

### Women facing quarter-life crisis

Today, let's talk about women who face a quarter-life crisis. They are bright, educated and in their mid-20s and they appear to be the rising stars of the workplace. Yet one in three women is actually suffering from a 'quarter-life crisis'. They are secretly crying in the office toilets or are so crippled with fear they dread their daily commute. A report by investment firm *Skandia* claims that one in three women in their 20s with a university degree is suffering from an anxiety crisis and have even delayed entering romantic relationships as a result. Other symptoms suffered by women included loss of appetite and nightmares. Those in their late 20s were more anxious than younger people – probably because they were worried about saving for a home or providing for their families. The report found that one in four men is *also* gripped by the same anxieties. The study was compiled through a survey of 1,076 British adults aged 18-30.

Many young people are suffering a quarter-life crisis and are unsatisfied with the direction their lives are taking. Many are in the grip of a 'severe crisis'. Most believe they have fallen hopelessly behind with financial goals, such as buying a home or paying off student debt. A third is putting themselves under huge amounts of pressure to succeed in their careers or jobs. However, the majority of young people surveyed said they were not yet worried about saving for their retirement.

Dr Meg Jay, a leading psychologist who worked with the study's authors, said: "These young women have worked hard through school and university. But now in the real world the recession has thrown them off course and caused them huge amounts of uncertainty." She added, "I've come across young women like this who keep up an appearance of being strong but find themselves every day in tears. It's usually men who struggle through a mid-life crisis in their 40s or early 50s, but the research suggests young women are also at risk of going off the rails."

Graham Bentley, head of investment at Skandia UK: "What's worrying is that less than a quarter are saving anything towards their retirement, which means they could be heading for a three-quarters life crisis further down the line."

**Category: Women / Quarter-Life Crisis / Anxiety**

**Level: Intermediate / Upper Intermediate**

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## EXERCISES

1. **Facing a crisis in your life?** Have you faced a crisis in your life? Go round the room swapping details with others.

2. **Dictation:** The teacher will read four to six lines of the article slowly and clearly. Students will write down what they hear. The teacher will repeat the passage slowly again. Self-correct your work from page one - filling in spaces and correcting mistakes. Be honest with yourself on the number of errors. Advise the teacher of your total number of errors. Less than five is very good. Ten is acceptable. Any more is room for improvement! More than twenty - you need to do some work!

3. **Reading:** The students should now read the article aloud, swapping readers every paragraph.

4. **Vocabulary:** Students should now look through the article and underline any vocabulary they do not know. Look in dictionaries. Discuss and help each other out. The teacher will go through and explain any unknown words or phrases.

5. **The article:** Students should look through the article with the teacher.

- a) What is the article about?
- b) What do you think about the article?

6. **Quarter-life crisis:** In pairs think of five important points mentioned in the article. Then add five of your own thoughts. Write them below. Discuss together.

From the article	Your own thoughts
1	1
2	2
3	3
4	4
5	5

**The teacher** will choose some pairs to discuss their findings in front of the class.

7. **Let's roleplay 1:** In pairs/groups. One of you is the interviewer. The others are one of the following people. You are in the *Debate FM* radio studio. Today's interview is about: *Women facing quarter-life crisis*.

1	A bright, educated woman in her late 20s
2	A 45 year old man
3	A young woman in her early 20s at university
4	Graham Bentley

**The teacher** will choose some pairs to roleplay their interview in front of the class.

8. **Let's roleplay 2:** Two of you are in the pub enjoying a quiet drink. Start a conversation about 'women facing a quarter-life crisis'. *5-minutes*.

Women facing quarter-life crisis – 25<sup>th</sup> July 2012

9. Let's do 'The Article Quiz': Have the students quiz each other in pairs. They score a point for each correct answer and half a point each time they have to look at the article for help. See who can get the highest score!

**Student A**

- 1) Who is the report by?
- 2) Who is Dr Meg Jay?
- 3) Who is Graham Bentley?
- 4) What does 'going off the rails' mean?
- 5) What does 'further down the line' mean?

**Student B**

- 1) What does 'three-quarters crisis' mean?
- 2) Name the 'other symptoms'.
- 3) What do we mean by loss of appetite?
- 4) What is a third of young people doing?
- 5) Who suffer a mid-life crisis?

10. Mid-life crisis: In pairs think of three things you suffer in mid-life. Write them below. Discuss together.

1) _____
2) _____
3) _____

**The teacher** will choose some pairs to discuss their findings in front of the class.

11. Three-quarters crisis: In pairs think of two things you might suffer in three-quarters life. Write them below. Discuss together.

1) _____
2) _____
3) _____

**The teacher** will choose some pairs to discuss their findings in front of the class.

12. Anytime crisis: In pairs think of three things you might suffer during an anytime crisis. Write them below. Discuss together.

1) _____
2) _____
3) _____

**The teacher** will choose some pairs to discuss their findings in front of the class.

13. Let's write an e-mail: Write and send a 200 word e-mail to your teacher about: **Women face quarter-life crisis.**

14. Sentence starters: Finish these sentence starters. Correct your mistakes. Compare what other people have written.

- a) Women face \_\_\_\_\_
- b) Men face \_\_\_\_\_
- c) In your mid-20s \_\_\_\_\_

## DISCUSSION

### Student A questions

- 1) Did the headline make you want to read the article?
- 2) What do you think about a quarter-life crisis?
- 3) What do you think about a mid-life crisis?
- 4) What do you think about a three-quarters life crisis?
- 5) Do you know anyone who has suffered either a quarter, mid-life or three quarters life crisis?
- 6) Do you think young people have more worries than their parents had?
- 7) Why do we worry?
- 8) Do you suffer from anxiety?
- 9) Have you ever cried in the office toilet?
- 10) Have you learnt anything in today's English lesson?

### Student B questions

- 1) What do you think about what you read?
- 2) Are young people under too much pressure today?
- 3) Are you under pressure with your job?
- 4) Do you worry about your retirement?
- 5) Do you save enough for your retirement?
- 6) Do you have a student debt? Explain.
- 7) Do young women suffer more worry than young men? Explain.
- 8) Do you suffer from loss of appetite?
- 9) Do you suffer with nightmares?
- 10) Did you like this discussion?

## SPEAKING

Let's discuss! Women and men facing a quarter-life crisis

*Allow 10 minutes – As a class / small groups / pairs / 1 to 1*

Women and men facing a quarter-life, mid-life and three-quarters life crisis
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The teacher can moderate the session.

## GAP FILL: READING:

*Put the words into the gaps in the text.*

### Women facing quarter-life crisis

Today, let's talk about women who face a quarter-life (1)\_\_\_\_. They are bright, educated and in their mid-20s and they appear to be the rising stars of the workplace. Yet one in three women is actually suffering from a 'quarter-life crisis'. They are secretly crying in the office toilets or are so crippled with fear they (2)\_\_\_\_\_ their daily (3)\_\_\_\_\_. A report by investment firm *Skandia* claims that one in three women in their 20s with a university degree is suffering from an (4)\_\_\_\_\_ crisis and have even delayed entering (5)\_\_\_\_\_ relationships as a result. Other symptoms suffered by women included loss of (6)\_\_\_\_\_ and (7)\_\_\_\_\_. Those in their late 20s were more anxious than younger people – probably because they were worried about saving for a home or providing for their families. The report found that one in four men is *also* gripped by the same anxieties. The study was compiled through a survey of 1,076 British (8)\_\_\_\_\_ aged 18-30.

Many young people are suffering a quarter-life crisis and are unsatisfied with the direction their lives are taking. Many are in the (1)\_\_\_\_\_ of a 'severe crisis'. Most believe they have fallen hopelessly behind with financial (2)\_\_\_\_\_, such as buying a home or paying off student debt. A third is putting themselves under huge amounts of (3)\_\_\_\_\_ to succeed in their (4)\_\_\_\_\_ or jobs. However, the majority of young people surveyed said they were not yet worried about saving for their (5)\_\_\_\_\_.

Dr Meg Jay, a leading psychologist who worked with the study's authors, said: "These young women have worked hard through school and university. But now in the real world the (6)\_\_\_\_\_ has thrown them off course and caused them huge amounts of (7)\_\_\_\_\_." She added, "I've come across young women like this who keep up an appearance of being strong but find themselves every day in tears. It's usually men who struggle through a mid-life crisis in their 40s or early 50s, but the research suggests young women are also at (8)\_\_\_\_\_ of going off the rails."

*nightmares*

*commute*

*appetite*

*anxiety*

*romantic*

*adults*

*dread*

*crisis*

*recession*

*retirement*

*risk*

*goals*

*uncertainty*

*pressure*

*careers*

*grip*

## GAP FILL: LISTENING:

*Listen and fill in the spaces.*

### Women facing quarter-life crisis

Today, let's \_\_\_\_\_ face a quarter-life crisis. They are bright, educated and in their mid-20s and they appear to \_\_\_\_\_ of the workplace. Yet one in three women is actually suffering from a '\_\_\_\_\_' . They are secretly crying in the office toilets or are so crippled with fear \_\_\_\_\_ daily commute. A report by investment firm *Skandia* claims that one in three women in their 20s with a university degree is suffering from an anxiety crisis and have even delayed entering romantic relationships as a result. Other symptoms suffered by women included loss of appetite and nightmares. Those in their late 20s were \_\_\_\_\_ younger people – probably because they were worried about saving for a home or providing for their families. The report found that one in four men is *also* gripped by the same anxieties. The study was compiled \_\_\_\_\_ 1,076 British adults aged 18-30.

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## GRAMMAR

Put the words into the gaps in the text.

### Women facing quarter-life crisis

Today, let's talk about women who face a quarter-life crisis. They are bright, educated and in (1)\_\_\_ mid-20s and they appear to be the rising stars of the workplace. Yet one in three women is actually suffering from a 'quarter-life crisis'. They are secretly crying in the office toilets or are so crippled with fear (2)\_\_\_ dread their daily commute. A report by investment firm *Skandia* claims that one in three women in their 20s with a university degree is suffering from an anxiety crisis and have (3)\_\_\_ delayed entering romantic relationships as a result. Other symptoms suffered by women included loss of appetite and nightmares. (4)\_\_\_ in their late 20s were more anxious (5)\_\_\_ younger people – probably because they were worried about saving for a home or providing for their families. The report found (6)\_\_\_ one in four men is (7)\_\_\_ gripped by the same anxieties. The study was compiled (8)\_\_\_ a survey of 1,076 British adults aged 18-30.

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Many young people are suffering a quarter-life crisis (1)\_\_\_ are unsatisfied with the direction their lives are taking. Many are in (2)\_\_\_ grip of a 'severe crisis'. Most believe they have fallen hopelessly behind with financial goals, such as buying a home or paying off student debt. (3)\_\_\_ third is putting themselves under huge amounts of pressure to succeed in their careers or jobs. However, the majority of young people surveyed said they were not (4)\_\_\_ worried about saving (5)\_\_\_ their retirement.

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Dr Meg Jay, a leading psychologist who worked with the study's authors, said: "These young women have worked hard through school and university. (6)\_\_\_ now in the real world the recession has thrown them off course and caused them huge amounts of uncertainty." (7)\_\_\_ added, "I've come across young women like this (8)\_\_\_ keep up an appearance of being strong but find themselves every day in tears. It's usually men who struggle through a mid-life crisis in their 40s or early 50s, but the research suggests young women are also at risk of going off the rails."



## SPELLING TEST

The teacher will ask the class individually to spell the following words that are in the article. Afterwards, check your answers with your teacher, using the following ratings: **Pass = 12, Good = 15, Very good = 18, Excellent = 20**

1	psychologist	11	secretly
2	dread	12	appearance
3	commute	13	workplace
4	anxiety	14	author
5	relationships	15	through
6	symptoms	16	university
7	appetite	17	themselves
8	nightmares	18	usually
9	recession	19	struggle
10	uncertainty	20	retirement

## LINKS

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2173388/The-women-facing-quarter-life-crisis-Third-graduates-20s-gripped-anxiety.html?ito=feeds-newsxml>

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Quarter-life\\_crisis](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Quarter-life_crisis)

<http://galadarling.com/article/how-to-cope-with-a-quarter-life-crisis>

<http://warandwomen.blogspot.sk/2009/06/quarter-life-crisis.html>

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