Navigating Change in Challenging Times

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Change

“The only lasting truth is Change.”
Octavia Butler, Science Fiction Author
What We Know About Change

- Unprecedented amount of change
- Decrease in sense of control
- Pressed out of our comfort zone
- Most often involves loss
What We Know About Change

- Responding to change and the adjustment period which follows varies for each individual
- Having a response to change is universal. You are not alone!
- Learning how to navigate your response to change is an **essential skill**
Changes In Your Life

Identify changes in your life:

- Personal
- Professional
- Community/World
# External Versus Internal Change

## External Changes:
- What’s changing on the outside?
  - Physical distancing, working from home, new technology/software, changes in job duties, wearing a mask, etc.

## Internal Changes:
- What’s happening internally?
  - Psychological process occurring in response to the external change
  - Usually includes experiencing grief and loss as we internalize and come to terms with the change
“It’s not so much that we’re afraid of change or so in love with the old ways, but it’s that place in between that we fear... It’s like being between trapezes. It’s Linus when his blanket is in the dryer. There’s nothing to hold on to.”

Marilyn Ferguson, Futurist
### Transition Model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Endings</th>
<th>The Neutral Zone</th>
<th>Moving Forward</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Denial</td>
<td>• Uncertainty</td>
<td>• Sense of purpose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anxiety</td>
<td>• Highs/lows</td>
<td>• Hope</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shock</td>
<td>• Instability</td>
<td>• Optimism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chaos</td>
<td>• Curiosity</td>
<td>• Clarity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adapted from William Bridges’ Transition Model
How Change Impacts Us?

Mind

Emotions

Behavior

Body

Change
Common Responses To Change

**Mind:**
Confusion, forgetfulness, difficulties with focus & concentration, disorganized, cycling thoughts, indecisive, disbelief, **bargaining**, loss of confidence, disorientation

**Behaviors:**
Accident prone, mistakes, unhealthy behaviors (over/under eating, alcohol, drugs), short temper, performance issues, isolating, gossip, relationship issues

**Emotions:**
**Denial, anger**, anxiety, sadness, fear, shock, grief, apprehension, irritability, impatience, confusion, disconnecting, vulnerable, agitated, withdrawn, tired, mood swings, hopelessness, **depression, acceptance**

**Body:**
Fatigue, insomnia, body aches, tense muscles, heart palpitations, digestive problems, grinding teeth, muscular twitches, headaches, shallow breathing

*Elisabeth Kübler-Ross, Psychiatrist (Death & Dying)*
Navigating Change
Navigating Your Mind

Identify:
- What’s staying the same?
- What you are losing?
- Ways to compensate for losses?
- What’s in and out of your control?

Check your thought patterns:
- Practice flexible thinking
- Take a helicopter perspective
- Seek solutions
Navigating Your Heart

- Expect, name, and accept your response
- Express your feelings
- Stay connected
- Practice self-care
Navigating Behaviors

- Identify key priorities
- Minimize change
- Engage in healthy communication
- Notice if you are engaging in unhealthy behaviors
Navigating Your Body

- Practice self-care
- Continue with well checkups & medical appointments
- Engage in healthy habits
- Continue with or start routines

Small changes can make a big difference!
## When To Ask For Help

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Typical/Expected</th>
<th>Worthy of Attention</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Denial (avoidance, confusion, elation, shock, fear)</td>
<td>Feeling significant distress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anger (frustration, irritation, anxiety)</td>
<td>Thoughts of harm to self or others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depression (overwhelm, helplessness, hostility)</td>
<td>Increase in alcohol and/or drug use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bargaining (struggling to find meaning)</td>
<td>Increase in sick time usage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acceptance (exploring options, putting new plan in place, moving on)</td>
<td>Decrease or increase in eating and/or sleeping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other responses identified in Common Responses to Change activity.</td>
<td>Concerning physical symptoms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Others are concerned about your well-being</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Typical and expected responses continue for more than several weeks and/or impacts quality of life</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
EAP is here to support you

- Free for you and your family
- Confidential
- Easy to access
- Expert professionals
- Practical help

- From everyday concerns to serious issues
- Caring and respectful
- Culturally relevant
- Supporting the WHOLE person

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877-313-4455
Learning More About Navigating Change

Managing Transitions
William Bridges, PhD and Susan Bridges
Author of the best-selling Transitions

Rising Strong
Brené Brown, PhD, LMSW
Author of the New York Times bestseller Daring Greatly

The Mental Toughness Playbook
Malcolm E. Smith

7 Keys to Finding Your Inner Strength and Overcoming Life's Hurdles
Karen Reivich, Ph.D. and Andrew Shatte, Ph.D.
Learning More About Navigating Change

Websites:
• Results Washington: https://results.wa.gov/

Ted Talk Videos:
• 3 Ways to Measure Your Adaptability and how to Improve it by Natalie Fratto (6 mins.)
• The Gift and Power of Emotional Courage by Susan David (16 mins.)
References

- 20 Best Resilience Books for Creating Mental Toughness by Erika Stoerkel
- 2015 Stress in America™ by American Psychological Association
- Coping with Transitions in Life: A Life Effectiveness Guide by Australian Institute of Professional Counselors
- Managing Transitions: Making the Most of Change by William Bridges
- On Death and Dying by Elisabeth Kubler-Ross
- Resilience: A Strong Workforce Needs It by Center for Workplace Mental Health