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# Navigating Change in Challenging Times

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# Change

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“The only lasting truth is Change.”

Octavia Butler, Science Fiction Author



# What We Know About Change

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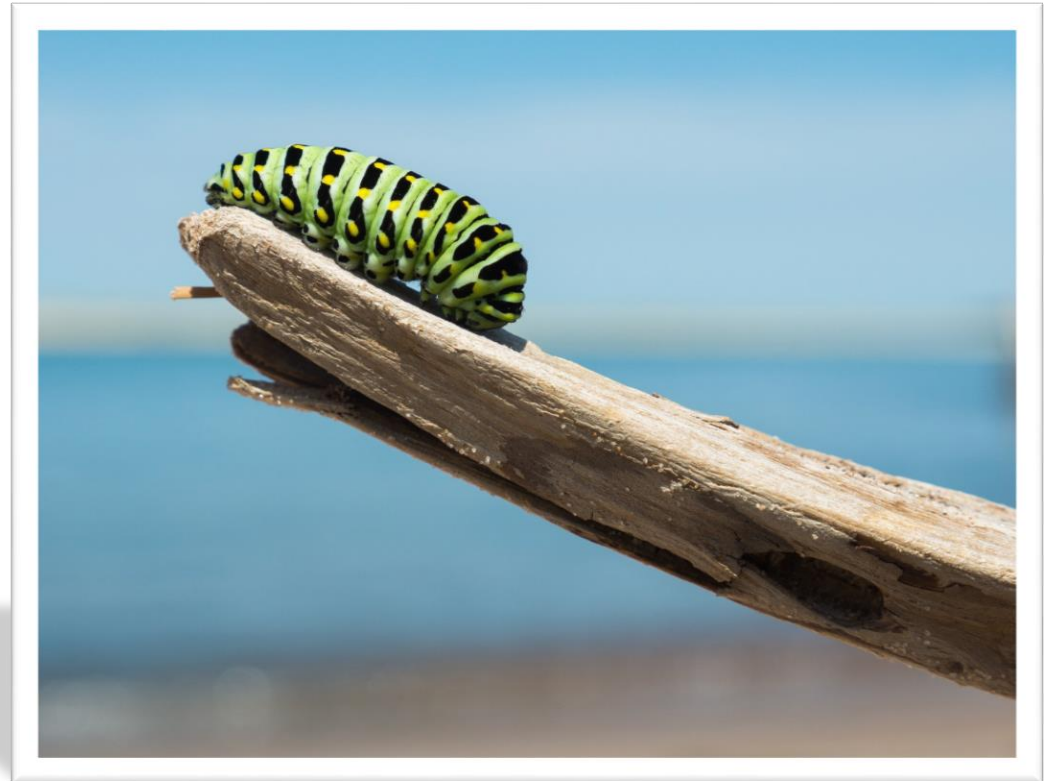


- ❖ Unprecedented amount of change
- ❖ Decrease in sense of control
- ❖ Pressed out of our comfort zone
- ❖ Most often involves loss

# What We Know About Change

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- ❖ 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

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Identify changes in your life:

- ❖ Personal
- ❖ Professional
- ❖ Community/World



# External Versus Internal Change

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## 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

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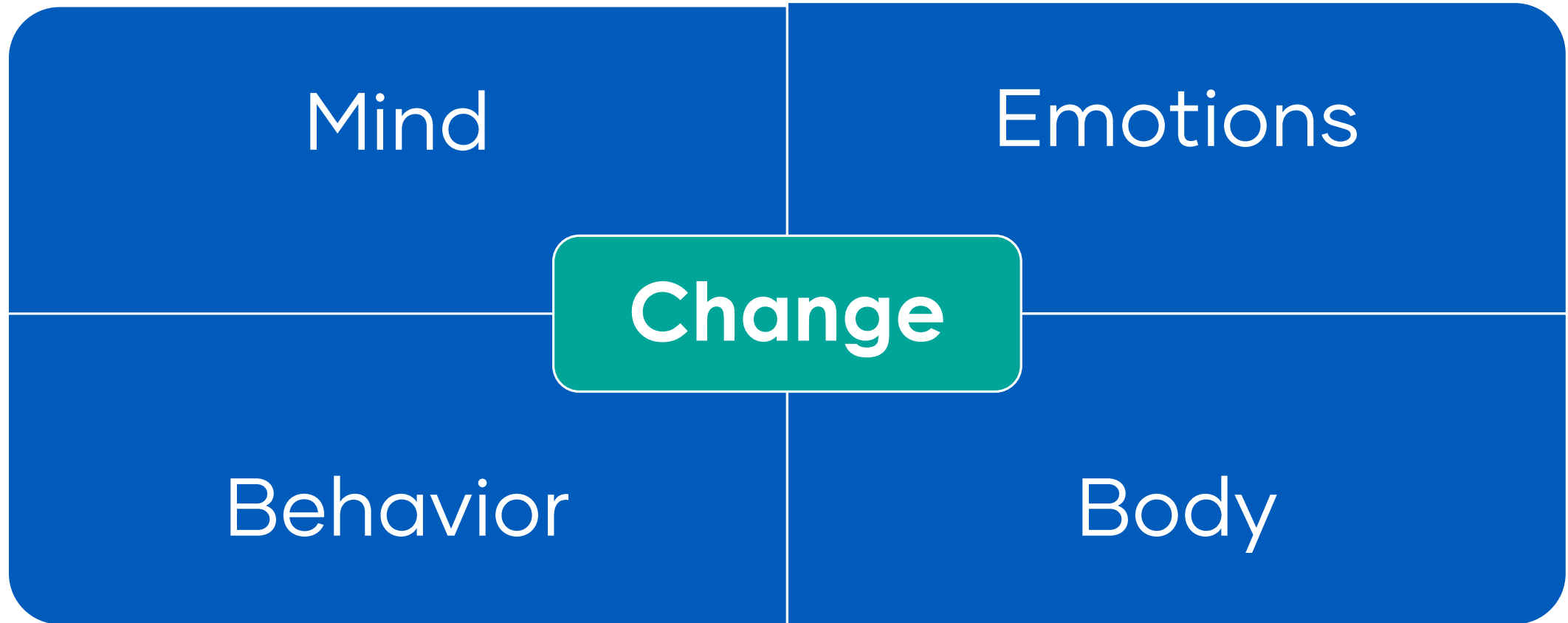
Endings	The Neutral Zone	Moving Forward
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Denial</li><li>▪ Anxiety</li><li>▪ Shock</li><li>▪ Chaos</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Uncertainty</li><li>• Highs/lows</li><li>• Instability</li><li>• Curiosity</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sense of purpose</li><li>• Hope</li><li>• Optimism</li><li>• Clarity</li></ul>

Adapted from William Bridges' Transition Model



# How Change Impacts Us?

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# Common Responses To Change

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## 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

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# Navigating Your Mind

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## 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

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



# Navigating Behaviors

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





# Navigating Your Body

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- 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

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



# EAP is here to support you

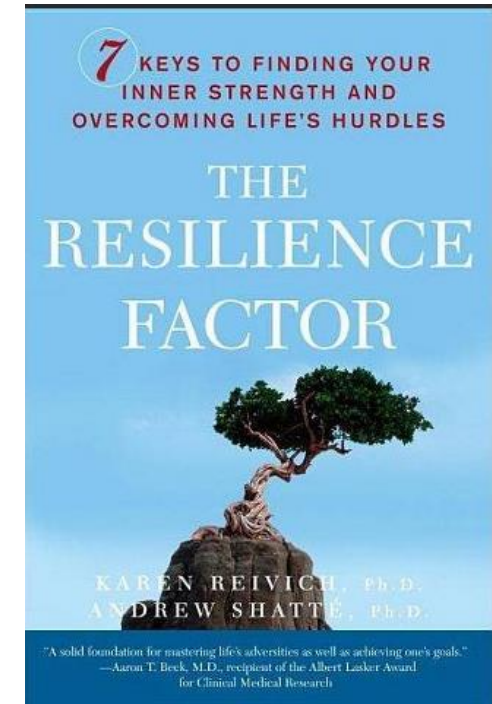
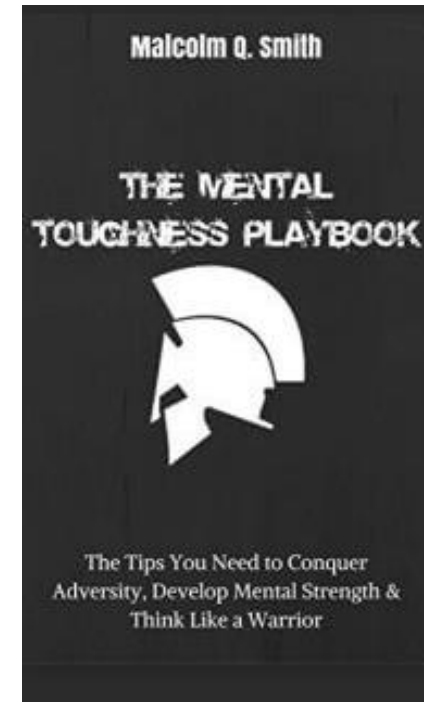
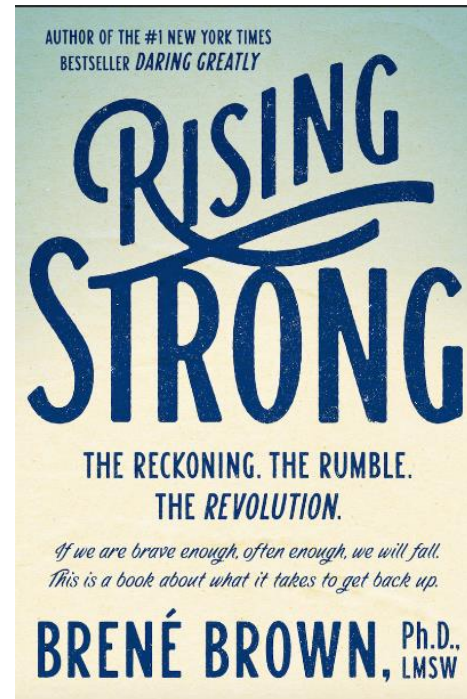
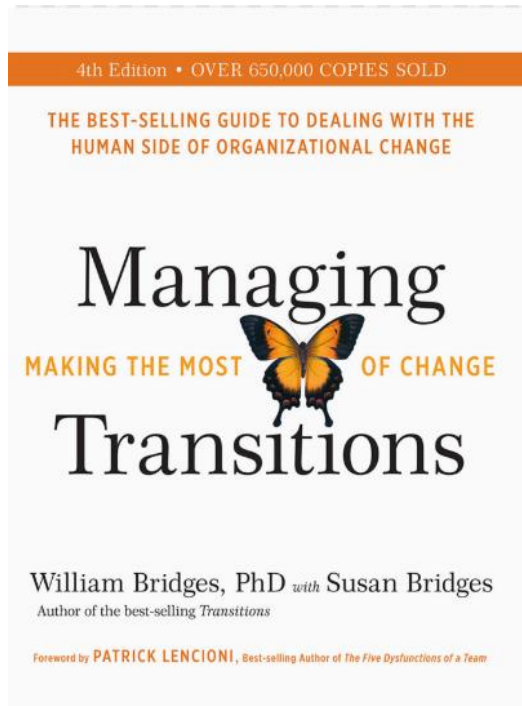
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- Free for you and your family
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- Practical help
- From everyday concerns to serious issues
- Caring and respectful
- Culturally relevant
- Supporting the WHOLE person



**eap.wa.gov**  
**877-313-4455**

# Learning More About Navigating Change



# Learning More About Navigating Change

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## Websites:

- Results Washington:  
<https://results.wa.gov/>
- William Bridges, Strategies for Managing Change:  
<http://www.strategies-for-managing-change.com/william-bridges.html>

## 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

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- [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