



EMBRACE CHANGE WORK SHEET



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A moment of joy is relished during Stalin's reign; one of the worst times in Russia history. This painting shows that we all can find happiness not because of our circumstance but INSPITE of it.

Reality of the change = Your Experience + Your Interpretation

Consider your reality as a combination of your experience and interpretation (your own story). When you change your interpretation, you can change how it affects your life.

Imagine it's your 90th birthday. You've lived a long and productive life. You're still in good health and manage to stay busy and independent. To your surprise, your family has arranged a birthday party in your honor. Four people have been asked to speak about your life and what you have meant to them. Each person represents an area of your life. There's a family member; a member of the community; a person from your school and one from your spiritual life. What would each person say IN HIS HEART? (what they say in public may be very different just to be nice):

From your family (Example: dad seems to be a nice person, I just wish he would return my calls...Dad is such a loving father. He is always there for me, even when he is busy)

From your community (Example: I haven't seen him in a long time, but I remember when we broke Mr. Thompson's window...He loves to see people happy & wants to make sure the community...)

From your school (Example: He's fair but tough. I never knew much about him outside of school except that I better do everything he told me...His courage and integrity is legendary. When we were going through our biggest changes, I could always count on him for support.)

From your religious group (Example: When he couldn't find time to attend, he always sent a generous donation along with a note or sincere regret...He is such an active member and inspiration to me.)

NOW, ASK YOURSELF: "IF I HAD ONLY ONE YEAR TO LIVE. WHAT WOULD I BE DOING NOW DIFFERENTLY?"

- How is the stress from change causing you pain? How is it affecting you emotionally and physically?
- What about your relationships? How is your anxiety over the changes in your life negatively affecting those closest to you?
- What will be your inevitable future if you do not rework your interpretation of the changes in your life?
- What if you could imagine a new way of being? What would that look like? How would it feel?
- If you are ready to see change from a more positive perspective, consider this:
 - Who can you reach out to for support on a regular basis? A safe and trusted person can help you talk through the anxiety
 - What simple body motions can you do to stop yourself reverting back to your old ways so no one can tell? Examples (pressing your thumbnail on your forefinger, standing tall, clasping your hands, breathing in)
 - Who do you know who has a talent for embracing change? What if you reached out to them? Ask them to share their experiences and how they think during the process. What do you have to lose? Think about how much you would gain. How would you contact them? Over the phone? In person?

What if you knew that you couldn't fail? NO MATTER WHAT. Here is an example of a person who, it seems, believed just that. He went through tremendous change but because of his attitude & grit used the experience to spur him on to further action which, ultimately, led to one of the most purposeful lives in U.S. history.

His mother died when he was 9 years old. His sister died when he was 19 years old. He ran for Illinois legislature and lost. He opened a general store and it failed. He ran for Congress and lost. His son, Edward, died when he was 41 years old. He ran for Senate 4 years later and lost. In 1860, he won the presidential election but with less than 40% of the vote. Two years later, his son, William, died. In 1864, he was re-elected president with a clear majority, though the country was in the midst of civil war. Abraham Lincoln is an excellent example of someone who was able to build strength from even the most painful changes in life.