



MindScape *Where Mind Meets Matter*

Navigating through change
News Letter - January to March 2024

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We cannot become what we want by
remaining what we are

Max Depree

News and Views

INTERNATIONAL

- Sentences with complex lingual structure can fire up brain's language processing unit, a study by Massachusetts Institute of Technology reported.
- Having a stable and positive relationship with parents and other adults during childhood can be associated with better mental well-being , a study by University of Columbia reported.
- A study by University of Vienna reported that playing violent video games can lead to significant reduction in the levels of empathy.

NATIONAL

- CBSE to start pre-annual exam counselling for class 10th and 12th students.
- The mental health helpline, Tele-Manas received over 6,000 calls from Delhi in past one year seeking support and guidance.
- NIMHANS organised a workshop on Yoga – vedantic approach to psychotherapy, unlocking the potential of Indian Psychology in mental health.

Local @MANASTHALI

- On the occasion of World Mental Health day , Manasthali organised a curtain raiser event for its much appreciated effort, Manotsava : Mann ka Utsav
- The event focused on the theme of using various sense modalities for the mental and overall well-being.
- Panellists having expertise in various alternative healing modalities were invited to be a part of the event.

MANOTSAVA™ : Mann ka Utsav (CURTAIN RAISER EVENT 2023)





Editor's desk



CHANGE IS THE ONLY CONSTANT

Heraclitus mentioned it but everything in the universe experiences it. Still fear exists. For something as fundamental as change, the whole humanity appears to be wanting just the opposite, trying to stop aging, trying to stop death, trying to stop disintegration of material objects!

Why are we so averse to change even when it's this very phenomenon which is taking us places. From the single gamete fusing with another, to becoming a whole human being.... Why do we want to stop the clock or resent moving from one place to another, having new experiences in similar circumstances or changing circumstances?

The universe is a conflict of forces, whether it's our external universe where gravity tries to bind objects together despite entropy being the nature of things or it's our internal universe. There is this thing called stress, again a force of resistance. It's the friction that makes walking possible, it's the element that makes adjustments feasible, but it's the very aspect of our existence we have to keep learning to manage. We know if we don't have stress, we develop a personality that is easily overwhelmed. We also know if there is too much of it, we are constantly in flight or fight mode, or even freeze at times.

In Hans Selye's words, "stress is the nonspecific response of the body to any demand for change".

Obviously now we are talking about stress in same breath as change. And somehow, we want to avoid stress as well. We want to stay in our comfort zone to avoid the unpleasant aspect of facing a new situation we may need to adapt to. We want to stay unchanged so we can keep wearing the same size of clothes, or fit into the same group of people. And if we continue to do that, we don't grow, we don't

learn, we don't evolve.

Imagine caveman not learning to light fire, we will be eating cold meat and uncooked vegetables. Or the wheel not being discovered would mean our legs or drought animals being the only mode of transport.

So navigating a phase of transition requires faith, a positive attitude. Belief that change can lead to something positive, even if it does not seem to make any sense at the moment helps us transform the uncomfortable feeling to excitement. Holding on to negative past experiences, following an orthodox ideology, having rigid beliefs blocks creativity. It leads to stagnation and where there is stagnation, there is still a transformation, but that is aimed at decimation and rebirth.

Nature favors change, so let's embrace it and explore novel terrains inside and outside of our material existence.

Dr Jyoti Kapoor

Sr. Consultant Psychiatrist and Psychotherapist



THE TRANSFORMATIVE POWER OF EMBRACING CHANGE

What is change?

There is never a static state to life. We enjoy life because of it, among other things. However, most people are afraid of change. It's been stated that the one true constant in life is change. Given that, why do individuals oppose change so strongly? Most individuals don't handle change well in general, especially when it's imposed on them without their consent.

It appears that we like some control over our changes. However, that contradicts the majority of our lives, which some would contend are not entirely within our control.

Why is it difficult to embrace change?

People often beat themselves up for being resistant to change. They think there is something wrong with them because they struggle with change or can't embrace new habits or ways of life.

But the truth is: change is difficult for everyone because our brains resist unfamiliarity.

Two of the most important functions of our brains are to keep us safe and limit our energy use. Change disrupts both of those programs.

Our brains see change as a safety issue, something new as unknown and therefore, likely to be unsafe for us. Our brains are wired to keep us away from lack of safety. It tries to keep us in the routine of things we already know i.e. familiar hence not unsafe (even if the habits and routines we have are likely to not benefit us in the long run).

Our brains see change as an energy drain. Our brains like when we engage in a routine because they don't have to be on high alert. They can go into autopilot. They know what to expect and can relax and use less energy. Change, on the other hand, makes our brain work harder, draining our energy and coaxing us back to doing things the old way.

If change makes you uncomfortable, unhappy, tired,

frustrated, or irritable, it's not your fault.

Small changes, like shifts in our schedules and or the introduction of a new person in our life, to big changes, like moving to another state or ending a relationship, can cause our brains to go into a tizzy.

But, thankfully, our brains are malleable and fluid. We can train them to accept change, so we can accept change. As change is constant and we cannot control quite a bit of what makes up our lives, how do we become more comfortable with change? First we have to understand where is the resistance coming from.

A lot of times our mind is happy being in the comfort zone as it is in control and familiar. As humans are creatures of habit, naturally drawn to the comfort of routines and familiar environments. This preference for the familiar is rooted in the brain's quest for safety and efficiency. However, staying within the confines of our comfort zones can hinder personal growth and limits our experiences.

Another reason people resist change is the fear of the unknown. Venturing into uncharted territory can evoke feelings of anxiety and uncertainty. But it's important to recognize that growth and discovery often lie on the other side of fear.

So how do we embrace change? Here are some insights:

Set realistic goals

Setting achievable goals that align with the desired change is crucial. Break down larger goals into smaller, manageable steps to make the process less overwhelming. Celebrate each milestone reached, reinforcing your progress.

Taking Incremental Steps

Change doesn't have to happen all at once. Taking incremental steps allows you to acclimate to new situations gradually. This approach reduces resistance and gives you time to build confidence.

Seeking Support and Accountability

Enlist the support of friends, family, or mentors who can provide encouragement and guidance as you embrace change. Accountability partners can help you stay committed to your goals and provide valuable insights.

Embracing change in different areas of life can be challenging hence here is how to go about it:

Career and Professional Growth

Embracing change in your career might involve pursuing new opportunities, acquiring new skills, or transitioning to a different field. Adaptability in the professional realm can lead to enhanced job satisfaction and advancement.

Relationships and Social Connections

Change in relationships can lead to deeper connections. Embracing change might involve opening up about feelings, resolving conflicts, or seeking new social circles that align with your personal growth.

Personal Habits and Lifestyle

Changing personal habits requires determination and consistency. Embracing healthier habits, whether related to fitness, nutrition, or self-care, can lead to improved overall well-being.

As we have understood that change involves a lot of back and forth and resistance here is how to overcome challenges and roadblocks:

Dealing with Fear and Doubt

Facing fear and doubt head-on is essential. Recognize that these emotions are natural responses to change and uncertainty. Acknowledge your feelings and use them as motivation to push forward.

Learning from Setbacks

Setbacks are part of the journey. Instead of viewing them as failures, see them as opportunities for learning and growth. Analyse what went wrong, make necessary adjustments, and continue with renewed determination.

Celebrate milestones

Change is difficult, so give yourself permission to celebrate your ability to go through it. Reward yourself for making tough changes, and celebrate milestones

along the way. Remember to celebrate even the small steps. After making progress on breaking a bad habit, draw stars on your calendar to remind yourself of the steps forward. On the first day of school, reward your child by doing something they love.

Ask for help

Sometimes embracing change can be more than we can do on our own. Changes — especially major life changes — can be difficult. They can be more difficult if you are going through them on your own. Hence, reach out for support. Whether you talk to a friend, a loved one, or a professional- mental health professional, just talking about what you are experiencing can help and make sure you have adequate support.

In conclusion, embracing change is not only a means to navigate uncertain times but also a pathway to personal growth and fulfilment. By stepping beyond comfort zones, we unlock our potential, cultivate resilience, and open doors to new horizons. As you embark on your journey of embracing change, remember that every step forward brings you closer to the greatness that lies within you.

By

Aishwarya Raj

(Clinical Psychologist)

Self Help Tip -Examine your current situation and note any areas that might require change before embarking on your own personal growth journey. Are there any job avenues you've been afraid to take? Exist any relationships that are adverse to your wellbeing? Is there a particular ability you've been wanting to master? The first step towards transformation is identifying these areas that could benefit from change.

After you've determined where you need to improve, make gradual but deliberate progress in bringing about change. Divide your objectives into doable assignments, then focus on each one separately. Recall that transformations take time to manifest. It's a slow process that takes commitment and tenacity. Appreciate the little triumphs you achieve along the road and utilise them as motivation to keep going.

Insights from the Vedic Lore

'7'

Change is the cycle of life

देहिनोऽस्मिन्यथा देहे कौमारं यौवनं जरा।
तथा देहान्तरप्राप्तिर्धीरस्तत्र न मुह्यति ॥१३॥

BG 2.13: Just as the embodied soul continuously passes from childhood to youth to old age, similarly, at the time of death, the soul passes into another body. The wise are not deluded by this.

The Vedic philosophy embraces change at its heart. The cycle of life is the cycle of transformation from material to non-material existence. Consciousness continues its journey from birth to death of body to the next, and this belief is central to acceptance of the constant change we face throughout our existence as human beings.

As Geeta propounds the ancient wisdom, Buddhism also follows the concept in its practice of Vipasana. The perceptions of happiness and distress are compared to changing of seasons, navigating through distress is thus a journey from night to day, its as natural as the movements of planets.

मात्रास्पर्शास्तु कौन्तेय शीतोष्णसुखदुःखदाः ।
आगमापायिनोऽनित्यास्तांस्तितिक्षस्व भारत ॥१४॥

BG 2.14: O son of Kunti, the contact between the senses and the sense objects gives rise to fleeting perceptions of happiness and distress. These are non-permanent, and come and go like the winter and summer seasons. O descendent of Bharat, one must learn to tolerate them without being disturbed.

Most of our anxieties stem from being in a situation one may find difficult to get out of. One is afraid of being in a state of distress due to lack of something- lack of a companion (loneliness), lack of good health (sickness), lack of comfort (discomfort), lack of money (poverty) and so on and so forth. The central belief that nothing is constant serves to inspire hope that things are never the

same, no matter how hard it seems today, its going to be different tomorrow, all we need to do is continue to be on the path of our 'karma'.

Then there are some, for whom the natural state of change itself is disconcerting, transformation of body, skin, hair, memory, abilities, even the natural growth of our children to adulthood makes them insecure. 'Maya' holds them in a strange state of duality, they want children to grow up and the freeze in a state of dormancy, unable to ask questions, defy them or leave the nest to grow their wings! They fear the onset of old age, the transformation of a young face to wrinkled maturity, change of that glossy mane to thinned white silk on the scalp!

The scriptures are not far from common sense, what is born dies, but that's not the end, that's the reboot the system needs to start functioning at optimal level.

यं हि न व्यथयन्त्येते पुरुषं पुरुषर्षभ ।
समदुःखसुखं धीरं सोऽमृतत्वाय कल्पते समदुः ॥१५॥

BG 2.15: O Arjun, noblest amongst men, that person who is not affected by happiness and distress, and remains steady in both, becomes eligible for liberation.

Acceptance of the changing nature of things is thus a path to liberation from the anxieties and fears. Those of acknowledge the eternal nature of this universe as energies constantly changing form, revel in the experience. The suffering comes from the conflict, the resistance to the change.

Let yourself flow with the tide, or swim against it, but not with the desire to go back but to move forward. There will be challenges, but each one will be the opportunity to transform to a better self.

Dr Jyoti Kapoor

Sr. Consultant Psychiatrist and Psychotherapist

THE 4 STAGES OF COPING WITH CHANGE

Change is an inevitable part of life. Whether it's a new job, a relocation, or a shift in personal circumstances, we all encounter change at various points in our lives. How we cope with change can significantly impact our well-being and success. Understanding the stages of coping with change can help us navigate transitions more effectively and emerge stronger on the other side.

1. Denial and Resistance :

The first stage of coping with change is often denial and resistance. When faced with something unfamiliar or uncomfortable, it's natural to initially resist it. We may deny the need for change altogether, clinging to the familiar and comfortable aspects of our current situation. This resistance can manifest as procrastination, avoidance, or even outright refusal to acknowledge the change.

2. Exploration and Acceptance :

As the reality of change sets in, we begin to move into the exploration and acceptance stage. In this phase, we start to recognize that change is inevitable and that resisting it will only prolong our discomfort. We may start to explore the reasons behind the change and seek out information to better understand it. This can involve asking questions, seeking support from others, and gathering resources to help us navigate the transition. Acceptance doesn't mean we necessarily like or agree with the change, but rather that we acknowledge its presence and begin to adapt to it.

3. Adaptation and Adjustment :

Once we accept the need for change, we enter the adaptation and adjustment stage. This is where we start to make practical changes in our behavior, routines, and mindset to accommodate the new reality. We may develop new skills, establish new habits, or adopt different perspectives to thrive in the face of change. This stage requires flexibility, resilience, and a willingness to experiment with new approaches. It's normal to encounter setbacks and challenges during this phase, but with persistence and determination, we can gradually adapt to the change and regain a sense of stability.

4. Integration and Growth :

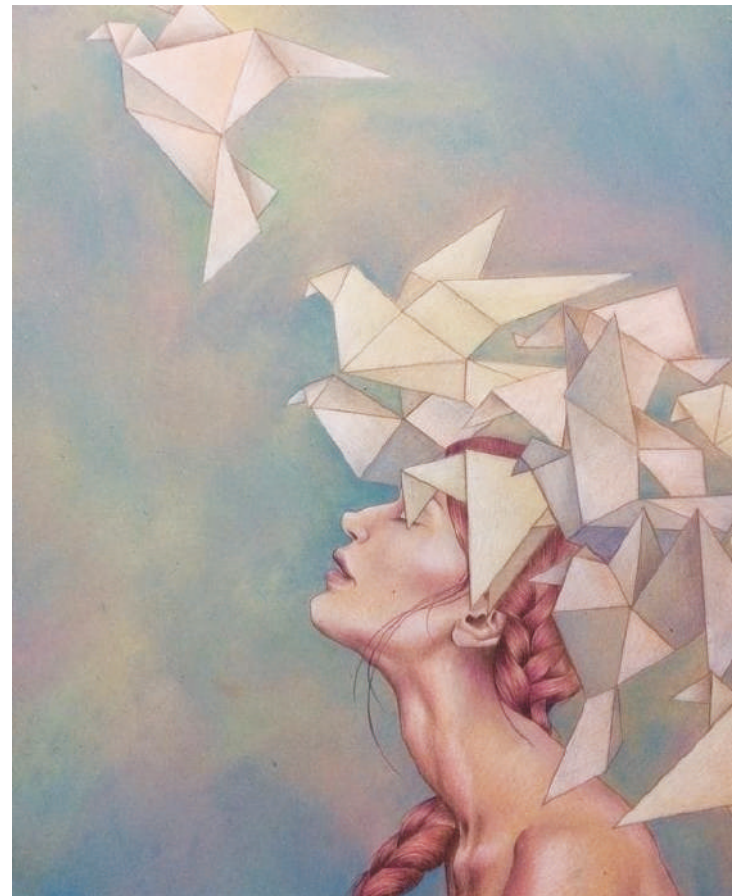
The final stage of coping with change is integration and

growth. As we successfully navigate the transition and incorporate the change into our lives, we begin to reap the benefits of our efforts. We may discover newfound strengths, insights, or opportunities that arise from embracing the change. Rather than simply returning to our previous state, we emerge from the experience transformed and enriched. This stage is marked by a sense of empowerment, confidence, and personal growth as we navigate future changes with greater ease and resilience

Conclusion :

Coping with change is a dynamic and often challenging process, but by understanding the stages involved, we can navigate transitions more effectively. From denial and resistance to integration and growth, each stage offers valuable insights and opportunities for personal development. By embracing change with an open mind and a willingness to adapt, we can emerge stronger, more resilient, and better equipped to face whatever the future may bring.

By
Mehak Thukral





Where Mind Meets Matter

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Manasthali®'s Rehabilitation Programs

According to WHO, Rehabilitation is "a set of interventions designed to optimize functioning and reduce disability in individuals with health conditions in interaction with their environment".

At Manasthali®, we understand the role of Rehabilitation as an essential element in holistic recovery and wellbeing of an individual and have designed programs which incorporate psychological, social and alternate healing practices to achieve integration of the individual into socio cultural milieu.

Our Programs :-

Basic Stress Management and Skills Training Program

Aim-Rehabilitation of People with special Needs

Approach- Integrative Medicine and wellness

Components- Behaviour Therapy, Social Skills Training, Music Therapy, Therapeutic Yoga, Positive Psychology

Online Wellness Restoration and Wellness Programs

Aim- Restoration of various elements of routine life that go out of sync as a result of disease process by daily counselling and follow up by qualified psychologists via phone/online means.

- A. Online Healthy Routine Restoration Program (Behavioral Activation)
- B. Online Mood Restoration Program
- C. Online Substance abuse Rehabilitation Program
- D. Online Positivity Development Program (CBT based cognitive restructuring)
- E. Online Dementia Rehabilitation Caregiver support Program
- F. Online Schizophrenia Rehabilitation Caregiver support Program

Our Services :-

- 1. Individual & Group Art Therapy Sessions
- 2. Corporate wellness programs
- 3. Happiness Club : A space where you can be yourself and enjoy all that makes you, YOU!

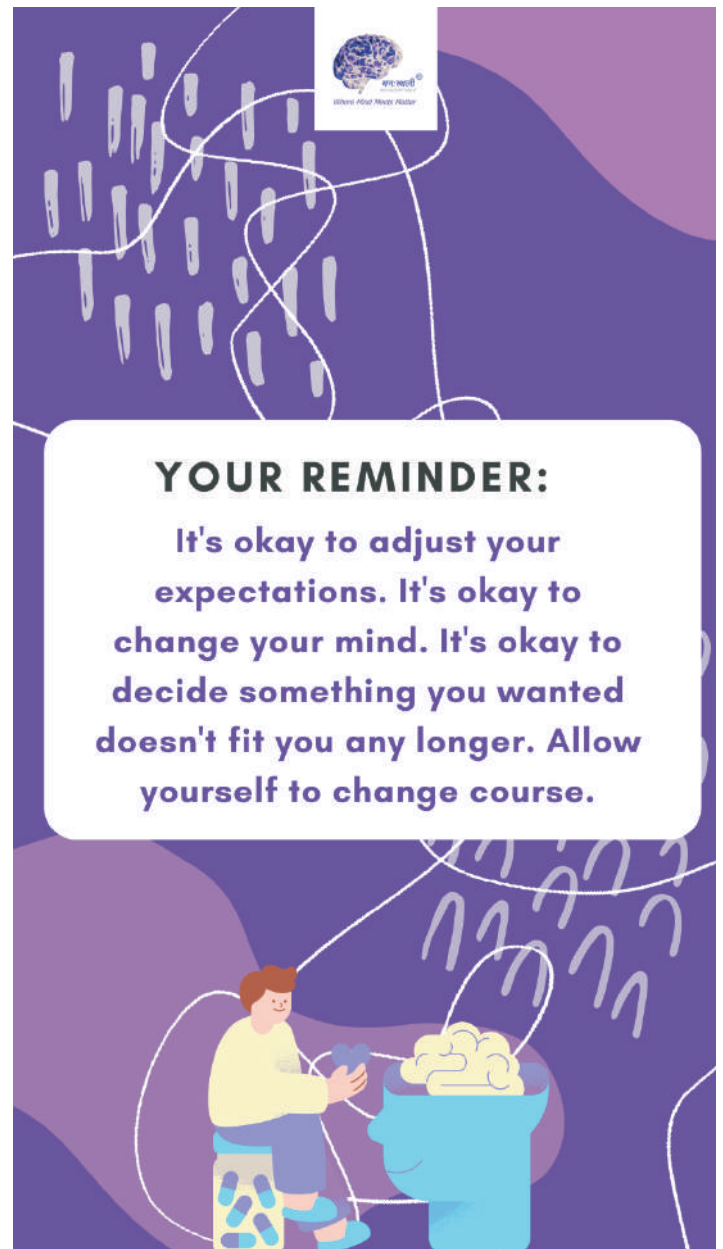
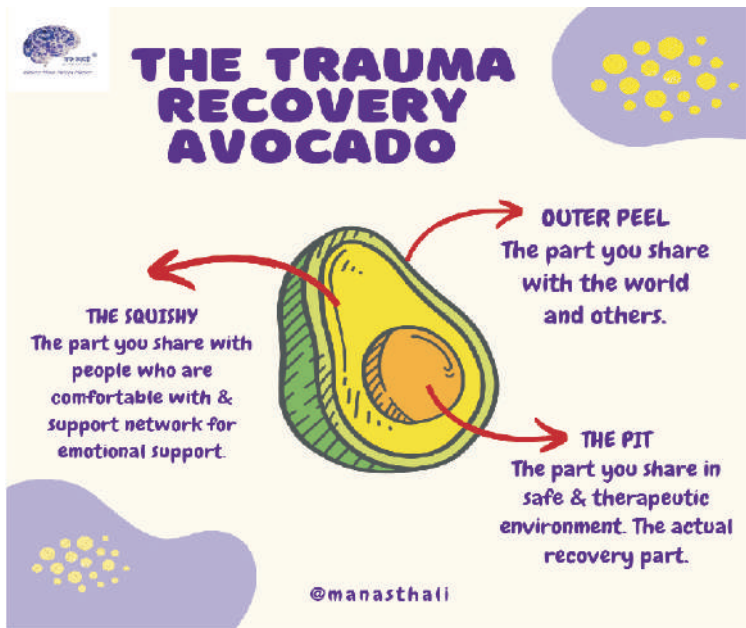


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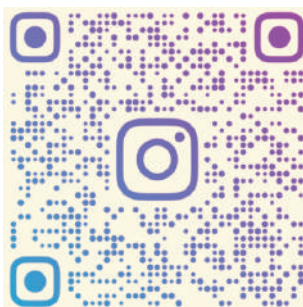
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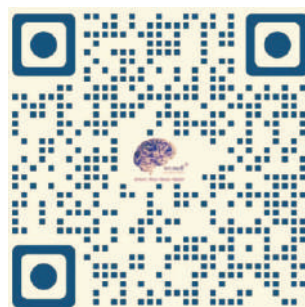
Guest Section



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