WHO? WHAT? HOW?
BALANCING YOUR TRIFECTA AS A TWENTY-SOMETHING PROFESSIONAL

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WHO ARE WE?

- Jasmin Thurston
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20 Something, 20 Everything: A quarter life woman’s guide to balance and direction by Christine Hassler was the spark and inspiration for this presentation. It will also serve as the foundation of the content that will be presented today.
WHO ARE YOU?

- Why did you decide to attend this session today?
Quarter Life Crisis Defined:
- “Feelings of confusion, anxiety, and self-doubt experienced by some people in their twenties especially after completing their education”
- Pressure to make [your] twenty something years the time when everything needs to be decided (Hassler, pg. 2.)
WHY THE FOCUS ON WOMEN?

- Why the focus on women when discussing the quarter life crisis?
  - According to Hassler, “many variables are unique to the female experience”
    - Women’s roles have changed dramatically over the years.
    - Women differ from men in how they handle situations psychologically and emotionally.
    - Physical alterations in the twenties are different for most women.
    - Many women still work in male dominated environments.
    - Support and competition amongst women is common.
    - Navigation of family roles and career.
      - However, everyone can experience a “quarter life crisis”.

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THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK:

- Schlossberg's Transition Theory
- A Transition is defined as:
  - “any event or non-event that results in changed relationships, routines, assumptions, and roles”
- Schlossberg’s (1984, 2004) transition theory proposes that successful adaptation to any significant transition, is influenced by three sets of variables:
  - perception of the transition event
  - the pre/post transition environment
  - characteristics of the individual that experiences the transition
- According to Schlossberg’s transition theory there are four categories of factors that most influence and determine a person’s ability to cope (help or hinder) with a transition:
  - Situation
  - Self
  - support
  - Strategies

The timing of transitions and the methods you use to aid with that all impact your trifecta (who you are, what you want, and how to get it).
TWENTIES TRIANGLE

Who Am I?

[•] Who Am I?
  [•] Describe you. Include the reasons you are the person you are/ say you are.

[•] What do I want?
  [•] Take into account all aspects of your life.

[•] How do I get what I want or think I want?
  [•] Include the ways in which you have already gotten or are in the process of getting what you want?
“As young woman in a materially driven, visual world we are likely to identify ourselves by externals, the things outside ourselves” (Hassler, p. 41).

- In order to determine and define who we are, we must uncover and identify some of the people and situations that influence our identities.
  - Mother and/or Mother Figures or Father/Father Figures
    - Or Other Individuals who may have played a guardian like role in your life.
  - Mentors and/or role models
  - Important women in your life

Obstacles to defining who you are
- Distinguishing who we are from what we do
- Superficial sense of self
"After spending years in the comfort of classrooms, we are thrust out into the working world, and suddenly we are supposed to know what we want to do with our lives" (Hassler, p. 47).

- We must get to the core of what we want.
  - In order to do this we must:
    - Discern our expectations
    - Recognize beliefs
    - Explore head and heart (your core)
    - Understand and develop realistic goals

**Obstacles to determine what we want**

- I “Shoulds”
- Expectation Hangover
- The notion of “Having it all”
How do I get what I want?

It is important to develop a life plan. Learning how to make things work in your life in a way that satisfies you are essential.

- Build a Solid Foundation
  - Your twenties are your “house building stage”...the house you will live in the rest of your life. Lay the foundation.
    - Secure your independence
    - Self-security
    - Financial Security

Obstacles to getting what you want

- Not enough-ness and comparisons
- Discontent
- Overextension
LET’S DISCUSS

**Who Am I?**

Reflect on who you are (personally and then professionally). Include the reasons that you are the person you said you are (familial background, education, career choice, etc...)

**Questions to ponder:**
- What expectations have you tried to live up to that were not your own?
- How have those expectations become your own?
- How did your parents/guardians influence your life goals and aspirations?

Consider every aspect that you feel is relevant to answering the question of who you are? What surprised you about your answers? Were they what you expected? Why or why not.

**Write down your reflections.**
LET’S DISCUSS

- What do I want?

*What we believe and what we are told to believe are often enmeshed in our heads*” (Hassler, pg. 52).

- Write down a list of at least 5 statements about what you want. Focus on aspects of your identity both personally and professionally.
  - (ie: I believe I should work 3 years as a new professional before advancing to mid level).

- Reflect on the statements that have been programmed into you, circle or highlight those statements.
How do I get what I want?

Take a mental inventory of what you have in your life right now. Do you think of ways it can be better?

- (ie making more money, starting a family, losing weight, etc).
  Write down all of your important life categories (career, romantic relationships, work, faith, family, physical appearance, etc).

- Take your top 3 categories and write down ways you would like to change, improve or alter things in that area of your life. Review your responses and consider if this is keeping you from a natural process of discovery and fulfillment? Are you too hard on yourself about certain things?

- Circle any item on your list that falls into this category. Discuss how you plan to let go of things you circled and how you plan being content with where you are. Feel free to take notes and follow through with your plan.
REFRAMING HOW YOU VIEW YOUR WORK

“Our careers are often in the forefront of our twenty something crisis” (Hassler, p. 265)

Questions to ponder

- Who am I in my career?
- What do I want in my career?
- How do I get what I want in a career?
BEST PRACTICES

- Interview professionals at every level
  - Ask them questions you yourself are wondering about
- Do a personal/professional assessment
  - What drives you to work
  - What are your professional interests?
  - What competency areas are you proficient in?
  - What competency areas do you want to develop more?
- Identify, discuss and establish a great relationship with a mentor
  - Identify your next 1-3 or 3-5 year plan
  - new job/location
  - same job
  - different area of practice
  - what are you deal breakers and non-negotiable
Where are you personally? With your friends? With your significant other? With your family? Physically? Emotionally? Spiritually?

What plan are you developing to achieve goals in these areas?

Use part three of group work activity to reflect and use their work (Really think about who you were, who you are now, and what/where you want to be)

What can you add?
Remember, Career Contentment is a journey

“Our career choices are not engraved in stone, and our answers to the 20s triangle questions will evolve over time. If we reassess rather than obsess, we just might discover our purpose” (Hassler, p. 300.)