



He said...

Change, Changing and Where to Begin

Is it just me or is trying to change much more difficult than one can ever imagine? At times our thought processes, our ways, seem absolutely set to move in one direction and one direction only.

For years, psychologists, therapists and motivational speakers have been telling us that we can change our thoughts, change our behavior, change our attitude, expectations and perceptions. They say change your thoughts and your feelings will follow. So if you don't like the way you feel, change the way you think. But for the average person, this is much easier said than done.

It should be noted that change does come more easily for some than for others. My wife seems to be one of those. I'm not saying that change is always easy for her, it's just that she has been able to change some things that I haven't. For example when a doctor told her to eliminate caffeine from her fluid intake, that's code for coffee, she quit cold turkey. When my doctor mentioned cutting back my Diet Coke, I stared and said, yeah right.

Easier for my wife to quit, more difficult for me, it's a mystery as to how different couples can be.

Yet, if I keep doing and thinking things in the same way, how can I ever expect a different outcome? If I desire something different, I will need to dedicate myself and embrace this thing called change. Can change be a good thing? Absolutely. It may be the best thing I will ever do, resulting in new found freedom, personal fulfillment and conflict resolution.

How does someone change? Well, here are a few considerations...

Start with changing something simple, stacking the odds for a successful outcome in your favor. Building on a string of small successes sets the stage to tackle bigger changes later on.

Consider obstacles that may be in the way of change and, if possible, remove or avoid them. Any type of resistance will only slow the process and, worse yet, possibly stop you in your tracks.

Break the change into smaller parts, taking one step at a time. One small step is a lot easier than a big one and each step brings you closer to your goal.

Visualize yourself making the change over and over again. Studies indicate that when you repeatedly visualize successful outcomes, change is more likely. Individuals with a fear of water have learned to swim using visualization, by overcoming this fear.

Remind yourself change feels foreign at first and you will experience discomfort and dis-ease. Why should you expect anything different? The pain of change will subside over time.

Practice, practice and did I mention practice? Whether it's

being more loving, speaking in public or improving your self-image, practicing is the only known way to become more proficient.

Recommit yourself to this change each morning and keep moving forward. No change occurs with a single decision; only when you repeat this change over and over again will it become integrated and a part of the new you.

Surround yourself with supportive individuals. This may include family, friends or others who may be going through the same changes. Going through change together increases your chances for success. This is why support of family and friends and groups like Over-eaters Anonymous, AA and MOPS provide successful vehicles for change. Together, you and I can make a difference.

And finally, work on changing yourself, not others. Focus on you. That's manageable, and leave all the other changing to someone else.

Well, there you have it. Yes, it is easier said than done, but the bottom line is that change is possible and that's the good news. I believe in you and may many positive changes come your way. Once again, thanks for listening.

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