

# A Fresh Approach to Change

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## A Fresh Approach to Change

The subject of change is interesting because people have such different responses. Some say they embrace change when in fact, they don't. Others would say that they are "set in their ways" while they carry around the latest technologies.



The truth is that all of us have a bit of a love-hate relationship with change. We want some things to change and other things we want to remain the same.

And those things we want to change? We also want to be able to decide what that change looks like, feels like, sounds like, etc.

The challenge is that while we do have a certain degree of control over what changes within our lives, in broader terms, ***all we really control is our response to change.***

The question is, if we know it's inevitable and have control over our response, why we are so resistant? It has been my observation and personal experience that our resistance isn't in fact to change. The resistance is there because we fear what comes next. The past in many cases has made us distrustful of our future. Our fear stems from the unknown impact of change. That is why some change is okay. We know what's next. The changes that sneak up and surprise us are trickier to absorb. As thought leader Jim Rohn has said, "When the promise is clear, the pain is easy." It's when we don't know what is next that change becomes uncomfortable.

Think about that for a moment. The changes we embrace with relish are where we understand why it is happening and can anticipate with some degree of confidence a positive (or at least not negative) result. What if that could be the case for us with all change? What if we could answer the question of why and be confident in a positive result about everything that shifts and moves and otherwise changes in our lives?

I believe we can. How? By recognizing that we are the keeper of the keys of our mind and it is in our mind where we control our response by the questions we ask and answers we accept. Everything happens for a purpose. There's the automatic "why".

The specific purpose served by the change does not really matter. What matters is that there is a purpose and that it holds the potential for good. How can that be true?

Everything that happens will bring the opportunity to learn and gain knowledge. When we have better knowledge, we also have a greater opportunity for abundance in our lives. How? The lessons we learn now forge our decisions going forward. Those with the best information, make the best decisions. And we know that better decisions bring better results.

In order to grow we must gain new knowledge by having new experiences. To grow we have to change. The only requirement to make peace with change is to see change differently. If we change, we grow. Isn't that amazing?

Let's bring this home to where you live. Where are you on the changescape?



Level 1: \_\_\_I fear change.

Level 2: \_\_\_I tolerate change.

Level 3: \_\_\_I welcome change.

Level 4: \_\_\_I create change.

To fully embrace change, we must take-on being creators of change. That includes not only WHAT we do, but also HOW we do it.

Have you ever wondered why some people are so adept at change while others struggle? Why do some people really win as creators while others always seem a step behind? It may be that the difference lies in how we inter-act with change. If we wait for change to cause its own effect, it will always be a struggle. But if we embrace change and leverage it to cause a strategic effect, it can in fact propel us.

Let's put this into perspective. Can you come up with a few things that you do today in a different way than you did a year ago? Or new things you do now? Or something you have stopped doing? Even if you resisted that change initially, do you now have a different view of it? Can you even imagine going back to the "old" way of doing things?

We can all begin to transform ourselves into level 4 creators on the changescape scale just by finding one thing that we can improve with a new approach. Remember, this is not limited to changing what we do; it also includes how we do things. Once we get started we will be inspired to deepen that change and do more.

And here is an important reminder: Sometimes change is as much about stopping as it is starting. Be open about how to view what generates change. In most cases, a small adjustment can deliver a significant difference.

**Here are 3 questions to get you started on creating your own promotion on the changescape:**

1. What one thing could you STOP right now that would bring about change?
2. What one thing could you START right now that would bring about change?
3. What one thing could you DO DIFFERENTLY right now that would bring about change?

Select a specific area of your life where you would like to achieve a greater sense of satisfaction and significance and begin there.

Consider each of the major segments of your life (health, wealth, work, family and community). Which of those areas brings the greatest fear for you in terms of unplanned change? That is where you need to begin shifting your perspective of change from fearful or even fateful to purposeful.

Choose one question and get started today! Put yourself in the lead on your own changescape. Become the creator you were meant to be.

If you still find yourself struggling with the idea of change, here's another exercise that can help. How do you "see" the word change?



When we hear a word, we associate it with an image. That's how the processors in our brain work. When you hear the word "book" – in your mind's eye you do not see the letters b-o-o-k, you see an image of a book.

Your personal perspective of books will determine what kind of book. You see, you control the image. It can be a cookbook, a contemporary novel, a textbook, something inspirational or a comic book. You decide. You choose.

Now what happens when you hear the word change? What image comes to mind? Is it positive? Is it magnetic? Does it invite change or does it create a big "caution" sign? Control the image, control the response.

Creating a fresh view of change is making change your ally; your partner; continuously.

What image can you use to change your perspective of change? What can you train your brain to "see" when the idea of change is introduced? Think of this as your "touchstone" for change. For each of us, there will be the right image, just like for each of us; there is a different book image.

The key is that in order for the NEXT thing to happen, something has to change. Before the next door can open, the last one must close. You will be shifting your focus from what ends to what begins.

The exercise below will use visual images you select together with quotes and questions to help create a new response. It will begin the shift for you to create a fresh view of change by seeing it as that ally, a new partner for growth.



**Step 1:** Select 5 words that represent or mean change and then select positive images for each. Write Change = \_\_\_ and then fill in the blank. Put each word and its image on the same side of a 3 x 5 card. You can use events or actual words to create the list. Some examples of events could be a raise in pay or revenue; a significant life milestone like marriage, graduation, anniversaries; reaching a goal weight or getting fit; moving to a new home, and so on. Examples of words might be growth, re-purpose, transform, alter, improve, etc. Use a mix of words and events.

**Step 2:** Now go on-line to your favorite quote site (Google if you don't have one) or refer to your favorite book on quotations. Select a quote that references each word or event and write that on the other side of the 3 x 5 index card.

**Step 3:** For 30 days, go through your list once a day seeing the word, saying the word and looking at that image.

**Step 4:** Treat the quotes as affirmations during the 30 days. Read one before you begin your day and one as you end the day. Let the choice be random.

**Step 5:** After you say the word and read the quote, create a question you will ask yourself that will pro-actively move you to action on that word or event. It would be something like this: "How can I \_\_\_ today?" or "What can I do today to \_\_\_\_\_?"



To help, here is an example from one of my own exercises:



**My word:** Growth

**My image:** A series of open doors (check it out!)

**My quote:** *"We keep moving forward, opening new doors, and doing things, because we're curious and curiosity keeps leading to new paths." (Walt Disney)*

**My question:** What am I curious about today?

Over the 30 days that you repeat the exercise your relationship with change will (*pun alert!*) change. And once that happens, you will become a magnet for opportunities like you have never experienced before. The key is that you will no longer respond as you do now to the idea of change. Your mental reflexes will serve you and instead of a defensive response you will enjoy one that brings you what you have created as your new definition of change.

The purpose of using different words and images is so that we recognize there are many forms and kinds of change and so we open ourselves up to those possibilities.

The purpose of the question is so that when we encounter those possibilities, we immediately begin to ask ourselves how we can embrace them. It's not quite like riding your bike, but it is close. Once you get it – you've got it!

When we follow the changescape path upward it means we are actively looking for new and fresh ways to live and serve. That requires personal growth first. My wish for you is that you get on the path and stay focused on why you chose it – to live the fullest, most abundant life you can, every day; in every way.

**Author's note:** In case you are wondering about the line of symbols above the title and what it means - that is in fact the title written with a symbol font. We really can change things very easily once we know what to do!

↔ ↑ ⇄ ↔ → ⇄! (Change...)



*It may be hard for an egg to turn into a bird.*

*It would be a jolly sight harder for it to learn to fly while remaining an egg.*

*We are like eggs at present.*

*And you cannot go on indefinitely being just an ordinary, decent egg.*

*We must be hatched or go bad.*

*C.S. Lewis*



## About the author



Kathi Laughman is a strategist, speaker, best-selling author and award winning blogger.

In 2008 she founded The Mackenzie Circle, a life coaching and personal leadership company in order to work with business owners as their possibility partner, coach and mentor.

Kathi also works with non-profit organizations focused on education and women's issues. She is certified by the International Coaching Federation and by the Institute for Professional Excellence in Coaching as a master practitioner (ELI-MP).

To learn more, please visit her website at <http://www.mackenziecircle.com>.