

Change & Transition

What Does It Mean?

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“The future has a way of arriving unannounced.”

I read that somewhere – I can’t remember where. But it seems relevant now. The Movement Center is changing. And even though we have a strategic plan, it’s not exactly how we envisioned it. It never is. The future has moved in unannounced.

So it seems like a good time to reflect on the changes in our shared lives.

One thought: ***Change is inevitable and, to quote Star Trek, “resistance is futile.”*** (I guess I’m into quotes today). Then my mind switches from pop culture to an Emily Dickinson poem:

*All but Death can be adjusted –
Dynasties repaired –
Systems settled in their Socket –
Citadel – dissolved*

*Wastes of Lives – re-sown with Colors
By Succeeding springs –
Death – unto itself Exception
Is exempt from Change*

I guess it’s safe to say that change is a fact of life. In fact, it’s a basic human need. Change is movement from one state of being to another. Without this movement (physical, psychological, mental, emotional, spiritual) human beings would stop functioning. And so would organizations.

However, people do have a great deal of choice in what the results of change will be.

Change vs. Transition

Change is different than transition in some significant ways.

Change involves a shift in the external situation. It is about the events or circumstances that impact our lives. Sometimes we plan the change (for example, leaving our job and going back to school). Other times it is out of our control (economic decline, the death of a loved one, losing a job, someone close leaving you). Sometimes you see it coming – and sometimes it's a big surprise.

Transition is an internal reorientation that people go through as they come to terms with change. It is a process, an inner experience. It's not necessarily focused on results. But it is during transition that people grow – or don't grow. It depends on how they handle it.

It's interesting to me that a massive number of studies show that people don't resist change, they resist transition. They resist giving up who they are in the world (ironically a world that no longer exists). They resist the uncertainty. They fear the risky business of doing and being what they have never done before. So, they deny change, run away, or fight.

Or, they can take the spiritual approach to change and transition. And by now you know what that approach is:

- Relax, relax, and then relax some more
- Release tension
- Let go of all assumptions, your current self-identity, and what you *think* you know
- Allow a transition to occur naturally
- Enjoy your new beginning

I have never witnessed a better place to do this than right here at The Movement Center. That is the reason I have been here for 37 years.

