

QUARTER-LIFE CRISIS

WHAT IS A QUARTER-LIFE CRISIS?

We've all heard of the mid-life crisis, but what about the quarter-life crisis? Affecting young adults aged 25-33, a quarter-life crisis is a time of insecurity, doubt and disappointment surrounding one's relationships, career choice, appearance or financial situation. It is a time where young adults can feel a lack of direction in their lives, and anxiously start to ask, "Is this it?". The stress of such crisis is a mental health risk, and could relate to the average age of depression decreasing from mid-40s to mid-20s. Whilst stress does increase into the 30s and beyond, this incline is far slower and shorter than the rapid increase that takes place in the 20s.

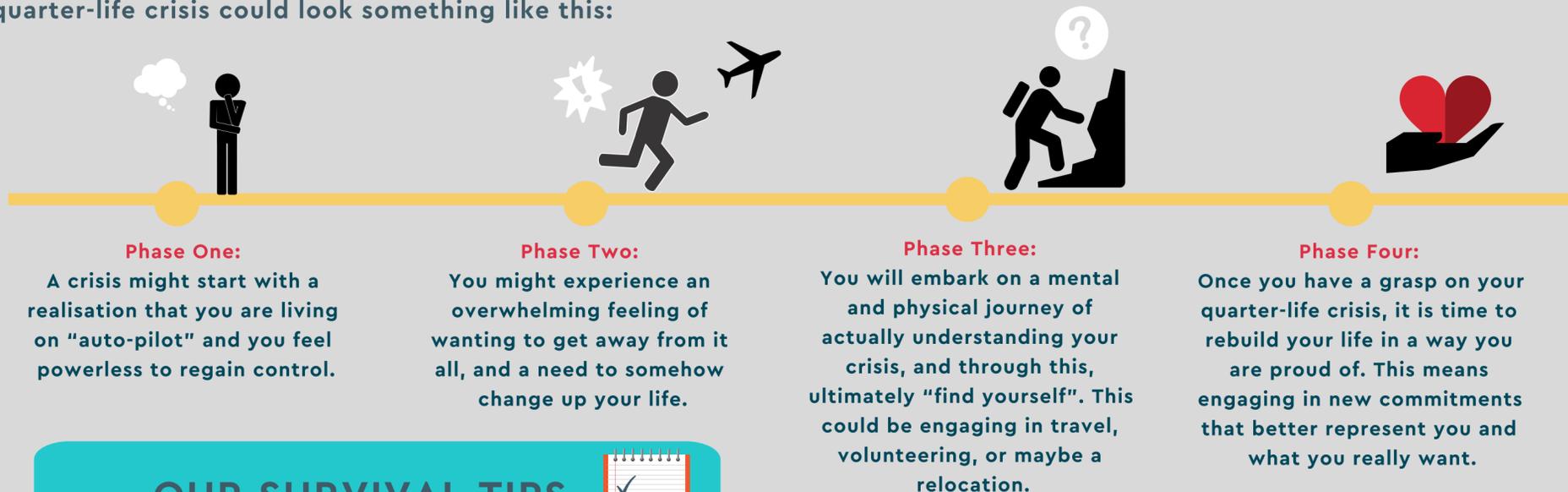


WHY DOES IT OCCUR?

According to developmental psychologist, Erik Erikson*, it is normal for adolescents aged 12-18 to ask, "Who am I?" and "Who can I be?", but it appears teenagers today are too busy managing their education and juggling casual work, social life and social media, so the focus on their future is being disrupted. Answering their identity questions is being postponed until their mid-20s, which can bring a sense of urgency as career expectations and biological clocks kick in, and with this comes anxiety and internal conflict.

THE WARNING BELLS!

A quarter-life crisis could look something like this:



OUR SURVIVAL TIPS



1. FIGURE OUT WHAT YOU DON'T WANT

In the middle of a crisis, it can feel overwhelming to work out what you want in life, but making a list of the things you don't want is a lot easier! Identifying things you want to stop doing and what things make you unhappy, will eventually help you answer what things you do want.

3. MAKE A 5-YEAR PLAN, BUT BE OPEN TO CHANGES

It is good to plan for the future through setting small goals leading to a larger goal. But if the plan changes, don't be afraid to step back and start again. Keep the inspiration flowing!

2. LIMIT YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA CONSUMPTION

Young adults fall into the trap of obsessive comparison which only damages self-confidence. Avoid comparing your life to the "filtered" standards of others, as it may cause you to lose track of your own goals in favour of impressing others.

4. DON'T BE SO HARD ON YOURSELF

We all know success doesn't happen in a day... it can take decades. Embrace the person you are today, and the rest will become easier.

YOU'VE GOT THIS!

The overwhelming disruption of a quarter-life crisis is, in fact, a good thing. When you learn to acknowledge the uncertainty about who you are and what you want, you will remember that **nothing in life has to be permanent** - there is always time to keep striving and achieving more.

For organisations, supporting individuals in this age bracket is essential and considerate. It can be a challenging time for them as well as those around them so being able to discuss this openly and supportively will reduce the impact and foster a psychologically safe work environment.



*Erik Erikson's Stages of Psychosocial Development. Retrieved from <https://www.simplypsychology.org/Erik-Erikson.html>

