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# LIFESTYLE DIARIES

SEGMENT 4

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## Creaky backs and shattered hearts: What they don't tell you about your 30s

They say that you will know what you want to do before you hit your teens. They say that in your twenties, you will already be on the way towards your dream career and by the end of it, find your partner and be married. They say that in your thirties, you should already have children, own a home and car, and have your career set in stone. Well, THEY say a lot of things!

For many, life simply does not work that way. Sure, those of you in your twenties reading this are probably saying, "By the time I am 29, all of the above are just going to fall into place."

To you, I, and many others in our mid-thirties, say "Don't hold your breath!"

Now, this won't be much of a pleasant read if I were to simply talk about all the things that have gone wrong

with our lives, and so, instead of focusing on us, how about we tell you twenty-somethings what to expect down the road so that you know what to expect and hopefully, deal with things better than we had.

### CAREER REALITIES

When in your 30s, perhaps the biggest daily reminder of how hard life is, lies with where you spend most of your days — the workplace. If you are one of the lucky few mid-30s who are doing what you always wanted, and you are financially solvent, well kudos to you. Sadly, stories like that are few and far between.

The reality is most of us are working in places that were not even on our list, but life's unpredictable currents had other plans. Truth be told, we have learned to make peace with it, and

will enable you to adapt to your career swings more easily.

One thing we have difficulty making peace with though is the poor state of our finances. Many soul-sucking jobs pay well, but at the end of the day, you are reduced to a husk, while a job you might enjoy might hand out a peanut instead. And keep in mind, as the years go by, your money buys less and less stuff, and that's a problem if your workplace's idea of a raise is double-digit numbers.

It's handy to remember that unlike the '60s and '70s, when our parents or grandparents could buy a house for the salaries we typically make now, this same salary is not even enough to get a meeting with a real estate agent.

So, the only wisdom I can impart right now is to start saving immediately and go see a therapist to deal with any of your unresolved issues, rather than dealing with said issues by buying into new hobbies every other year, because trust me, you are not helping anyone.

### YOUR HEALTH'S WAKEUP CALL

Are you someone who could bolt up seven stories without breaking a sweat? Well, guess what?

Crossing thirties will see you with a mild arrhythmia and gasping for an oxygen canister after just two stories. And forget eating your favourite junk food whenever wherever. Even before you get a reality check at work, the first thing that will tip you off that 30s and beyond is a whole new ball game — your health.

You have seen plenty of sitcoms and movies stating this,



standing on this planet alone. We know that is the eventuality of life, but I don't think we truly realise what it entails until we are on the spot.

No one's saying you need to be provided for and taken care of like a big baby, but think about this — what will you do when you are sick? Say, as sick as your parents are now? Your parents had you to look after, but who will be there for you? If you answer "friend," "relatives," or "myself," then dear reader, you are kidding yourself.

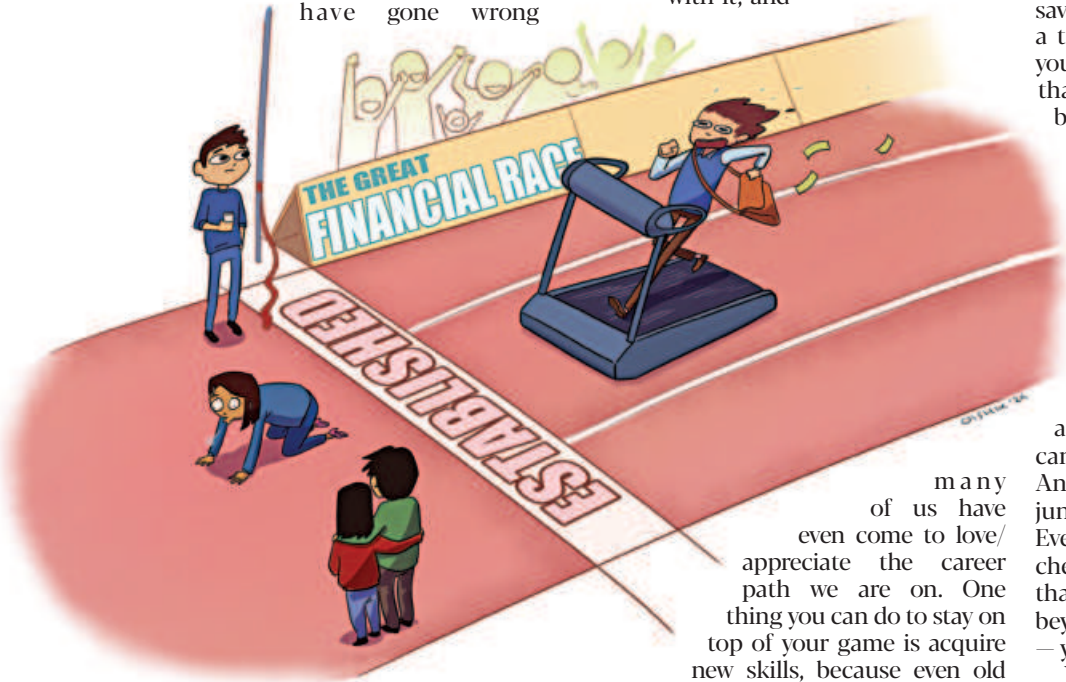
Having a strong romantic partner helps make peace with some of these situations. However, as we learned in our mid-30s, you cannot even take that for granted. If there is one upheaval that we in our 20s didn't see much were relationship woes.

Growing up, we saw people just pair up and before you knew it, their knots were tied. I mean, that's what movies and TV shows taught us. Sadly, the reality was different.

Stories of 30+ people loving hard and having their hearts broken to smithereens are as common as the cold. And so, you will find loads of us mid-30s folks trying to go through life with our heart in 50,000 pieces, but still putting up a smile to not ruin anyone else's day.

With the advent of social media, relationships have gotten even more fragile, as we are constantly led to believe that there is always a better choice out there. The "fix it till you make it" philosophy has taken a backseat to the "new is always better" mindset, and let me tell you, that's not healthy.

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many of us have even come to love/appreciate the career path we are on. One thing you can do to stay on top of your game is acquire new skills, because even old dogs can learn new tricks! This

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