

### keywords

career navigation, change management, aging workforce, networking, personal growth, transferable skills, lifelong learning, community building, career transitions, work-life balance

### summary

In this episode of Aging For All, hosts Jen Yanez Pryor and Andrea Price engage with Kaisha McCrea, founder of Growing Perspectives Career Consulting. They discuss the importance of navigating career changes, the anxieties associated with transitions, and the evolving nature of work as we age. Kaisha shares her insights on embracing change, the significance of networking, and her journey as an author, emphasizing the value of lifelong learning and community support. The conversation highlights that it's never too late to pursue new interests and that our experiences are invaluable.

### takeaways

- Kaisha McCrea helps clients navigate career changes.
- Embracing change can lead to new opportunities.
- Anxiety around career transitions is common.
- It's okay to change your career path multiple times.
- Work-life balance is essential as we age.
- Networking is crucial for personal and professional growth.
- Lifelong learning enriches our experiences.
- Retirement can be a transition to new pursuits.
- Community support enhances career navigation.
- Our experiences are priceless and should be cherished.

Jen Yanez Pryor (00:01)

Hello and welcome to Aging For All. We're your hosts, I'm Jen Yanez-Pryor.

Aging For All (00:05)

And I'm Andrea Price. Thank you all so much for joining us today.

Jen Yanez Pryor (00:10)

Today, our special guest is Kaisha McCray. Kaisha is the founder of Growing Perspectives Career Consulting. Growing Perspectives' mission is to support early career and mid-career professionals and leaders as they navigate their careers. In 2017, Growing Perspectives was established to help others in their chosen careers and corporate environments reach their full potential and thrive. In addition to founding Growing Perspectives, Kaisha is the author of

Life, Love and Legacy, honoring my father, William Lee Holman. This book is a beautiful tribute to Kaisha's father who died tragically at the age of 26 and a half in a car accident when Kaisha was only 18 months old. The book's message of love, power, resilience, faith, grief and healing provides those closest to him an opportunity to honor and remember him. Hi Kaisha and welcome to Aging4all.

Kaisha McCrea (01:06)

Thank you for having me. Thank you.

Aging For All (01:09)

Hi, Kaisha. Yes, I've been fortunate to witness the growth of your business over the years. And first of all, I want to congratulate you for being bold enough to launch and lead growing perspectives. Yes. And so many people across the lifespan, really from childhood, I had my first job when I was a teenager, until retirement work in some capacity.

Kaisha McCrea (01:10)

Hello?

Thank you. Thank you.

Yes.

Aging For All (01:35)

And

with work comes changes, whether it's a new job, whether it's changes internally. So share with our listeners a little bit about growing perspectives and how you help workers really navigate change along their career paths.

Kaisha McCrea (01:50)

Yes, absolutely. And thank you. That's a great question. So I work with clients, employees, sometimes leaders or direct professionals without reports to embrace, understand and appreciate change. And I think for me, it is supporting the clients to really fully understand what that change is. And I love to...

ask my clients to consider the possibilities. Because often when we hear change, of course, especially when change is unexpected, that brings another level of anxiety and concern.

But when the change is expected or when the change is necessary for your growth and your development, I really encourage my clients to consider the possibilities, explore what this change can provide for them in their career. So helping them to explore the options and consider what if they do not move forward in this area, what will happen.

So those are the ways I've been able to support my clients to really help them really analyze more comprehensively what's happening with this potential change outside of the initial fear or concern. And often they are able to understand,

This does allow me to do X, Y, and Z or after this, you know, I can gain these additional experiences or skill sets to help me in my career to further develop.

Jen Yanez Pryor (03:37)

I really love the positive way you approach this. I think that's perfect because I was thinking about my own career. You think about all of the anxiety what ifs, you know, and I'm curious, do you see kind of different types of anxieties around people going from career growth to maybe retirement?

Or is it kind of the same?

Kaisha McCrea (04:00)

That's

an interesting question. I think there's a lot of similarities when it comes to the unknown. You're not really sure sometimes in your career and at retirement or preparing for retirement, there are still some unknowns there. I would say maybe at the retirement stage.

and one client in particular comes to mind, they may have a better sense of what they really want to do and what they don't want to do towards the end of their career as they approach retirement versus during your career. Sometimes we might still be evolving. We're not quite sure yet. So those would be some of the differences, but I can see some similarities as well.

Aging For All (04:51)

I think it's important for me still as a working person and so many of us to consider these things. Think about my parents, they worked at the same place for 40 years, but we don't really live in that kind of reality as much anymore. Thinking about lifespan, how do we even teach young people, maybe those going to college or those in college, how to

even start thinking about career navigation before we get to these places in our lives where we have to consider change?

Kaisha McCrea (05:21)

I love that question. I think how I've done it and how I would suggest you consider approaching this topic with younger people and students is to let them know that it's okay to change. Often when you reach your career, maybe five, 10 years, definitely 20 years, people are not doing the same thing they may have gone to college for.

And it's okay. So letting them know that, you know, our interests could change, our skillsets change, you know, the market changes and it's okay to be flexible. And a big message now that I hear more and I share with my clients is to pursue things that they want to pursue. I feel like 20, 30 years ago, it was a little more,

I don't want to say cookie cutter, but people tend to pursue maybe certain fields.

or certain fields weren't as desirable, you didn't hear about them a lot. Well now you have more flexibility. So you can pursue your goals and your dreams in a variety of career paths. And you can change your mind. You're done with that. You can leverage your skills. So transferable skills are a big deal and a big topic. So letting the young people know that

It's okay to change. You haven't lost the time. You can leverage your transferable skills from this job to another job, to another career. And it's okay because you're continuing to grow and change is really inevitable. And sometimes the market will force you to change as well. I'm going to be okay with it. And to realize that you're not alone in that.

A lot of people change their majors, they change their career paths several times. So you can talk to other people as you go through that.

Jen Yanez Pryor (07:32)

You know, in listening to you talk, I'm reflecting on where I've come from, right, through my career journey. And it's been very unplanned. And I'm suspecting that a lot of other people's career journeys are unplanned, may begin with a plan, but don't really go the way they thought. you know, listening to you makes me think like, we should have some kind of a plan maybe. And evaluating throughout our career, is this still what I want to do?

Kaisha McCrea (08:03)

Absolutely. And I think a plan with flexibility. Everyone is different. I really lean in on that. Everyone's different. I'm more structured. So for me, when I came out of school, I knew what I wanted to do. I had this plan and yet I allowed myself to be flexible and I changed various roles. I did not go the exact path.

And then at this point in my career, like I worked in corporate America for over 20 years, starting off as an engineer, did different assignments in manufacturing, and then landed into a corporate consultant role, which introduced me to coaching and training. What that leaned in on core skills that I already had, and I loved working with people.

So then I was flexible and open to this transition. So I think having a plan is fine and a plan can be defined differently for each of us. So I just want to say that. Go ahead.

Aging For All (09:10)

And I think, I'm sorry, Aisha, I think

this, we've talked about this several times before on the podcast, but I think this speaks to the beauty of aging too. As we age, our interests might change. Oftentimes the core of who we are pretty much stays the same, but we discover different interests. We learn more, we meet new people and we discover more. Aging is a part, discovery is a part of aging. So through your work, what have you discovered about work?

Kaisha McCrea (09:30)

Yes.

Aging For All (09:40)

How has your view of work evolved over your career?

Kaisha McCrea (09:45)

Yes, I smile. I love that. My view of work has evolved where I remember being in my early twenties and I am going to date myself with this. I had a pager and I remember when that pager went off and I was like, yes, you know, they need me. Work is calling. I've got to jump on this call. You know, I just, was so, I think I was

overly connected. Sometimes we can get overly consumed with our work. And at that time, it wasn't a lot of talk about work-life balance. And then I got a chance to observe as my life changed, different responsibilities outside of work, started a family, and realized, wait a minute, I don't want that call necessarily at 1130 at night. I don't want to pick up that call.

And then I started to prioritize managing the outside world plus work, plus really leaning in some more of where I saw myself longer term in my career. So that started happening. So I started to see work as more a part of my life and how do I best manage it.

so that I am present in other pieces of my life the way that I desire to be. As I became more intentional about my time, more intentional about setting some boundaries, and more intentional about opportunities that I wanted to pursue. And I've noticed I have really enjoyed seeing the last five years.

how the work has become a little more flexible with people and more creative and people being okay with change and seeing somebody that has transitioned and did what? So I've enjoyed people being more receptive of flexibility, change, people not having to stay in a career path that.

no longer serving them the way they desire. So that's how my view of work has changed. And I've always valued being able to be in a country where we have a lot of different opportunities and that's still whole. So there's some things as I've evolved, I still love the fact that, you know, we can start a business.

with an idea, move forward, and we have so many ways we can show our skills. And so I'm excited about the state of work, and I think it's a healthy space to still be in. And I'm excited when I see people that are 70 years old, 80 years old.

still pursuing what they want to do, whether that's in movies. You know, I've seen an actor like Denzel Washington, you know, he's above 70. You know, they're doing stellar. So I love the fact that work, that the view of work is changing. And I love that we can still work in the ways we desire and the flexibility is here.

Jen Yanez Pryor (13:12)

I love all of that, what you just said about older workers. I did a guest lecture recently and someone asked me a question, when is it too old? When are you too old? And I don't think that you are. And so it was a tough question to answer because in some people's minds, there is a definite end to when you exit the workforce.

You know, I'm curious if you run into any of that with clients who are like, well, I'm 68, I guess I need to start thinking about retirement, right?

Kaisha McCrea (13:50)

You know, it's interesting. Most of the clients that I've worked with, they have thought about retirement, but retirement is, it is something they are planning for. And while they plan for that, they're still enjoying their current work.

And I think they are flexible to, you know, if they want to stay longer, they will. I think having that flexibility is great, but they are aware of when they would like to retire, but it's not that they must retire.

And in often cases, they are still going to use a skill set. I've heard some other folks say they're going to retire to something else. This new generation or current generation, they're retiring to something else.

Aging For All (14:39)

Yes, I used to do a lot of volunteerism with the Small Business Administration. And you might be familiar with this. They had many volunteers who were retired corporate people who helped new business owners start their journeys in the business world. So they found those transferable skills and have been able to use those skills as volunteers to help other people interested in starting businesses. So I think it is beautiful just because

The work no longer exists in terms of we're going to this work and we're retired. We still have skills, we still have value. We still can be a great contributor to our community and our country. And I really, you've re-inspired me when you said, I said, we still live in a great country where we can still pursue those things that matter to us. And it's my hope we will continue to pursue those things that matter to us as we grow older too.

Kaisha McCrea (15:27)

Yeah.

Absolutely.

Aging For All (15:38)

Yes.

So outside of your consulting work, you are an author. And again, you have not been defined by one role in your life. You have continued to pursue things that matter to you. So share a little bit about this journey that to me shows that no matter where we are in life, if something interests us, we can pursue it. let's talk about your journey to becoming an author and why this

Kaisha McCrea (15:51)

Yeah.

Aging For All (16:07)

book you wrote was so meaningful to you.

Kaisha McCrea (16:11)

awesome. Thank you. Yes, I do see myself as a continual learner. And I see myself as a person being open to where opportunities come to me. And writing my book, I was privileged to connect with you. Andrea is also an author and

you were my writing coach. And I was very, I knew that I, I knew I needed to write the book about my father. He passed away when I was very small and I was given divine guidance to write this book. So I knew I had to do it. And I've always enjoyed writing as a child.

and I've never written a book before. So I reached out to a resource, which was Andrea as a writing coach, to support me in this process. And the process was definitely very...

It was a healing process for me and it was also a healing process for members of my family. Because my father died so tragically, there was a high level of trauma associated with his death at such a young age and he has such a long runway for promise. He was a very brilliant person. So was a lot of unrealized dreams that the family was left with.

So my book allowed us to have a place where people I interviewed family and friends who knew my father very well and put this together as a tribute to his life, his love and his legacy so that we all can now have another piece of him that can continue forever. So that, you know, that was the purpose behind my book and it has helped.

with healing and closure for folks in our family, as well as it's allowed me to connect with other people who've experienced similar losses to myself. And really it's for anyone who's experienced loss in family, for friends. It talks you through really treasuring, honoring, remembering lives of our loved ones and addressing our own healing from loss.

So it has been a wonderful blessing for me to be able to do this. And it really allowed me to put some things out, you know, for me emotionally into the world as well. So, and it allowed me to tap into another skill set that I had not leaned into as much. did lean into it some with writing, but this was another level.

but it was a wonderful experience.

Jen Yanez Pryor (19:16)

I think this is a beautiful example. Thank you for sharing that. That not only talks about how to take advantage of opportunities that come to you, but use it as an experience to help you process, to help your community, to grow your network, you know, in a very creative way and integrating that creativity into your work, you know, persona as well. I'm curious if you have...

Kaisha McCrea (19:31)

Yes.

Jen Yanez Pryor (19:45)

advice for people who are kind of thinking like, well, I think I could do something like that, but I don't know an Andrea to coach me through this. You know, how do I, how do I find the Andrea's? Right.

Kaisha McCrea (19:52)

That's it.

Yes, well, I would say it is definitely, it's a small world. It's smaller than what we think. So I would suggest first, you can go online and Google authors near me. You can go online. You can go to the library, go to the neighboring bookstore. Often the creatives, the writers, they, everybody has their circle and a lot of groups have writing clubs.

So I would suggest looking at your writing clubs in your area, talk to your librarian and Google. And there are a lot of local authors and I would say the libraries have local author sections. So you can contact one of them. You can go online on social media, TikTok, everywhere. You can find authors. So there's certain hashtags that you can follow as well.

That would be my starting point. And then ask someone, you know, if just talk to your friends and family, you will be surprised who knows somebody else who's an author or who knows someone that's an author that can help you. And then there's several local publishers as well, two that are able to assist.

Aging For All (21:16)

One thing, again, Kaisha, this speaks to you leaning into your gifts. Another thing that I know about her personally is that she hosts networking events around central Virginia.

And I've gone to several, I've been able to meet people with different talents, different skill sets, different things. So.

Not only are you helping people navigate changes at work, your writing, but you're also curating events where we can get together, learn from each other, creating community. Again, this is something you probably didn't start out when you were a college student, but across the lifespan, you have seen somewhere the importance of networking to help improve the lives of others. So talk a little bit about, again, leaning into this part of you and your life.

that brings people together.

Kaisha McCrea (22:08)

Yes, absolutely. I did not see this when I was in college. Absolutely. And I didn't see this part of my role of connecting with people and connecting people when I first started my career. It's something I feel like it just started to happen naturally. It just started happening. I realized the benefit that I was gaining personally in my career from getting to know people.

And I had managers that were very intentional of connecting me with people and go on to different conferences and meeting people. And I saw the value in that. And I'm like, hmm, that's a lot of information, a lot of support coming through networking. And sometimes it wasn't who was in my office that was the person that was really supporting me.

Sometimes it was that person I met at a conference or a person that someone in my office referred me to, to give me this outside perspective. So seeing the power of networking really helped me realize, I think there is a need for us to continue to come together. And the group that I started was Women in Leadership.

because a lot of women leaders are in the area. I wanted to include women leaders in the community. They could be in corporate, they could be small business owners, but a space where we can slow down, connect, support each other and grow together. And I witnessed the power of that. So I wanted to create a space to continue to do that so others can continue to grow.

Because since COVID and before COVID, since COVID we all went in. We went in a lot because we had to. So coming back out, creating those spaces I felt was really necessary so we can continue to build relationships and support each other. And it's

been wonderful because it is a small world and unfortunately sometimes we don't connect the way we used to connect with people.

So these events allow us the spaces to be able to connect with each other.

Jen Yanez Pryor (24:26)

Yeah, I appreciate you saying that because I've noticed that in myself too is, since COVID, I have been looking for more of those opportunities to connect with people in person because it's just a different feel than staying home all the time like we were. On some level we do crave that connection and the mentorship that we get from others, even in different disciplines is incredible.

Talk about transferable skills. Sometimes it's hard to see yourself in different settings, but when you start talking to people in different fields or disciplines, you really start to say, well, I could do that. I could do something. That's interesting to me.

Kaisha McCrea (25:10)

Absolutely, absolutely. And we would not know that as quickly unless we are around each other. We have to talk to each other. And that's the power of networking. Being in the room, hearing that conversation, like, wait a minute, Andrew, you do what? You know? I know this person. So it's a beautiful thing when we can connect. And we are, I've...

believe we are designed for community. We are designed to get to know each other, to connect, and those spaces are a wonderful time to grow.

Aging For All (25:46)

And I know we have listeners that range from young adults to older adults, 70s, 80s, 90s who listen. And I think from this conversation, I hope people are taking that whatever we have in our hands is enough to do a lot with. yes. So whatever it is that we have in our hands, there is a use for them. As you

Kaisha McCrea (26:05)

I'm just...

Aging For All (26:16)

think about this work and all the things we're talking about. What would you like our listeners to know about just aging in general from your perspective?

Kaisha McCrea (26:26)

Yes, enjoy the journey. Enjoy the journey. Savor your opportunities, savor your experiences. Your experiences are valuable. Your experiences are priceless. To be able to replace your experiences would take a lot. So I think the reminders are...

appreciate the journey that you're on in your career, know that it can change and be open to change. And I still believe that we can achieve our goals and our aspirations and we don't have to do it by ourselves. So there's a world of resources out there and lean in on what you want to do in your life and in your career.

and give back. So those would be the points that I would want the listeners to leave with. If have nothing else, enjoy where you are and lean into what you want to do and be willing to give back.

Jen Yanez Pryor (27:40)

I love that. That's like a whole full circle right there.

Kaisha McCrea (27:43)

Absolutely.

Jen Yanez Pryor (27:46)

Well, I want to thank you so much, Kaisha, for sharing all this. This has been wonderful listening to your reflections on the work that you've done, how you've integrated and been intentional about your skills and all the different ways that you get yourself involved in different activities. We can all do that. And it's easier than I think we think it is, right? Yeah. Yeah.

Kaisha McCrea (28:09)

That's correct, I agree with that. That's right.

Jen Yanez Pryor (28:11)

We make it too difficult sometimes, but I really appreciate your thoughts and your conversation today.

Kaisha McCrea (28:19)

Thank you for having me. This was wonderful.

Jen Yanez Pryor (28:22)

Yeah, and of course I want to thank all of our listeners for tuning in.

Aging For All (28:27)

And please join us next time for another amazing episode of Aging For All.