

Career Changes Transcript

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So my name is Serena. I am currently about to finish my training as an NHS midwife, but before that I used to work in finance so had a big career change at the beginning of the lockdown, I think.

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When I realised that finance really wasn't for me and I wanted to do more of a vocation, that has involved sort of going back to university, I am.

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Did my first degree in biomedical sciences up at Newcastle and then sort of after three years of doing that worked in hospitals in a different element in pathology and then sort of fell into finance as suppose I wanted to move to London and.

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Applied for all sorts of different jobs all over the place and ended up getting offered this job at a boutique firm based in Mayfair, three 2 1/2 years. Actually, after starting that, I sort of realised that that job wasn't for me. My job rolled tight, title changed massively and I wasn't.

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Really informed about that. And then I felt really massively out of my depth and thought well, there's no time like the present. Why? Why wait? I'd always wanted to be a midwife, so I took, took the chance and and quit my job in finance and then applied to go back to university to study another undergraduate degree.

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At Kings College London, and I'm just about to, well, I've just finished my three years of academic training there and and yeah, about to start my new my new real life life as a midwife and in the NHS.

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I got to the point where I knew that I needed to change. I was just finding work so stressful, I.

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Found that I was not being myself. I was missing out on friendship things and like my normal life balance because I was so worried about work that I would spend every waking minute doing that. Then I think it was the

fact that, you know, I'd wake up in the middle of the night like thinking about emails that I needed to send or that I hadn't sent.

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And was just constantly on sort of high.

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Alert. I never left anywhere or turned off my work phone and I just generally was quite.

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Highly strung about the whole thing and not really enjoying it at the same time. I I panicked about everything that I sent and and when we were started working from home in in the lockdown there was a there was a working way that changed and it sort of meant that you never were offline. People were constantly.

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On your back for various things, and I think that's part and parcel of the job, because I've worked within different time zones and all across the.

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World and but when I found working from home and not being able to switch off from that much harder than I had when we worked in the office. So yeah, when I when I realised that my quality of life, let's put it, had changed massively and I wasn't really enjoying myself in that sense.

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I thought I'm. I'm gonna take the plunge and and and change.

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But with that comes a whole load of different emotions. A, you know, how did I know that? Midwifery? I thought that I'd wanted to be a midwife the whole of my life, like being fascinated by pregnant people. And but I was giving up a lot to do that. Firstly I was giving up a a A like a confirmed.

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Up a salary and I think I was sort of like all of my friends, are sort of settled in jobs now and I'm about to technically turn my life upside down, go back to being a student.

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Unpaid work for three years and and it did take.

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A lot of considerations. Is this a sensible idea? Is this clever?

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I was fortunate in a sense that working in finance to start hand had given me a bit of a backing to be able to do that.

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And but it was quite a financial commitment in terms of more student loans and that's obviously not ideal for everybody, but I'm very pleased that I've done it and through doing it have actually been able to sort of pick up bits of work along the way through various.

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Avenues.

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Which have all only enhanced my sort of midwifery career in terms of, you know, babysitting or doing various things for different clinics and stuff like that. So that has been good, but it was.

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Definitely important. I quit in October of 2020, which meant that I had about nine months before starting midwifery and that in that time it allowed me to sort of like regather my thoughts.

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Try something different as a bit of temporary work before knowing that I was gonna start on the career that I knew that I wanted.

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To end up in.

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Uhm, I sort of had many conversations with a lot of people and.

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They all sort of said to me, no money will come and go at various points in your life, but actually staying in one place just to have the financial security is one thing. But you've also got to look at yourself and the big bigger picture if you're not able to, then enjoy the money that you're earning, then there's no point in earning it in the front.

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First place.

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Um, so yeah, it's a big it was a big risk, I suppose in in terms of.

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Rent in London is expensive, like living in London is expensive. I was quite worried that I was going to have to.

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Take a big.

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Like a big change in my lifestyle, I suppose, because.

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I felt that I was moving down a pay grade and all of my friends were moving up a pay grade, but anyway, it has never been the case. Luckily I have got very understanding friends and you just have to.

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It's it's definitely a change, but it's one that has been so worth it. And so I spoke to a lot of people prior to the big change. I didn't want to.

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It's helpful to be able to speak to people about this, my family.

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And friends were particularly supportive of it because I think they had seen and.

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How how much I changed through my first career and were sort of like this isn't really this isn't really what you want. And I feel that you'd be happier doing somewhere else. So they were. They've always been my biggest supporters from the sidelines in that sense.

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And.

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I've had other friends who were like, you're absolutely mad. Why are you considering that? Are you aware of? Like, are you aware of the financial losses that you're going to make from that? Like you'll never make that money again?

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Fine and bigger. Another thing that I always had was Oh my God, the hours that you work in the NHS are just terrible.

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And they are nothing that I've worked in comparison to what I worked in finance. So just goes to show how much people can often say things which stick with you and actually they have no idea about that.

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It's really helpful to speak to people about it and definitely try if you can, to speak to someone who's in the industry that you're wanting to go into. I think that was really important for me. I had a couple of friends who had to become midwives earlier on and they were able to sit down and really.

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Give me an insight into what the job really entailed and how that career was gonna pan out for me. So if you can get direct information from someone in it because.

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Yeah, there's no harm in that. And yeah, listen to what you want to listen to.

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Block out the stuff you don't want to listen to and trust your gut. I think I had a gut feeling that finance was not working out for me and it was just having the trust in that feeling to allow myself to think I need to go elsewhere for this.

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Um, so I think my top advice for career changes would be don't be scared of it. Embrace it. It can seem really, really daunting at the beginning, and a lot of people.

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Everyone you speak to will have an opinion on why you're doing it, and some of those opinions can be negative and some of those opinions could be really positive.

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You've got to do this for you. It's a selfless change. Don't think about anybody else but yourself in that process and just know that it's OK. It's not, never frowned upon, and in fact, it's one of the bravest things that you can do is take that change for you.

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Yourself and I hope, like me. You won't regret it because it has just been the best decision that I made and there were points during that where I thought ohh my gosh, what have I done?

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Do I regret this? Nothing is ever plain sailing, regardless of whether you're doing a dream career or am struggling in the one that you're in. So just to ride out the bumps in the road on that sense and.

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Keep pushing forward, I think, and don't settle until you are happy. There's no right or wrong on how many career paths.

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You have someone once said to me you have at least seven career changes before you find you're happy. I'm on career #5, so let's see where this one takes us after that. But yeah, just keep going until you found the one, because no one is meant to know what they want to do from the outset.

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And and yeah. Enjoy it.