

How redundancy affects your sense of power at home...

In the 1980's we experienced a new phenomenon of 'Dinky's' (Dual Income No Kids Yet). It led to a psychological trend in society where a professional couple funded a generous lifestyle, more or less equally. The trend evolved post 2000 when the escalating cost of living required both people to work– irrespective of whether they had children!

So what happens when one earner is made redundant? Overnight the power balance shifts within the relationship. When both people contribute to the household bills, financial discussions are held more or less on equal terms. With one person suddenly the sole breadwinner, that sense of equality changes.

Remember, a job is often a key component to your sense of identity and the loss of it can quickly erode your self belief. So whilst you can't change the job market you can influence how you perceive yourself at home. Although tempting to blow redundancy monies on a new car or home improvements – this temporary distraction is not a sensible long term strategy! Placing a lump sum into an account and drawing out a regular amount each month to fund a share of the bills can help maintain some sense of balance and pride – even if the contribution is less than before.

Often dual professionals will 'outsource' services such as cleaning or gardening. Beware the assumption that this should become the duty of the person made redundant. Clearly this makes economic sense, however, it's important that both people realise this must come second to finding another job. Whilst enjoying home-made meals may reduce your restaurant bills, it won't replace a second income!

Some people will decide to take the leap into running their own business and this is the subject of next month's article. However, many clients are more conservative and whilst they come to me saying they want a complete career change they end up pursuing a related career. This choice is the result of having carefully and seriously evaluated all options. If you are the partner of someone going through this transition it can be very frustrating and tiring listening to their "pipe dreams", yet anticipating they will stick to what they already know! So it's important to remember that they need to work through the alternatives, put things into perspective and ensure they won't be chastising themselves later for "selling out".

Where both partners are made redundant – try not to distract each other from the priority task of finding new work. A clear structure to the week with scheduled and synchronised 'work' and 'down' time can help. Perhaps dedicate some time to actively supporting your partner's job search by lending your help and encouragement.

As the saying goes, what doesn't defeat you makes you stronger. So be prudent, be disciplined on your job search but don't forget to do some "fun stuff" too! You'll eventually look back at this chapter, as a time you got through together. In this market, persistence is key. Thomas Edison said "Many of life's failures are people who did not realise how close they were to success when they gave in".

If you have been made redundant and would like more tips on how to maintain your sense of self-belief take a look at the tip sheets on <http://www.coachu4success.co.uk/resources/MotivateYourself.htm> . Or to organise a free consultation contact Michelle direct on Michelle@greenfieldsconsultancy.co.uk