

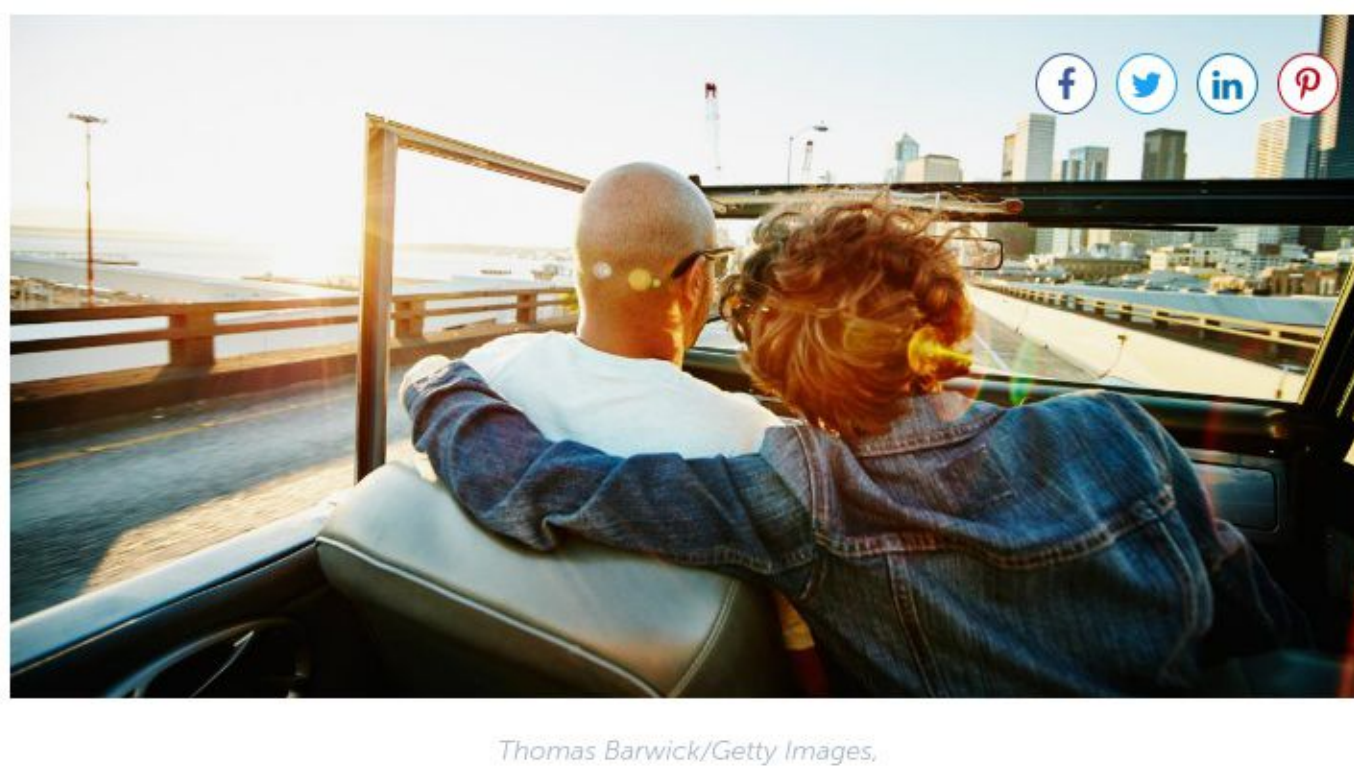
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WELL-BEING

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# Act: Start Living Your Life With Purpose and Joy

Changing little by little—no big, scary leap—is the best way to live life to the fullest.



Thomas Barwick/Getty Images.

by RICH FELLER

Complacency is easy. Accepting the status quo can even be compelling because of the comfort it promises. Here's the rub: we have limited time to create what we want in our lives. So ask yourself: Is what you're doing right now consistent with who you say you are? Are you all you want to be? How could you live more fully by acting on [your purpose](#) in search of joy?

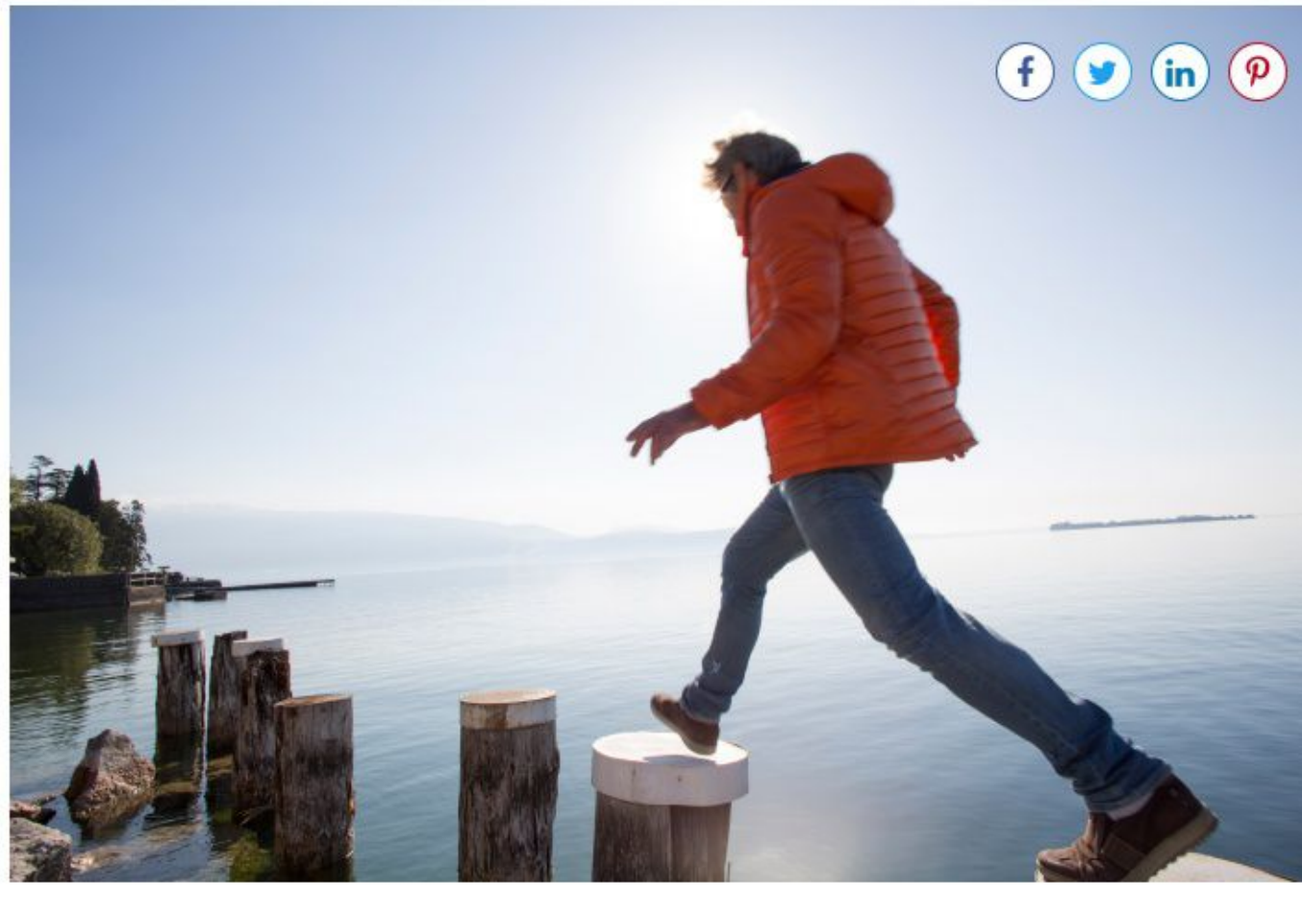
Acting means moving from who you've been toward who you want to become. It's transformative. Absolutely, you'll hold onto what's dear to you and what, at your core, makes you you. Acting is about celebrating who you are, not contemplating a complete makeover. It demands [self-awareness](#), and involves some touch-ups, a few accents, and small daily decisions to help you to find peace of mind and become even more fulfilled.

### How Sam Acted on His Passion

Sam cared deeply about the environment and minimizing the carbon footprint. He often said so, loudly. He was known for his captivating mini-lessons about water conservation. Sam, who works as an engineer, was considered an expert on the topic. Then, at 57, he realized that while he'd been tracking data, reading and talking about sustainability for years, he had not acted on this passion. It frustrated him to acknowledge that he was sitting on the sidelines.

Sam's actions were not consistent with who he said he was. Determined to change that, Sam volunteered with his local water association where he met many like-minded people and began to take on a leadership role. Through [reflection](#) and self-awareness, Sam felt energized, connected and hopeful, having aligned himself with his gifts, values and passion.

Does Sam's story sound familiar? If so, consider these questions: In what ways have you yet to act in accordance with what's important to you? To what degree does your [purpose drive your actions](#)? How could you experience more joy?



Once you've charted your course, you get to choose your speed as you act upon the future you've reimagined. Consider the pace you want to set. Is it a relaxed stroll, a brisk walk, an energizing jog, or an all-out sprint? Your pace doesn't matter nearly as much as the simple fact that you take action. Start where you are today by using these four tools:

1. What you've [reflected](#) about. Calm your mind to think about how you want to grow and give back.
2. What you've [explored](#). Say yes to exploring something that nudges you just beyond your comfort zone.
3. What you've [chosen](#). Take pleasure in choosing something you want more of.
4. The time and resources that you've reclaimed from [repacking](#). Identify some small things you could go without to help repack for what lies ahead.

Go ahead, take a step. Nike has it right: "Just do it!" Then, do it again...and again. Change doesn't happen all at once, but rather little by little, building upon small but practiced habits. You cannot get anywhere without action...so start now. By reading this article you've discovered the power of acting, and been reminded that the ease of complacency does not need to rule you.

Change doesn't happen all at once, but rather one step at a time, building upon small but practiced habits.



As you move forward, keep these guidelines in mind:

**Overcome Caution** It's a great idea to gather information as you learn about the six Life Reimagined practices (Reflect, Connect, Explore, Choose, Repack and Act). But beware getting stuck in this stage...it feels safe, it's familiar, it's less risky. But it won't get you to your goals.

**Consider Emotions** What are you concerned about? What feels right? What would it feel like to complete a daily action step toward your goal?

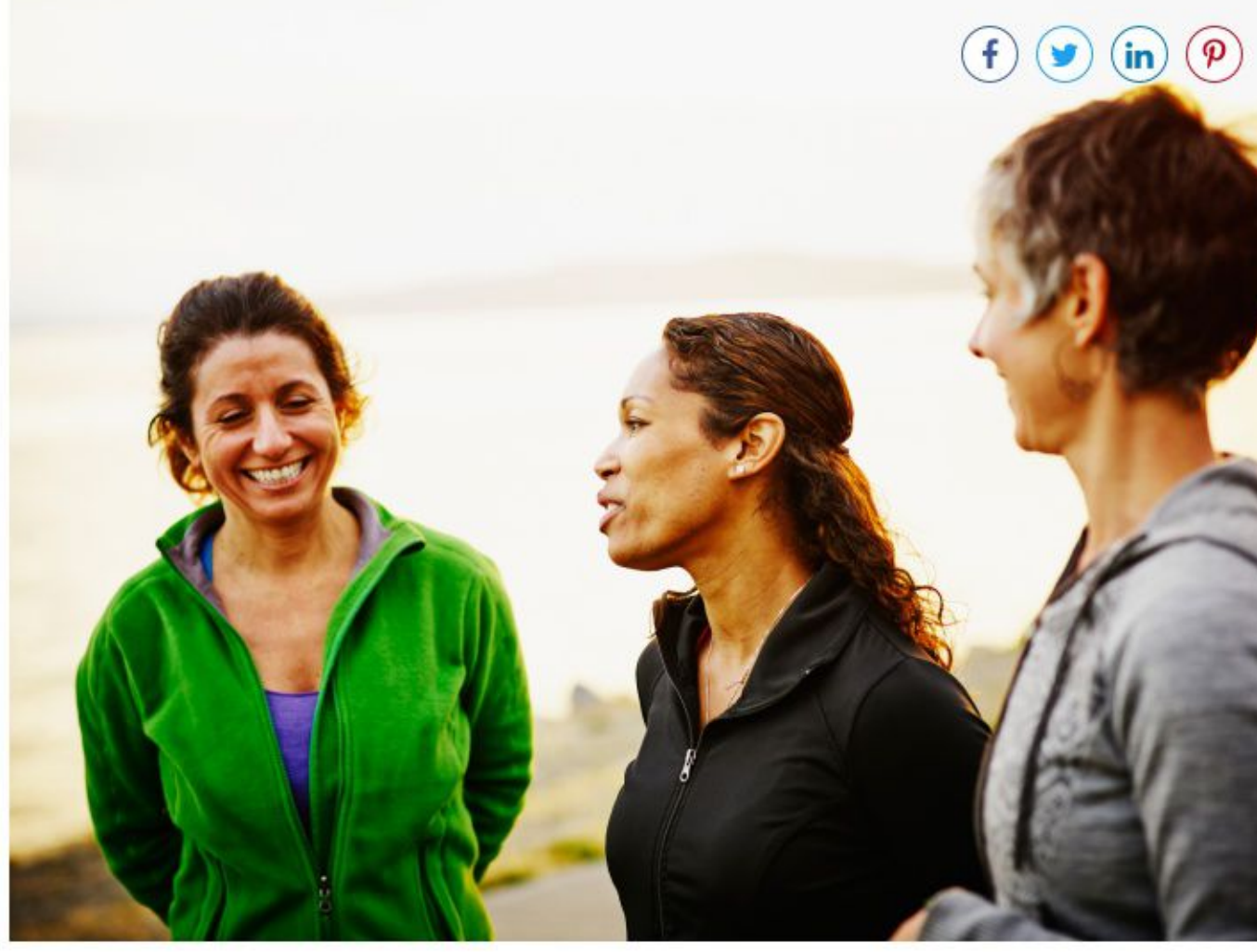
**Muster Courage** Visualize a time when you took a big step or initiated a change? How did you do it? Those actions can lay the groundwork for taking steps toward your goals right now.

As you act, be sure to challenge trouble spots such as:

**Overanalysis:** While it's important to anticipate struggles that might occur, you can't anticipate every obstacle. Believe in your ability to shift gears and move forward despite unexpected potholes.

**Fears:** Generally, worries about our own inadequacies and lack of preparation are efforts to Fabricate Evidence Appearing as Reality...so identify the facts to keep moving!

**Inertia:** We all get stuck in routines and habits. Life's sparkle lives just outside your comfort zone. Stretch and reach, even if only slightly.



As you change and grow, consider your [connections](#). Who will support your actions? Reach out to the people who believe in and encourage you. Who are your personal cheerleaders to share your goal and your feelings about it? Your support system can help you maintain your courage to act.

The time is now. When you're ready—even just a bit before—take the first step. Push yourself to do something different than what you've always done. Cheers to the new, and increasingly fulfilled, you!

*Life Reimagined thought leader Rich Feller, Ph.D. teaches at Colorado State University. He is a licensed counselor and certified coach with scores of publications in academic journals and awards.*

For more inspiration and practical advice about life change that satisfies, check out Feller's posts on the other 5 Life Reimagined practices: [Reflect](#), [Connect](#), [Explore](#), [Choose](#) and [Repack](#).

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