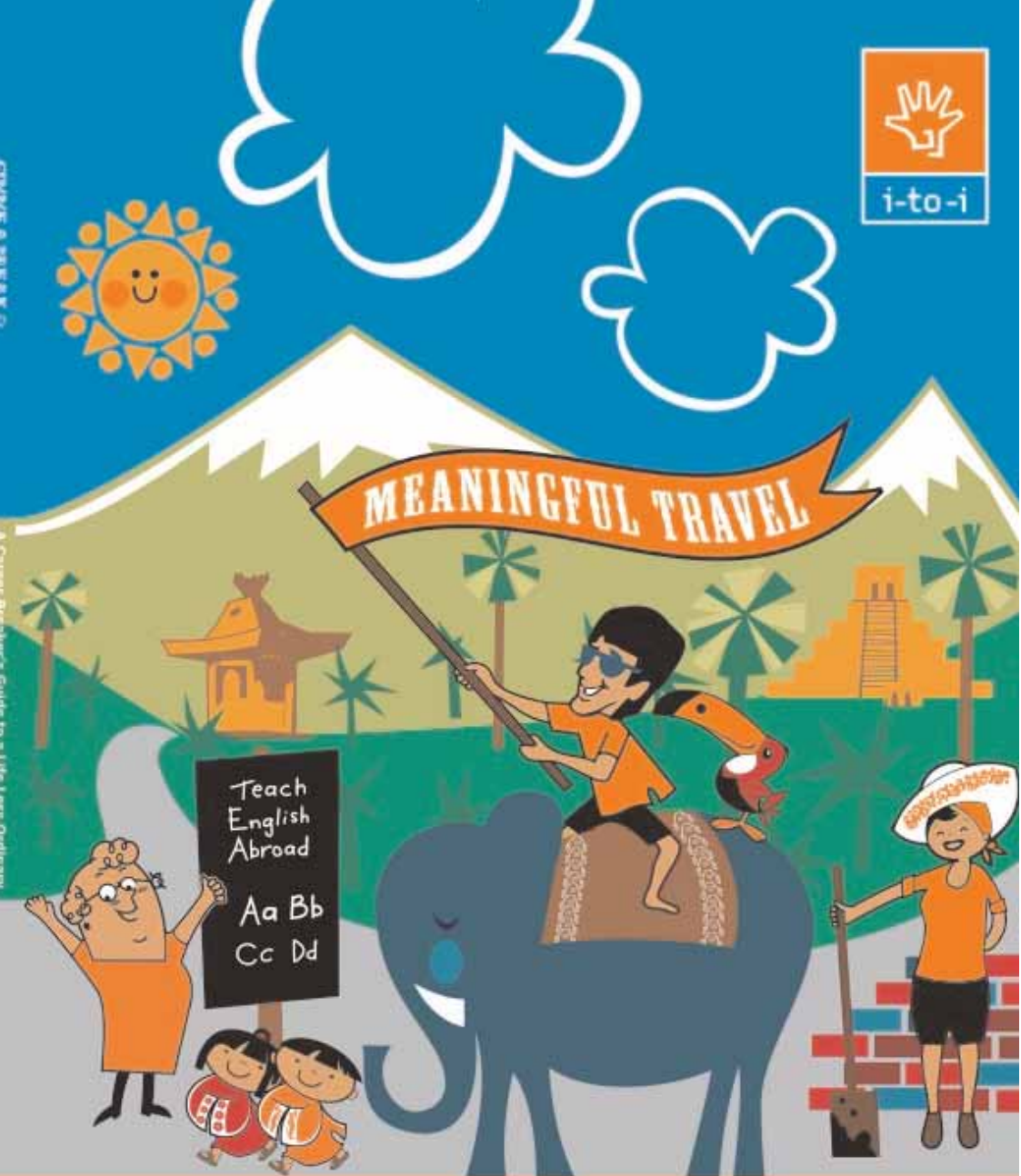




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GIMMIE A BREAK

A Career Breaker's Guide to a Life Less Ordinary

GET A LIFE

Introduction

Are you happy? Is life really good?

Or, do you find yourself gazing out of the window at work wondering 'is there more to life than this?' Perhaps you spend your Monday-to-Fridays clock-watching and dreaming of a new challenge.

Or perhaps although you like your job, you just want a break from the daily grind.

You're not alone. In a survey conducted by organisers of 'One Life Live' – a show for those looking to change their lives - a shocking 86 per cent of people between 25 and 54 said they were disillusioned with life in general. Fifty-eight per cent dreamt of breaking free from their work to do something more fulfilling and 49 per cent fantasised about a less stressful existence...

But the good news is there is a way out. It's right here, right now and it's open to everyone. So you can escape to the real world and join the grown-up gapper revolution heading off on a sabbatical, career break or a post-career trip.

It's fear of failure and a lack of confidence that stops many people from achieving their dreams.

After all, there are always plenty of reasons not to go.



MONEY	FRIENDS
MORTGAGE	PETS
JOB	RELATIVES
PARTNER	KIDS
AGE	HEALTH



'My travel experience changed my life. It inspired me to look for a new career and go travelling for nearly a year.'
Nicola Wheeler, P43



'When I got on the plane to go, I didn't know where my career break would take me. But it was the best thing I've ever done.'
Katy Cox, P39

The 20 people in the following pages made it real, and they're here to tell you how. Turn the pages to read the story of the person who taught in Cambodia after having cancer (Eileen page 58). And, about the party girl who went from the bars of Spain to a voluntary work career in Costa Rica (Nicola page 44) and the man who is now grateful for being made redundant (Matt page 42). It goes from the wacky – like the post-career computer fanatic who went new age and married a Brazilian (Giles page 60) to the wonderful - a woman who met her husband-to-be cleaning beaches and homes after the tsunami in Sri Lanka.

Read on to find out more...

We've also included a little bit of help from the experts, so you have all the information you need to do it yourself – from financing your trip to setting goals so you can use your career break to impress employers. Even how to set up your own business when you get back! And then, there's our experience from dealing with THOUSANDS of career breakers over 13 years at i-to-i, the largest global career break company working in meaningful travel, sending travellers to nearly 30 countries around the world.

HAPPINESS...

A survey on happiness found that it wasn't Americans, Japanese, British or Germans who were happiest. It was the Icelanders. (Inglehart and Klingemann, 2000).

Forty-four per cent of British adults in the Last Minute Living Survey said they feel under constant pressure to perform. Forty-one per cent were sometimes overwhelmed by all the choices they have to make. Don't you think 100 per cent of them would want to escape to the real world?



'Don't do it for other people, do it for yourself.'
Gillian Drake, P61



'Be impulsive – don't put off anything that looks like fun.'
Last Minute Living

THE CAREER BREAK QUIZ

But before we go any further, a quick quiz ...

Gone are the days when career breaks are just for the young or extremely loaded! And, employers are increasingly seeing the benefits of the grown up gapper revolution.

However, a career break might not be everyone's cup of tai chi, at least not right now. Why not take our scientifically unproven psychometric test and determine if it could be right for you ...

1

How long have you been in full time employment?

- 1 A few hours.
- 2 A couple of months.
- 3 1-5 years.
- 4 10 years or more.

2

How often do you watch the clock at work praying for the day to end?

- 1 Never. Work's great fun.
- 2 Occasionally if the day is slow.
- 3 Quite often - yawn!
- 4 Sorry, what was that again? I was looking at the clock.

3

How stressed are you feeling on a scale of one to ten?

- 1 One, totally chilled maaan!
- 2 Three, I don't tend to get worked up.
- 3 Six, life ain't always easy.
- 4 12 give me a break argghh!

4

Have you often lent a helping hand to others?

- 1 Don't be ridiculous I am far too busy looking after myself!
- 2 Erm occasionally, well once or twice.... I think??
- 3 I try to when I can, but know I could do more.
- 4 I am involved in one or more volunteering activities right now.

- 1 I will travel anywhere - as long as they serve lager and can cook me a full English every day.
- 2 Europe is about as far as I have ventured so far.
- 3 I have done some travelling but have a few more places I'd like to go.
- 4 I hope to visit every continent in the world and as many countries as possible in my lifetime.

Do you
enjoy
travel?

5

Answers below ...

You don't have the motivation or commitment to make a break right now. Although this may not be the time for you to take that break, one day it could be exactly what you want to do.

**mostly
ones**

Think carefully about why you want to take that break and what you want to achieve from it. Make sure you are doing it for all the right reasons and that you are prepared to make a few sacrifices. This is more than just a holiday - you could also gain so much more from it.

**mostly
twos**

This could be the time for you to take that break! You may be a little unsure but do your research and this could be the best decision you ever made.

**mostly
threes**

What are you still sitting there for! Seize the day and get yourself away. Life at home is not satisfying and your energy could best be used to explore the world and perhaps help others.

**mostly
fours**



Matt Tamplin



Age: 29

Job ambition at 18:
Wanted to run my
own pub

Three main values:
Honesty; integrity and
living life to the full

COSTS:

Flight	£550
Two i-to-i projects	£1,590
Online and weekend TEFL	£500
TOTAL:	£2,640

I'M SO PLEASED I GOT MADE REDUNDANT

Why did you take a career break?

I was looking at going travelling anyway when I got made redundant from my job in pub management.

How did you make it happen?

I had already backpacked around Australia and New Zealand and wanted to do something constructive this time round. Teaching and going to a non-English speaking country were the challenges I set myself. I used my redundancy lump sum to pay for the trip.

What did you do/where did you go?

I taught English for a month in the Amazon basin and spent a month on a conservation project in Ecuador, both with i-to-i. I loved the conservation work and stayed for six more weeks as volunteer co-ordinator. There's now a baby named Matteo in my honour in the cloud forest of Ecuador!

How has it affected you?

Going on a career break changed my life. I knew when I got back I wanted to work in the travel industry, with volunteer projects around the world. On my last night in Ecuador, I saw a job advertised on the internet – co-ordinating volunteers in Latin America for i-to-i - and my career took a new direction.

What now?

It's now my second year working for i-to-i and I've moved from being a desk officer to being their main presenter in the UK on projects around the world. I've also been lucky enough to visit countries like Brazil and Costa Rica. And, as Leeds is such a great place to live, I've bought a house here.



'Life is not for standing still,
death comes all too soon.'

Anon

A DIFFERENT KIND OF CONFIDENCE

Why did you take a career break?

I hate repetition and mundane stuff and that described my job. I had strains in my personal life too and was ready to break away and travel. I just had to find a way to pay for it.

How did you make it happen?

I did the research, did the i-to-i TEFL course, found a job and agreed a start date then told my boss. I had a joint mortgage that luckily the other owner carried on whilst I was away. The money was a struggle as I had credit cards etc to clear but I just worked like mad for months and saved.

What did you do/where did you go?

I taught at a private language school in Ankara, Turkey.

How has it affected you?

I now know I can do anything. It was a challenge and a half to give up everything - job, studies, friends, family and my pet cat and go to a country where I knew no one and didn't speak a word of the language. It was a struggle at times, but I'm so glad I didn't give up. I've learnt so much about the culture, I'm learning a new language and I've met some of the most important people in my life. I've always been independent but to achieve this has given me a different kind of confidence.

What now?

After a year, I was offered a teaching post at a leading private university in Ankara. There's another exciting year ahead!

 Unsure whether a career break is for you? Try our scientifically unproven career break quiz on page 12



Nazia Anwar



Age: 26

Job ambition at 18:
To find a charity for orphan children in a third world country and to be filthy rich so I can fund it!

Three main values:
Have no regrets - only learning experiences, ethical living and value what you have and who you are.

COSTS:

Flight	£250
TEFL course and materials	£150
Spending money (I didn't use much!)	£500
TOTAL:	£900