

Giving Yourself Permission

Making a change in your career or educational path can be intimidating — and even frightening. When you learn to trust yourself enough to take risks, however, you might be surprised at how much you're capable of accomplishing.

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I can't do that! I shouldn't do that!

Guess which person is the most discouraging when we want to make a change, take a risk, or try something different? We, ourselves! This is because we often hesitate to give ourselves permission. We can be hard on ourselves in other ways, too. Actions we would forgive instantly if one of our friends did them, we chastise ourselves about *forever*. In this article, we talk about ways to expand your thinking and to start giving yourself permission to move your life forward.

Changing direction

Maybe you've been thinking about going to graduate school — getting an M.B.A., M.D., or J.D. — or you've been on the manufacturing floor or in the field and you want to transition to the office, or vice versa. To change direction, you first need to give yourself permission to do so. Take heart from the guidance sought by and given to a writer from the advice columnist Dear Abby many years ago:

Dear Abby: I've been thinking about going to medical school, but it will take me seven years to finish — and in seven years I'll be 43 years old!

Abby's response: And how old will you be in seven years if you don't go?

Remember, your change of direction doesn't have to be forever. If it doesn't work out, you'll try something else. But the new chapter in your life might be the best thing you've ever done!

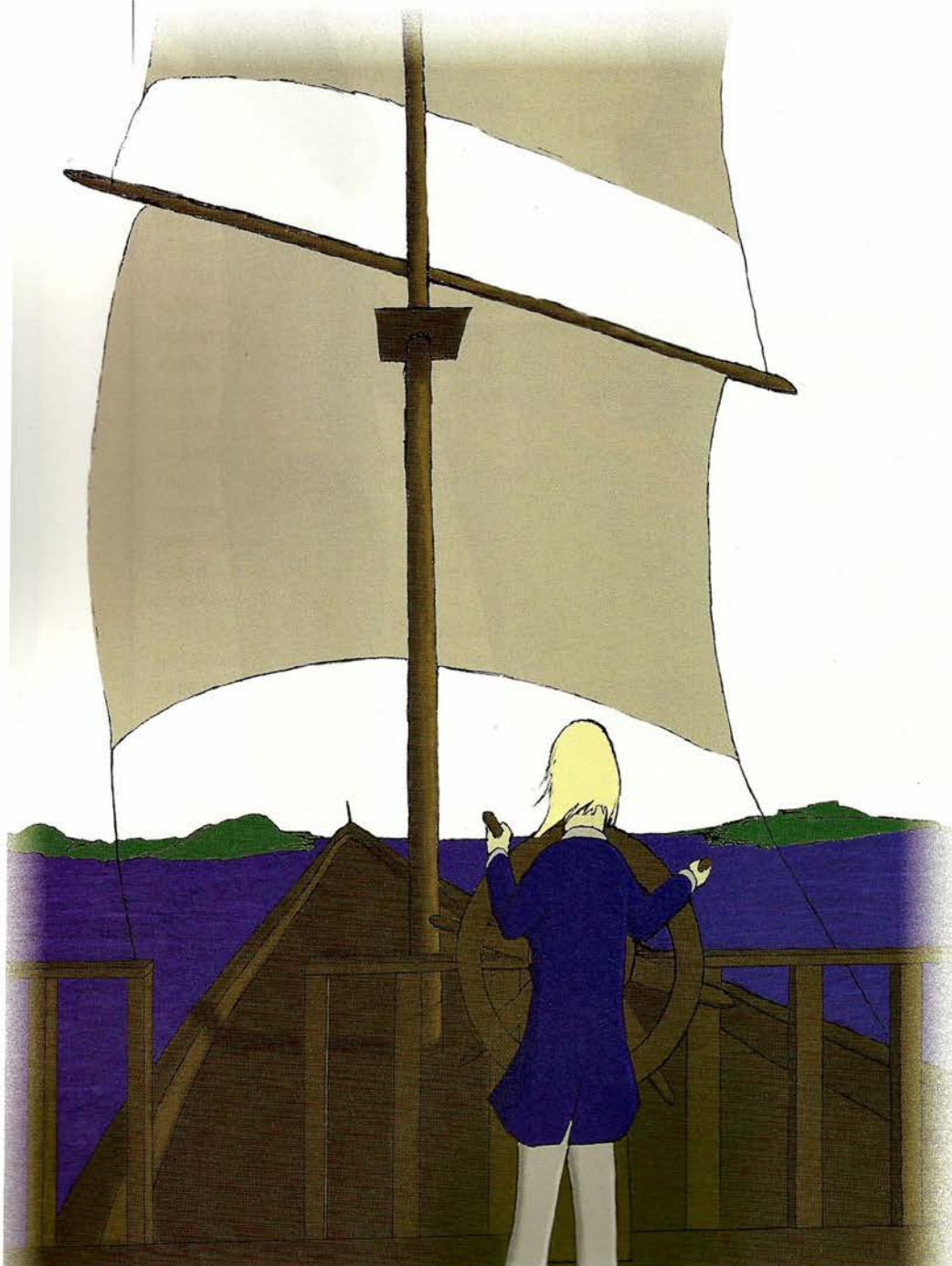


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