An Interview with Amber Rosenberg
By Serena Kappes, Daily Worth, May 30, 2014

Job Check-in
When's the last time you asked yourself if you're (still) doing what you love? Often, just getting through the daily workload keeps your mind occupied enough that wondering whether your career is really making you happy becomes an afterthought. You can become so focused on your day-to-day job that you set your career on autopilot without even realizing it.

It can take a major transition - getting laid off from a job, for instance, or getting a new boss - before you ask yourself whether you're happy in your current situation and in your career. But doing a career check-in when you're still employed is actually a smart idea. You may come to the determination that the job you have isn't really utilizing all your strengths or the goals you had earlier in your career may no longer be the ones you have now.

"Sometimes people find themselves falling into a career path that was unintentional," explains Amber Rosenberg, a San Francisco-based career coach with 20 years of experience working with private clients and companies like Google, Adobe and Morgan Stanley. "Five years, 10 years, 15 years down the road, they think to themselves, 'I never really intended to go in this direction and now I'm here. How can I change this?'"

Here are some exercises that can help you figure out whether the job or career you have is really the right one for you - and if not, what you can do to change that.

Write a Vision Statement
A vision statement, explains Rosenberg, is a writing exercise to help you identify some important attributes of a fulfilling career: what kind of people you really work best with, what values you're honoring in your career (think about what makes you feel engaged and happy or achievements you're especially proud of), what kind of impact you want to make in your career and what you need to do in order to make this vision a reality. It may seem daunting to tackle, but don't overthink it. Plan to spend about 5 to 10 minutes thinking about each.

"Sit down after some kind of self-care activity, like exercise or meditation or yoga - whatever it is that's going to help you feel really centered and grounded and not in your head and coming from a place of fear, doubt or worry," says Rosenberg. "If you have an annual vision statement for where you want your career to be and you check in along the way - little check-ins every month to see how you're doing against that vision - that's a good way to approach it." And, if during the course of writing your vision statement you realize that your values (what really makes you feel fulfilled) aren't being met in your current career, it may be time to make some changes. "At the end of the day, if you're in a career or a profession that really does honor values, you're going to feel more fulfilled and be more successful," adds Rosenberg.
**Set S.M.A.R.T. Goals**
You want to be S.M.A.R.T. about setting goals - that is, goals that are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timely. "The idea is the more specific and measurable you make them, the more realistic they are," says Rosenberg. "You can break them down into small, achievable action steps that are big enough to move you forward but small enough to be doable." For instance, a short-term goal might be getting more engaged with clients. A long-term goal might be that you want to be the CEO of a company in 10 years. By segmenting your goals, you won't feel quite as overwhelmed.

**Learn Your Strengths**
Sometimes we're not even aware of what our strengths are because we take them for granted. Rosenberg recommends taking an online strength-finder assessment like the one on the "Authentic Happiness" website from Dr. Martin Seligman, the Director of the Positive Psychology Center at the University of Pennsylvania and founder of positive psychology (a branch of psychology which focuses on the empirical study of positive emotions and strengths-based character).

"It can be very validating and confidence-boosting to do a little bit of external check-in to find out what are these strengths and are you leveraging them? I always recommend that people look at their top five strengths and record them," says Rosenberg. "So much of our performance reports in our culture focus on areas for improvement and instead, if you can approach your job and your career from a place of strength, how much more empowering is that going to be?"

**Analyze How Your Job Makes You Feel**
A 2012 survey by Net Impact, a nonprofit organization geared toward students and professionals interested in using business skills in support of various social and environmental causes, found that 88 percent of workers considered "positive culture" and "work/life balance" to be very important or essential factors in their dream job. Meanwhile, 86 percent said the same about "interesting work" and 58 percent of respondents said they would take a 15 percent pay cut in order to work for an organization "with values like my own."

Because we spend so much of our life working, how your job makes you feel really matters for your overall well-being. "A good way to gauge if you're on track with your career is how do you feel at the end of the day? Do you feel energized? Do you feel depleted? Do you feel excited?" asks Rosenberg. "These are good questions to ask yourself as well as how do you feel at the beginning of the day when you're going to work. A lot of people want to feel like they're making some sort of difference. Is your job helping people to live better lives? Is it helping companies to produce more? Is it making things easier for a population of folks? Getting a sense at the end of the day what people are contributing to helps them evaluate, 'Is this really feeding my soul?'"

**Have a Daily Renewal Ritual (It'll Help You Think Better)**
In our non-stop, email-checking, Facebook status-updating culture, taking time to decompress and just be is often a challenge. But it's an essential factor in figuring out what motivates and makes us happy. "All the experts and the research points to the benefit of taking 10 minutes, twice a day, for some sort of quiet, reflective activity that quiets the thinking brain and allows you to be present and in the moment," explains Rosenberg. "It can do wonders if you're in a career and you say
to yourself, 'I don't really know what I want. It's very difficult to think clearly and make decisions when you're operating from a place of stress and overdrive.' Any regular daily renewal ritual that quiets your mind - cooking, going for a run - can really help center you and help you think more clearly about what you really want.