

## Regrets

4 The photos show two people whose career paths have been very different. Which person regrets their decisions more?

Yeah, I remember Kim. I studied business administration at college with her. We had a great time. I took a job as a trainee accountant in London at the same firm as her. But I felt it just wasn't for me. I was earning good money, and they offered me a salary of £45,000 just to stay, but I said no. Instead, I downshifted. I left to become a dairy farmer. When I look at the people I used to work with, we're really different now. They live in nice houses and drive expensive cars. But overall, I think I made the right choice. I'm really happy on my farm. And I'm not at all stressed.



I studied business administration at college, but I didn't really enjoy it. I always really wanted to be a vet, but I made the wrong study choices. In the end, I joined an accountancy firm. Now I'm a senior partner, which means I have a great salary. But I sometimes think there's something missing. My friend Grant, who joined the same time as me, left after a few years to start a farm. He asked me to help him set it up, but I said no. I think it was the wrong choice. He says his job's not at all stressful, but mine is constant pressure.



### Glossary PAGE 158

downshift  
evacuate  
generator  
impact  
reactor  
seismic  
turn down

5 Complete the sentences with appropriate past modal forms of the verbs in brackets.

- 1 Grant \_\_\_\_\_ (have) a career as an accountant, but he left.
- 2 Grant \_\_\_\_\_ (earn) £45,000 or more, but he turned it down.
- 3 In the end, Grant doesn't think that he \_\_\_\_\_ (stay) at the accountancy firm.
- 4 Kim thinks she \_\_\_\_\_ (study) to become a vet, not an accountant.
- 5 Kim now thinks that she \_\_\_\_\_ (leave) the accountancy firm and started a business with Grant, but she said no.
- 6 Kim \_\_\_\_\_ (live) a less stressful life on a farm.

6 Complete the sentences with your own ideas, based on the stories about Grant and Kim.

- 1 If Grant had stayed at the accountancy firm, ...
- 2 If Kim had studied to become a vet, ...
- 3 If Grant hadn't become a farmer, ...
- 4 If Kim had helped Grant start his farm, ...

7 Look at the activities in the box. Which are part of Grant's past? Which are part of his life now?

earn a lot of money    have a slow pace of life    run my own business    work in London  
work under pressure    work with animals

8 Write sentences about Grant using the ideas in Exercise 7. Use *used to* or *be used to* and the correct form of the verb.

### Discussion

9 Imagine you have recently quit a very well-paid business job to start a different life on a farm. Use the ideas in the box to imagine your life in the city and your life now.

food    holidays    home    how you spend your money    means of transport  
social life    typical day

10 In groups, exchange memories of how you used to live. Say what you are finding it hard to get used to now.

### Internet research

Search for the keyword *downshifting* to discover more about this trend. Make notes on the different forms of downshifting and decide which you would adopt if you had the chance. Give a one-minute presentation of your idea to the class and vote for the best one.