

Should I take just any job? **by Rose Jonas, Ph.D.**

No, but sometimes yes.

Here's the no. If you're out of work, your full-time focus should be on getting your next job. You may question the no because you really need income. It may be relatively easy to find free-lance work or non-challenging jobs you can do evenings or weekends, but taking part-time work or a "less-than" job will only extend your search period. Plus, it takes time to find these jobs, especially to chase free-lance assignments. You can easily eat into job-hunting time if you're not careful. Also, because we dislike this hunt, it is often tempting to take a "less-than" job and make it full time. We fool ourselves into believing that we can live on less money or lack of challenge. When the "less-than" chicken comes home to roost in our paycheck, the bitter lesson is that we should have kept looking.

Now the yes. I don't care what the books say you should do. People seem to be productive only about 25 hours a week in this stressful business of finding a job. Having *some* employment can help maintain self-esteem and a check on fear (your biggest enemy). Additionally, a cruel reality for many job seekers these last few years has been the need to look at the bank balance and take into account the family that expects to eat. The "Plan B" job is a necessity. If that's you, go in that direction without apology. When things get better, get on the job search again.

This is a balancing act and there is no straightforward answer. It depends on you, your energy, your family's needs, and the kind of work you can do and still keep a powerful search going. Make sure you're talking with your family or a career counselor about it.