

# Change - Seasons, Moods, Outlooks - LIFE!

Change always excites me! I enjoy change in my life, and feel a little stale when I'm doing the same thing all the time. I have changed colleges, residences, clothing styles, friendships, employment settings, romantic relationships, furniture, career directions. There is not much in my life that hasn't undergone change. And here's the reality - we are always encountering changes. In fact, the one thing that's constant in our lives is just that - CHANGE!!

I appreciate how the seasons change in this part of the country. Just when we're sick of one season, along comes another one to give us fresh perspective. In summer, we have the longer days, more chance to get more vitamin D, wear lighter clothing, ride a bicycle on a sunny day. In autumn, the trees are glorious with their colors - red, gold, orange, brown. Winter comes with the snow and ice (yes, it's often a part of the package), but there are warm fires to sit in front of, and hot cider to drink, and snowy slopes to ski on. And then comes spring, and the colors are with us again - the new leaves, the fuchsia and purple and white of the azalea bushes, the balmy feel of the soft air in a world that's waking up again after its cold weather hibernation.

When else does change occur, and in what other ways? Just about anywhere and about anything in our lives. There are some things we hope to count on - love, money, work, health. But as you know, these are things that can and do change. Our bodies change, our energy levels change, our lifestyles change. We don't spend our whole lives in the same place doing the same thing in the same way. So why then, are people so afraid of change and why do they resist change with such force and strength?

It's because we really fear the unknown. We become complacent in our safe, comfortable nests and don't like to be pushed out into the unknown world, where we have to make an effort to find new safety and comfort and the means to build a new nest. It's hard to start over, and yet it's a fact of life that to some degree, many of us do just that again and again throughout our lives.

I think of changes in life as I think about the way seasons bring changes. Our lives have many seasons, and change is a part of each one. Rather than be afraid of those changes, why not adjust the attitude, lose the fear and embrace the changes? We can see change as opportunity instead of loss, risk instead of stagnation, within our grasp instead of beyond our reach.

Change requires courage, as the serenity prayer of the 12-step program states. Then again, doesn't life require courage too? How many times would we rather just stay in bed with the covers over our heads, but we know we need to get up and out and face the world? We make that choice toward courage every day we live. Sure, some changes will come and they won't be good. They will rock our sense of security, and leave us trembling with anxiety. But then we have those changes that come and with them comes more joy into our lives than we ever thought possible. Whether change is good or bad, it is unavoidable and inevitable. For what it's worth, we can choose to see each change as another chance to learn about ourselves, to add new coping strategies to our skill sets and overall to celebrate our capacity for embracing change!