

Changes

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Hi, Folks,

The holidays are over and now it's time to put our goals for the new year into action.

We are often full of energy and motivation when we initially decide to make a change in our behavior. It takes 90 days to make a change a "habit". Unfortunately there is a gravity pull toward old habits the minute we decide to initiate change. This newsletter is dedicated to helping you make the changes in your life "stick".



My vision this year is to help you celebrate your accomplishments, move toward new horizons and create the life you want — both personally and professionally.

Warm Regards,

Rosemary

Rosemary Lavinski, M.S.W., B.C.D.

Taking Risks, Managing Change & Making Change Stick !!!

People have a difficult time with "change" and "transition". Both involve giving something up, detaching from the familiar, dealing with losses and letting go of the past with no clear vision of the future. It involves a transformation or new way of being. Dr. Lundin in the book *Fish Sticks* expresses the sentiment of transformation in ideal terms when he suggests we view it with this attitude: "I am arriving at a new place, a place where none have traveled before in quite the same way and where a unique challenge awaits. I have everything I need but no guarantee of success."

This sounds great but most of are uneasy when we are in the process of "transformation." We have a sense of uncertainty when we leave the familiar. Letting go of anything involves denial, anger, sadness and ultimately acceptance. You are caught between a rock and a hard place when you just don't know yet what the future will really look like. During transitions, even positive ones, you can expect to feel insecure, highly emotional and like you have a great deal of undirected energy. Dr. Lundin notes "External energy is only effective for the short term. Eventually, external energy must be replaced by natural energy in order for change to stick. In the beginning, novelty can be an adequate source of energy. Over time a deeper and more sustainable source must be found." Where does this energy come from? It comes from having a clear vision of why you are committed to the change you want to make.

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What can you do to help yourself during a transition?

1. IT IS A NATURAL TIME TO REFLECT ON YOUR PAST AND MAKE CHANGES FOR THE FUTURE.
2. REASSESS YOUR PRESENT SITUATION AND MAKE NECESSARY ADJUSTMENTS
3. ACCEPT WHAT YOU CANNOT CHANGE
4. INVOLVE YOUR FAMILY AND FRIENDS IN THE PROCESS AND LET THEM KNOW OF YOUR NEED FOR SUPPORT
5. PRACTICE STRESS MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES: MEDITATE, PRAY, EXERCISE AND HAVE SOME FUN
6. ACCEPT THAT THIS IS A DIFFICULT TIME AND THAT "THIS TOO SHALL PASS".
7. KNOW THAT YOU CANNOT CONTROL EVERYTHING AND THERE WILL BE SOME GLITCHES.
8. DON'T BE AFRAID TO TRY NEW THINGS. EXPERIMENT, MAKE SOME MISTAKES AND EXPLORE ALL POSSIBILITIES.

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Taking Risks, Managing Change and Making Change Stick!

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You must have a deep connection to your vision and how these new ways of being will improve your life. It helps to acknowledge ambivalence about your new way of being. If you do, the process of working through your ambivalence can occur. Why do most of us give in to our ambivalence and fall back into old behavior? We are often unwilling to make ourselves a priority. We must be able to say, "This goal is more important than anything else in my life right now." The transitional phase is most difficult because we usually feel worse, not better, while in the process of trying to make a form of behavior a habit. Remember this takes at least 90 days. We must be persistent, and patient with ourselves. There will be glitches along the way and we will not be perfect. Once we are clear about our vision we can begin to "live it".

The next step is to incorporate our vision into action. For example, if our goal is to loose weight we need to start exercising regularly as well as eating healthy. It helps to keep your vision alive by seeking the assistance of a coach. Feedback is a key ingredient to change. It is often difficult to observe our own behavior. Your coach need not be a professional. It can be anyone who is committed to helping you reach your goals. You need to feel safe with this person and be able to seek their assistance when your motivation wanes. They need to remind you of your commitment to change. They can also help you clarify what success will look like for you. Most importantly they must be able to help you determine the steps you must take to reach your vision and help hold you accountable for taking responsibility for taking actions on your goals on a daily basis.

What can you do to make change stick? Lundin notes: A. Find the It (Know the values, wishes that are most meaningful to you regarding this transformation) B. Live It (You must take action on your vision and practice a new way of being) C. Coach It (Get coaching from a professional or friend to help hold you accountable to your goals.)

I wish you success in reaching your goals. Also, remember to practice stress management and have some fun along the way.

*Twenty years
from now you will be more disappointed
by the things that you didn't do than by the ones you
did do. Sail away from the safe harbor.
Catch the trade winds in your sails.
Explore. Dream. Discover.*
Mark Twain

Becoming a member?

The last newsletter I wrote about burnout. This seems to be a reoccurring affliction for all. Are you a Member of the Burnout Club? Here are some sure signs you are gaining membership:

- Never exercise
- Be a perfectionist; never accept anything less than perfection in any area of your life
- Work at least 10 hours a day; work as many holidays and weekends as possible
- Adhere to inflexible idealism
- Assume responsibility for solving the problems of all your friends, family and coworkers
- Try to please all the people all the time

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