

# Coping with Change

*Imagine viewing change as an opportunity for new growth, rather than another hill to climb.*

CHANGE IS  
CONSTANT;  
what varies is  
how you manage it.

Change is all around us. From our first breath until our last, our lives will always be changing. Our relationships, families, physical and mental health, jobs, and finances continually change, directly and indirectly affecting us.

Knowing a transition is coming can help us begin to mentally and emotionally prepare for a new situation. However, unexpected change is just as common. Sudden negative events can easily become crises. Those who struggle to cope with change are at higher risk for anxiety and depression, and their physical health and relationships may also suffer. When you can't effectively handle life's changes, it will only take a very small amount of stress to make you feel completely overwhelmed. Defining your life goals and dreams will also

become difficult and clouded.

## POSITIVE WAYS TO COPE WITH CHANGE

If you struggle to deal with new obstacles in life, be encouraged. Your ability to cope with change, sometimes called resilience, is not a fixed value. Bouncing back is a learned skill, and with the right tools you can successfully navigate a new situation. One such skill is to practice being in the present instead of worrying about the future or dwelling on past mistakes. Focus on your breathing and senses to feel calmer and more prepared to tackle new experiences. Relaxation techniques will also help you notice your physical and emotional responses to stress and when to address them.

## ACTION STEPS

- ✓ **Practice acceptance** – Before you can make changes in your life, you have to understand what you can't control. Accept that other people's actions are outside of your control. Consider how you can take responsibility in the situation. How can you change what's happening? What could you do to accomplish your goals? Fix your mindset on the only thing you can control, and that's you.
- ✓ **Examine your thinking** – It's easy for your mind to jump to the worst-case scenario when you feel stressed. Focusing on the facts can help keep our thoughts and emotions under control. This will also help you strategize

where to put your energy and how to solve the problem.

- ✓ **Allow yourself to grieve** – Many changes in life take the form of losses. During change, it's important to allow yourself time to grieve what may have been lost, such as a job, your sense of security, a loved one, etc. You'll need time to embrace the change, take care of yourself, and possibly seek out support.
- ✓ **Set future goals** – Times of change are excellent opportunities to reflect on your values and purpose in life. Perhaps, you've been exhausting valuable time and effort on unimportant situations. Having clear values and goals for the future can help ward off the physical and emotional symptoms that emerge in uncertain times.

## KEEP IN MIND

Humans were never intended nor built to weather all of life's storms on their own. Leaning on friends or family or seeking help from a medical or mental health professional can help you regain your energy, focus, and passion for your goals. Support groups can also assist you in embracing the change, letting go, and moving onward and upward with your life.

***What positive steps will you take today to adapt to change and move towards your future?***