

THE FIRST 100 DAYS AFTER YOUR EXIT

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A Reality Guide for Entrepreneurs and Executives in Transition

Before You Begin: This isn't about what to do. It's about what to expect. After guiding hundreds through major transitions, these patterns are universal. Knowing them won't prevent them, but it will normalize them.

Days 1-30: The Honeymoon Illusion

What It Looks Like: You're busy with logistics. Lawyers, accountants, celebrations. The calendar still has momentum. People still call. You feel free.

What's Actually Happening: Your nervous system hasn't caught up. You're running on 20+ years of adrenaline and identity. The real transition hasn't started.

The Hidden Danger: Making major decisions from your old operating system. Starting new ventures to avoid the void. Saying yes to boards and advisorships you'll regret.

One Critical Action: Do nothing strategic for 30 days. No new ventures. No big commitments. Let the dust settle.

Days 31-60: The Void

What It Looks Like: Monday feels different when there's nowhere to be. The phone stops ringing. Your opinions matter less. The problems that defined you are someone else's now.

What's Actually Happening: Identity withdrawal. Like detoxing from a drug, except the drug was significance, stimulation, and structure.

The Hidden Danger: Panic-driven decisions. Recreating what you had. Depression masquerading as "relaxation."

One Critical Action: Document what you miss versus what you don't. Notice the difference between missing the work and missing who you were when you did it.

Days 61-100: The Fork

What It Looks Like: Two paths emerge clearly:

- Path 1: Recreate your old life in new form (new company, more boards, stay busy)
- Path 2: Sit in the uncertainty and discover what else you might be

What's Actually Happening: Your ego is fighting for survival, offering familiar solutions to an unfamiliar problem.

The Hidden Danger: Choosing Path 1 because Path 2 feels like death. (It's not death - it's rebirth, but your system can't tell the difference.)

One Critical Action: Before choosing, spend one full week doing nothing productive. No networking, no planning, no researching. Notice who you are when you stop producing. That's your teacher.

The Three Essential Questions

Before making any major decision in your first 100 days:

1. **Am I running FROM something or TO something?** (Discomfort vs. Calling)
 2. **Would I do this if no one ever knew about it?** (Purpose vs. Performance)
 3. **Does this expand who I'm becoming or recreate who I've been?** (Evolution vs. Repetition)
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What Nobody Tells You

- Grief is normal (you're mourning an identity, not just a job)
 - Your spouse is transitioning too (they married the CEO/founder)
 - Money doesn't solve the identity problem (it often amplifies it)
 - Most people can't relate to your struggle (find those who can)
 - This is supposed to be hard (transformation always is)
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The Other Side

Those who navigate this successfully report:

- Energy without anxiety
- Success without performance
- Relationships without transactions
- Purpose without pressure
- Identity without title

It's possible. But first, you have to survive the first 100 days.

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