

Dealing with Change

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Sample of Content:

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Content:

“The only constant is change”. Change is something that affects us all in our lives some more serious and impacting than others. Moving house, changing jobs, redundancy, divorce, losing a loved one, death, they all affect us in different ways and our ability to cope varies from the type of person we are, to how strong we feel at the time, what else is going on for us at the time and our level of stress.

When we experience change we all go through a natural response curve that will vary according to speed and intensity from person to person.

Essentially there are six main stages to this curve.

Shock and Denial – often when we first hear the news or are impacted by change we experience shock, denial, confusion, fear, numbness and blame. How often do you hear people say “I can’t believe this is happening” or appear cold, unemotional and not react when they first hear the news?

Anger/Resistance – this often follows on after the initial shock. Frustration, anxiety, irritation, embarrassment and shame. Wanting to take it out on someone else or blame someone for the situation you’re in.

Dialogue/Bargaining – as we start to come to terms with the situation we are more likely to be able to talk about it. Often the healing part of the process happens when we are willing to talk about what’s happened. It really does help. Many people who have been through change and emotional upheaval find it helps to share their experience with others either in a support group or with a professional.

Depression – at the bottom of the curve comes a sense of overwhelm and helplessness. This may result in a complete inability to function and no energy or motivation to do anything. People may withdraw into themselves – physically and mentally and switch off emotionally.

Acceptance – when you’re ready to move on you are more able to accept what has happened, start to explore new options and put plans in place for the future. It becomes easier to think more positively and this in itself has a beneficial effect.

Return to normality – while “normality” may not be possible in some cases of loss, once you have accepted the situation, moving forward to a more secure and meaningful existence is once again possible.

What you also find is that you will swing to and fro within the change curve and may pass through certain stages more quickly than others. Some people stay stuck at a particular point because they don’t know how to move on and this can hold them back for months and even years and stops them from . You may also find yourself going backward as you adjust to the change before finally being able to move forward.

If you’re going through a period of change – I hope that this helps you to recognise where you are and that it’s OK to feel all these emotions. If you’re having trouble dealing with a significant change and what’s significant to you may not be significant to others – then don’t be afraid to put your hand up and ask for help and support. That may be from your partner, friends or a professional. The quicker you learn to deal with your emotions, the quicker you will be able to move on and grow stronger as a result.

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