

Dealing Effectively with the Dynamics of Change

Change can be challenging.

Some people look forward to change and embrace it. Some people dread change and try to avoid it.

Since change is inevitable, so here are some of the dynamics surrounding change and the specific strategies to deal with change more effectively:

9 Dynamics of Change

1. When you are going through change, you feel awkward, ill-at-ease or self-conscious. What's the strategy to overcome that dynamic? Expect the unexpected. Since change can be hard and can keep us from changing, how do we deal with that? For example, whoever expected a pandemic that would turn the world upside down and cause so much change? Since unexpected change may continue for months or even years, what must change and be different? To answer that, here are three other questions: what am I learning, what do I want to keep and take with me and what do I want to leave behind? Answering these questions changes my expectation, and I no longer feel so helpless and uncomfortable.

2. We feel alone. When we experience change, we often think we're the only ones going through it. So, what's the strategy? Structure activities that create involvement. For example, when you host a meeting with your team, have dinner with your family, have a one-on-one meeting or coach a team, using the . model engages everyone. This model consists of intentionally Welcoming each person to the meeting, Asking questions, Discussing the agenda items that need discussing, Empowering people to fulfill their roles and Launching people at the end of the meeting with positive encouragement.

3. We will be faced with behaviors that we have to give up.

The strategy? Identify what you need to give up. It could be things and/or behaviors and I say go for the biggest problem first. The self-evaluation tool helps us look at ourselves and identify in a T-chart both our positive and negative thoughts, feelings and behaviors so we keep the positives and mitigate the negatives. Another tool is the gas tank T-chart where you identify what fills your gas tank, what keeps you going and what empties your tank, knowing some may fall on both sides of the chart. As we distinguish those things, people and/or activities that are fillers and emptiers, that either fill up our gas tank or empty us, we can choose to keep them or give them up.

4. We will be concerned that we don't have enough resources.

What's the strategy? We get creative. Here's why outside-the-box thinking doesn't work. When we get outside the box and it gets uncomfortable, we crawl back inside the old box as fast as we can because we are still too connected to the familiar walls of that old box. Since change is constant, the external pressures on the outside of us or the internal turmoil inside us can change as rapidly as bubbles that form and then burst when the external or internal pressure changes. That's why this strategy calls for us to learn how to think beyond the box and learn how to bubble jump and develop a whole other way of thinking.

5. You can only handle so much change at once. The strategy is to set priorities and go for the long run. The VPMOSA helps with that by identifying the Vision, Purpose, Mission, Objectives, Strategies and Actions that will move you toward your end goal, help you manage the different spheres that you operate in and show you your priorities so you can balance your family, your job, your ministry or whatever it is you're doing.

6. Different people are at different levels of readiness for change. The strategy is to go for the toughest area first.

Some people say do something easy first to get some practice and then go for the tough one, but here's why I don't agree with that. Typically, the easier ones are just a symptom of the toughest one. So, do a personal evaluation. Think of something in your life that if changed would help you be a better mother, father, spouse, boss, employee or friend. Write down what you should change and then ask if you can own the fact that you are that way. If you can, write down an action step toward changing it and commit to making that change.

7. You revert back to old behaviors when the pressure is off.

Often the discomfort of change causes us to revert to the old way. The strategy? A concept I call bumper buddies, bumper people, people who can bump you back on track to accomplish your goal if it gets uncomfortable or if you get off track. They can help you stay focused as you share your self-evaluation T-chart that identifies your positive and negative thoughts, feelings and behaviors and the gas tank T-chart that distinguishes your gas tank fillers and emptiers. Bumper buddies speak truth to you about those two sides of the T-charts when you begin to stray from your goal. Another tool that can help us from reverting to our old ways is TFA, the thoughts, feelings and actions where we identify the thought and then change the thought if it needs changing, which then changes the feeling, which leads to a change of behavior and action. These tools really help you interact with your bumper buddies.

8. Change can be fun. Change can be fun if we embrace the change and do it with others who also embrace it. These new ways of thinking help us cross over a bridge of transformation. Without crossing that bridge, many of us stay in what we call the river of complication. But when we decide to cross over, then we find that we have complicated what has always been extremely simple, but not easy, because we have been swimming in the river of complication. But after crossing the bridge of transformation, what has always been simple now

becomes easier. We find out it's not only the *what* that keeps us from crossing that bridge, it's also the *how* to get over that bridge, and that leads us to an action plan that incorporates the personal evaluation T-charts; TFA; .; a social covenant where we decide how we are going to treat each other; an intentional 6-step apology where we confess our offense, admit we were wrong and ask for forgiveness and accountability; and our VPMOSA.

9. Change is a choice. Not changing is also a choice. What's the strategy? Use those bumper people to encourage you if you feel guilty, if you fail or if you falter.

Change is a constant in a world of constant change. We experience changes in our culture, in our work, in our finances, in our relationships and even in ourselves. As we deal effectively with those changes and understand their dynamics, these strategies help us become transformational leaders.

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