

Why is Change So Difficult?

Change is a concept that is often feared and avoided by many. Oftentimes, people wonder why it is so difficult to make positive changes. Change comes easier to some than to others. For example, change might be easier for an optimistic ("glass half full") person than a pessimistic ("glass half empty") person. The pessimistic person might be able to come up with a whole thesis as to why they should not or cannot make a necessary change.

Non-flexible or negative thinking patterns are oftentimes at the root of resistance to change. However, change is not impossible. By changing one's mindset, one can become open to the possibilities that change can create.

A common argument used by many to avoid change is the time needed to institute the change.

Take exercise for example. You have probably heard people say "I'd like to begin exercising or get to the gym, but I just don't have enough time in the day." While it may be true that the person has a tight schedule, it is important to prioritize and create time for the activity. Taking time out for exercise gives one increased energy and renewed vitality, which in turn creates the feeling of the equivalent of more hours in a day.

A deeper fear may be that other aspects of your life will change as a result of making one change or that you want to change many things about your life but feel you can't or don't have the strength.

Don't worry.

Worry will only prevent you from taking the first step. You don't have to do it all at once. You can think of change as a domino effect. Begin by creating change in one aspect of your life. You will notice that this might create further changes as a result.

Take the example of exercise. When one begins an exercise regime, he/she might then decide as a result that he or she would like to begin to eat healthier and the person will gradually introduce a healthy diet into his or her life. In this example one healthy choice influences another and it happens over time. The beauty of this is that you not only enjoy the process, but when you look back at all of the changes you have made, you will gain a greater appreciation of the journey.

If you fear that others around you will resist you or be threatened by the changes you've made, don't let that stop you. Find people who share common goals, outlooks, interests and allow them to be your support system. Be patient with others as you make life changes so that they may change along with you. Remember, as you change, it is not only for your self-improvement, but you can see how it positively influences others around you.

Remember that "change is the only constant." Resistance to change only blocks one's ability to go with the flow of life and enjoy life fully.

Change can be a conscious decision (being aware and being proactive and determined to make changes), and sometimes it can come as a surprise from the outside if one has been resistant to change.

By being open to new possibilities and opening our minds to change, we expand our horizons and realize how resilient we are and what endless possibilities have always been within our reach.

GARY BREUER, MA, LPC



My private practice is located in North Scottsdale, within the offices of PsychArizona. I work with children (ages 6 and older), pre-teens, adolescents and adults. I work with individuals, couples and families with issues of anxiety, depression, trauma, grief and loss, career, academic and workplace issues, relationship issues, LGBT concerns, personal growth and spirituality.

I use various therapeutic approaches depending on the needs of the client. These approaches include developmental, humanistic, cognitive-behavioral, existential, family-systems, mindfulness-based, transpersonal, and EMDR (Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing). EMDR is a model used for the treatment of trauma, and has also been found to be successful in the treatment of various other disorders as well.

I have experience providing professional counseling in clinical, business, and school settings.

Apart from my private practice, I am also a Reiki Master and have a great appreciation and respect for alternative as well as conventional treatment approaches.

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