us about what we need to feel alive. What we need to really *live* on this journey of life.

And that keeps you stuck.

It's a sad cycle. You don't know what lights you up but you are too busy to hear what it might be. You are left feeling that life is passing you by. Feeling directionless. Not being able to work out what goals you want to set for the next phase of your life. Not making time for yourself.

Rushing, stress and busyness are the exact opposite rhythms of nature.

If you want to stop being busy **doing**, you really need to find a way to be still. To being in the present moment instead of always thinking of what you have to do next.

There are all sorts of ways you could do that. You've probably even tried a few of them. Maybe you even tried meditation for a while.

Here's the thing. As I walked 900km across Spain I had plenty of time to think. Along the way I discovered a simple, accessible path to stillness and being present.

It's something I can teach you in my program.

It involves walking but there's more to it than that. (And you don't need to walk 900km)

One of the things this process will help you do is to stop and listen for the whispers of your heart giving your clues about what lights you up, makes you feel alive.

It's something I teach you in my program called **Stepping Out.**



Maybe when you were on holidays and after you spent a little while relaxing you started to feel restless. That there might be more to life than the way you are living it now. But then you were washed with a panic about how scary it felt not knowing what you really wanted, not having a map for what's next. So you jumped right back into scheduling every minute of life (and maybe of your holiday as well) to keep that feeling at bay.

You are a smart woman. I have no doubt that if you could figure this out on your own you would have done so by now. Every woman I work with longs for a life that lights them up. To feel like they are alive, the tingly feeling of living a life you LOVE.

The question *'Is this all there is?'*, really, it's your friend. It's your life calling you towards the next iteration of you. It tells you that you've outgrown what was, your old habits, the way you have been living. Your next chapter is waiting to be written.

Walk forward to meet it.

Now is the perfect time to set your path for the next stage of life!

I've put together a straightforward process for you to follow to help you become more present. And when you are present, then you can hear the whispers of your heart and soul, the ones that will point you in the direction of a life filled with meaning. I believe life can be a grand adventure when we know what matters to us, what makes us feel alive. And I want you to be able to feel that too.

*"I've done great things. I've got what most people would see as a perfect life. But it all feels a bit hollow. 'Stuff' doesn't hold meaning, the kids are grown. Now I wonder what the next years will hold."*

If this sounds like you, if you haven't got any goals you are working towards, you aren't making time to nurture yourself, or if you know too well the biggest problem I mentioned, the one of being addicted to being busy which means you can't hear what it is that lights you up, then this is for you.



To help you overcome these three problems and hear the whispers of what you long for I have created a program called **Stepping Out – A Pathway to Presence**.

It is broken into 3 modules and during this program you will be listening, walking, reflecting, journaling and then checking in with yourself.

You can work through the program as quickly or as slowly as you need. Once you sign up you will be directed to a page where you will find the **Stepping Out** program materials. You can download them all at once, or you can work through the program one Step at a time.

By the end of the course you will have come up with a list of things that light you up and have worked out some ways you can include them in your everyday life beginning with small, achievable actions. You'll also have a tool you can use at any time to help you be in the present moment. The insights you have a result of being present will help you map out the next phase of your life.

I believe that being present is a key to a life you love, and that walking is an ideal way to tap into being present.

That's why I have designed this program for you.

To read a little more about the program and to sign up to begin Stepping Out on your own Pathway to Presence [click here](#) (or go to <http://bit.ly/2bRROQI>). I can't wait to hear where it takes you.

Derrin Cramer



I'm a coach working with women at midlife, helping them work out what lights them up so they can live with purpose and enthusiasm. I draw on the many life lessons that unfolded walking 900km across Spain (and other long distance walks) as well as my experience as a teacher, a gifted education consultant, mentor, author and creative maker in helping women find what brings meaning to their life and design the next stage of their journey through life. I'd be honoured to help you too.

