



Conquering Change

By Lyn Carman

Is the fear of change holding you back?

Bill Gates said “You always overestimate the change that will occur in the next two years and underestimate the change that will occur in the next ten. Don’t let yourself be lulled into inaction.”

The Greek philosopher, Heraclitus of Ephesus, said – “the only constant in life is change”.

Yet, when change happens, it often takes you by surprise. You are human.

Everything is constantly changing, whether you are aware of it or not – the environment, the weather, the economy, technology, society, culture, your friends and family, your body ... everything. The more comfortable you get with change in your world, the easier it will be for you to live your best life.

Change can be frightening or even terrifying when the meaning you give it involves risk or loss – perhaps it’s simply the loss of what is familiar and comfortable.

Change can also be a new adventure with unlimited potential to develop – this is another meaning you can choose to give it.

Change is exactly this: it’s an opportunity for new experiences, for growth, for learning, and evolution for you as a person.

After all, change asks you to:

- Learn new things
- Master new skills
- Develop new qualities like flexibility, optimism, courage and persistence

And when this happens, you ultimately become a better and more capable person.

Change is like the tide, it’s inevitable.

When you resist it, it feels like you are fighting against the incoming tide and trying to hold back the waters – it’s exhausting and hopeless.

When you embrace and accept change, it's like floating effortlessly, knowing the tide will turn – you will still need to control where you float to, but you won't feel like you are fighting the tide ... and life gets easier.

You can't stop the world from 'worlding' ... from doing its thing. You can't control the events that happen – they happen out of your control. You may not be able to do much to change them ... BUT you CAN change your response to them and experience them differently. You can control your response to events and ensure the outcome you experience in your life is as positive as possible. Remember, YOU always have control over how you choose to respond to things – when you respond with an attitude of curiosity, optimism and confidence, it is so much easier to not only survive change but to thrive throughout change.

“everything can be taken away from a man but one thing: the last of the human freedoms – to choose one's attitude in any given set of circumstances” Victor Frankl – Man's search for Meaning

Personally, I feel as though I have transitioned through many different metamorphoses in my career: starting out as a Dental Assistant (DA) when I was just 18 years old ... and in my personal life as well – each time I have had to get comfortable and embrace change. My latest endeavour brings me into contact with business owners and oral health professional alike – the constant common theme I come across is **fear of change**.

This fear holds you back from living a full life. Life is not meant to be simply just a life of comfort, of mediocre moments, of being stagnant and doing the same thing over and over again – Groundhog Day! This life was meant to be lived; to be experienced; to live a life where at the end you will have no regrets.

If you are living in Australia, you are among the most privileged on the planet. Don't get me wrong, I understand this is a very big statement and there are always exceptions, though generally speaking I believe this to be true.

At this point (2022), when you have had to learn to adapt to change like no other time in your lives, you may have embraced the opportunity to “pivot” (I use this word with volition); to innovate; to grow and experience a positive outcome for your life and those around you. Congratulations!

Or, you may have struggled to keep control of your world; to hold back the tide and feel exhausted; stagnant, undervalued, paralysed and fearful. You are not alone! One of the biggest fears holding us back in life is difficulty in making decisions. We have probably been taught from a very young age "be careful, it might be the wrong decision" and we are also taught not to make mistakes. So, by not choosing, we are making a choice to deprive ourselves of what makes our life full.

Remember, in order to *change your world*, all you need to do is to change the way you think about it. What if you are faced with the choice of staying in your job or taking a new one – off goes our inner voice, the see-saw of "what ifs"

If I stay, I may miss an amazing opportunity for growth, but if I go, I may not be able to handle it. It's easy to stay here, but I'll have more opportunity to move ahead in the new job, and perhaps earn more money, but what if I regret leaving?

Or....Isn't it fantastic I have the opportunity for a new job! What an amazing opportunity to meet new people, feel valued, stimulated and learn a new way of doing things. If it doesn't work out, I know I'll handle it and there will be even more opportunities. I will have even more clarity about what I am seeking, I am growing and learning and I have courage.

Are you waiting for fear to go away before you act? The fear *never* goes away. The *only* way you can overcome fear of something is to go out do the thing you fear – Say "Yes!" and then work out how ... feel the fear and do it anyway! (One of my favourite books ..."Feel the fear and do it Anyway" – Susan Jeffers)

When we wait for something 'out there' to make a decision for us, we give our power away.

Take small steps towards where you want to go now ... but most importantly, act now, make a decision today that you will be proud of, especially if it fills you with fear.

"Whatever the mind can conceive and believe, it can achieve." – Napoleon Hill

