Coping with losing a job

How losing a job can affect you, and what helps in the weeks afterwards.

Losing a job can shake your routine, your finances, your confidence and your sense of who you are, all at once. Strong reactions are normal, even if the job was not one you loved.

What you may feel

Shock and anger
At how it happened, at the unfairness.

Shame
As if it says something about your worth. It does not.

Anxiety
About money, and about what comes next.

Grief
For colleagues, purpose and status.

Relief
Sometimes, and sometimes with guilt attached.

Low mood
As weeks pass and structure falls away.

What helps

1. **Keep a routine.** Get up, get dressed and have a plan for the day. Structure is the first thing to go, and keeping it protects your mood.
2. **Treat the job search as a part-time job.** Set hours, with a start and a finish. Then do other things.
3. **Face the money early.** Work out what you have and what you need. Check your entitlements. In Ireland, Citizens Information and MABS (the Money Advice and Budgeting Service) give free advice.
4. **Stay in contact.** Isolation makes everything harder. Tell people. Many jobs come through people you know.
5. **Look after your body.** Sleep, movement, food, daylight. Go easy on alcohol.
6. **Keep some achievement and enjoyment in every day,** unrelated to work.
7. **Separate what you do from who you are.** Your skills, your character and your relationships are still there.
8. **Expect ups and downs.** Rejections sting. They are a normal part of looking for work.

Talk to your GP
if low mood or anxiety lasts more than a couple of weeks, or if you are having thoughts that life is not worth living. In an emergency call 112 or 999. Samaritans: freephone 116 123.

What I miss most about the job

What I want from the next chapter

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