

# Change

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Have you ever heard the quote that goes something like this, “The only thing that is constant is change?” Change is all around us; change in seasons, weather, age, life experience, health, family dynamics....the list can go on and on. Many of us fear change and a few of us thrive on it. People often fear change because the unknown. If we had an idea of what may be ahead, it might begin to help us ease into change and embrace it.



With so many changes in life, sometimes we have to let go of things that have been comfortable and safe. Our unconscious mind can be thrown into a state of worry and fear when facing the unknown. The unconscious mind has the role of protector and wants to bring us back to a place of safety and comfort. Around the time the school does the Master Herbalist Certification Seminar, I hear from many students who are uncertain about taking that next step and wondering if they can do it. The fear is real. Unless we make a conscious choice to change our life and force ourselves out of our comfort zone in hopes for growth and improvement, we can fall prey to our unconscious mind which keeps us in a rigid place, stuck for fear of the unknown ahead.

I have learned that there are a few phases or steps that each person goes through when making changes in one's life. If we are aware of what these steps may be then we can preempt the fear or concern that may keep us stuck and from achieving our goal. They build upon one another, much like stepping onto a staircase trying to reach our goal or vision. We each climb at our own pace. One phase may stall us for a time whereas we may move quickly through others, yet with the knowledge of what we may be facing we can ramp up and climb.

First step~~ We make a commitment to change something. The roadblocks that we may hit in this first phase are the fears and doubts that come up.....”Do I really want this?”....”I don't know if I can do it....”I'm not that kind of person.” These types of doubts play out in your mind making you wonder if this really can be you and/or the reasons why you may not be able to achieve. To overcome this step, you must decide why the goal is important to you. You need to recognize the clear vision you had and pray to see your potential and worth. You must “choose in” and stay the course to attain your goal.

Second step~~ Your determination begins to wane. Thoughts like, “It is too hard”....”There is so much to do”...”So much is out of my control”....”I don't have the time”.... begin to appear. A sense of being overwhelmed can overtake our emotions and sometimes even our physical stamina. To move on from this phase create order around you. Plan what your next tasks will be.

Get a routine going and discard the negative thoughts that keep you from showing up and acting the part. Control what you can and let go of the rest.

Third step~~ Doubts of your worth can creep in and you begin to lose self-confidence. You have come this far yet you begin to wonder... “Is this really worth it?”...”Will people really pay me or pay for this?”...”Is it really important enough?”.... “Can I make it work?” Build the confidence back by claiming your space with a big YES. Release the thoughts that don’t serve your goal and fill your mind with empowering declarations that do serve your desires. If the goal is important to you and you love it then that is what will draw others to you. YES, there is a reason you started this journey and a reason you wanted to change something. So claim what you desire and move forward!

Fourth step~~ You begin to feel the strain of the sacrifices. “It is too much, too hard and I’m tired. “ At this step people sometimes begin to grieve that which they have had to give up in this process of change. Many fear that the sacrifices may be more than they can handle. This is the stage where self-care becomes important. Take time off. Play and enjoy. Fill your metaphorical bucket so you have the fuel to move forward.

Fifth step~~This is the step in the process where you may feel all alone in all of this; that your relationships are suffering. You may be thinking that you are leaving loved ones out, or seeing some friends or loved ones as distant because they are not a part of your new vision. This is the time to reach out and nurture those you love. Bring them along however it fits. This may be just sharing your vision with them. Also, know that there will be new people in your life that will be there to support and help you in fulfilling your vision. There will always be loved ones along the journey, whether they are lifelong or newly formed.

Sixth step~~ This is where commitment must come once again. At this point, just before the change comes into full realization, many people stop short of their goal. They are so close yet the doubts of “Do I really want this anymore?”... “I’m really not cut out for this”...”It has taken so long it must not have been meant to be” make us lose courage. We must re-visualize the goal and decide once again if we really want this change in our life. Then we must stay steadfast and see the progress we have made.

Seventh step~~ CELEBRATE!!! Often times we are so busy moving on to the next thing that we forget to celebrate our successes. Our brain needs the pleasure of success to give us the energy to move forward and make other changes in our lives. Plus we need to take some time to re-energize before moving on to the next goal.

Knowing these steps and the fears that can be associated with change will hopefully give you the foresight you may need to stay the course and create an amazing life!