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PSYCHOLOGIST'S MINDFUL APPROACH TO WORKPLACE RESOLUTIONS

FROM AN EARLY AGE MEREDITH FULLER KNEW HER CALLING - NOW THE FORMER CHILD MODEL AND ACTOR IS A PSYCHOLOGIST, MEDIA COMMENTATOR AND AUTHOR

WHAT I DO: I run my own business as a psychologist specialising in career change and development. I work with clients between late 20s and early 60s who are unhappy about their work situations but may be "stuck" for various reasons within and external to their control. I also consult to a number of organisations who may refer staff.

HOW I GOT HERE: I was a child model and actor, but didn't see myself satisfied with this when I grew up. Having a natural interest in careers counselling from an early age, I chose a psychology degree in occupational psych, then a

graduate diploma in vocational counselling. While studying the latter, I took a job for a year at the Youth Job Centre, an experiment by the CES. I applied for a job as a careers counsellor at Rusden - a teacher training institution - and then spent 12 years team leading the Careers Service. During this time I completed a research Master of Social Science in career behaviour, and worked evenings sessionally as a lecturer in the Grad Dip for a number of years. I began a private practice in 1990.

MY TYPICAL WEEK: I love doing different and new things, so I see clients for

careers counselling during the week, and devote the rest of the week to other projects [teaching, supervising other psychologists, providing long-term personal counselling, contributing to the body of knowledge in my field via writing etc.] I write articles for journals and the print media, have a regular guest spot on ABC radio with Trevor Chappell, and provide psychological advice for TV.

THE GOOD BITS: Helping people who are in pain with little hope. I love supporting people making career and lifestyle changes that enable them to work with passion, integrity, and meaning. I enjoy

solving the people puzzles, and generating new theories of career behaviour I can write about.

WORK STRESS: I focus deeply and my work is intense and I need time between client visits. Long hours and feeling "talked out" by the end of work. I don't have it in me to chat on the phone to friends, get through all the emails, or attack the administrative piles that breed on my desk.

WHAT'S THE BEST CAREER ADVICE YOU CAN OFFER? Do work that is congruent with who you truly are and that you can love and respect. You need self-

awareness, insight, and curiosity about your unconscious and conscious behaviours. You also benefit from observations from people you value.

WORDS OF WISDOM: Mentors are useful. I had an amazing mentor, Selby, one of my lecturers, who was significant in my development. I wasn't afraid to bring him my mistakes, silly questions, or opposing viewpoints.

WHAT'S THE NEXT STEP? I'm spending more time writing and multi-media. But essentially, I see myself careers counselling and writing about it well into my 70s.