

Coping With Change

Change is inevitable. As we move through our lives change happens regularly in our work, home and social settings. Coping with the changes can be difficult. Here are some hints to help yourself and those around you.

1. Relax

When change hits you unexpectedly be prepared to practice relaxation techniques. Deep breathing exercises will help you feel more in control of what is happening with you physically and allows you to think more clearly. Use the other relaxation skills that you have developed and work well for you.

2. Refocus

Develop the habit of looking at change as an opportunity to make things better. When the opportunity comes ask yourself what positive outcomes can come from the change.

3. Restrain

Practice restraint by turning from the negative. It is easy to look at all the negative effects change can have. It is well worth the effort to talk of the positive aspects of the change. Make sure that your self-fulfilling prophecies are set for the better.

4. Rejoin

Turn to your support group/work team. If you have moved away from their source of support rejoin the group in order to increase support for all as you go through the change process.

5. Remember

Remember the good things from before the change. Take those positive aspects with you. Work toward incorporating those positive aspects into the new situation.

Change will happen. The stages of grief can accompany any change. Be aware if you are going through these stages –

- Denial (this isn't *happening* to me!)
- Anger (why is this happening to *me*?)
- Bargaining (I promise I'll be a better person *if*...)
- Depression (I don't *care* anymore)
- Acceptance (*I'm ready* for whatever comes)

The awareness that you are going through these stages can, in and of itself, help you through the change process.

