



Change Management

Sometimes we choose change and sometimes change is forced upon us. Even when we choose change, it is a painful and difficult process. People like to stay in their “comfort zone” and be surrounded by what they know and can trust.

Change takes us out of our comfort zone, involves the loss of what we know and trust, and takes us into unknown territory that is rather scary.

“It takes a lot of courage to release the familiar and seemingly secure, to embrace the new. But there is no real security in what is no longer meaningful. There is more security in the adventurous and exciting, for in movement there is life, and in change there is power.”

Alan Cohen

Coping in a time of change:

Some tips for coping during a time of change would include the following:

- To talk the issues out with someone we trust.
- To be honest about our feelings, acknowledge them, accept them, and not try to hide them or pretend they aren't there.
- To understand that work-related changes originate for reasons way out of our control and not to take the change too personally or to blame ourselves for the change.
- Seek out ways to rebuild our self-esteem, affirm our strengths and build confidence – especially in out-of-work situations if our workplace has become very stressful. We need to try to separate our self-worth (which should be unconditional anyway) from our changing circumstances.
- Take extra good care of our physical health.
- Fill our life with positive, enthusiastic people and use humour as a coping tool.
- Retain as much structure as possible in our daily life and keep to our daily routines.
- Use all the sources of support in our life to the fullest.
- Keep faith in our future.
- Get professional help if we feel like we are spiralling downward and are losing both our focus and our self-esteem.

Principles for embracing change:

If any of you have read the book “Who Moved My Cheese?” by Dr. Spencer Johnson you will know that there are certain principles around change that we have to embrace.

Here are a few principles that the book teaches us:

- **Change happens** – “they keep moving the cheese” (the four characters in the book are little rodents who live in a maze and survive on cheese)
- **Anticipate change** – “get ready for the cheese to move at any time”
- **Monitor change** – “never take the cheese for granted – smell it often so that you know when it is getting old”
- **Adapt to change quickly** – “the sooner you let go of old cheese, the sooner you can enjoy new cheese”
- **Change** – “move with the cheese”
- **Enjoy change!** – “savour the adventure and enjoy the taste of new cheese”
- **Be ready to change quickly and enjoy it again** – “they keep moving the cheese”

“The important thing is this: to be able at any moment to sacrifice what we are for what we could become.”

- **Charles du Bois**

You will need to remember that in the new world of work **THEY WILL KEEP MOVING THE CHEESE** so best you get used to the fact that you have to keep monitoring the situation, anticipating change, changing and enjoying it – else you could wind up starving to death!

Change often forces us to learn new skills and embrace new challenges that we would not have done if we had stayed exactly where we were. In this way we come to see change as a positive force in our lives.

Going through change is not always easy, but ICAS is there to support you and your family through this time of change.

Remember that ICAS is available to you 24 hours, 365 days a year and our qualified personnel are on hand to offer confidential counselling and emotional support as well as legal and financial information to you and your dependants. Support is only a telephone call away.