

# THE TIMES, THEY ARE *ALWAYS* A-CHANGIN'

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Tips for thriving through transitions



BUT FIRST, LET'S CHANGE IT UP BY STARTING OUT WITH THIS  
ENERGIZER (YES, WE'RE GOING TO SING!)

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- I'm alive, awake, alert, enthusiastic
- I'm alive, awake, alert, enthusiastic
- I'm alive, awake, alert
- I'm alert, awake, alive
- I'm alive, awake alert enthusiastic

PERSONAL CHANGES, ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE OR BOTH?!?

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- And what about systemic change (economic, environmental, health, social systems)?

## WHICH OF THESE HAVE YOU EXPERIENCED?

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- New job
- New role at current museum
- New boss
- Becoming a supervisor
- Budget cuts
- Layoffs
- Staff departures—resignations, retirements, deaths
- What else is on your mind?

# WHEN WE RESIST CHANGE, IT'S CALLED "SUFFERING"

—PEMA CHODRON

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- Acknowledge that things are changing
- Realize even good change can cause stress
- Keep up with your regular (or some) schedule as much as possible
- Try to eat healthy foods (change = ~~Cheetos~~)
- Exercise
- Seek support
- Write down the positives associated with this change (find the orange frogs)
- Get proactive, not reactive
- Vent, but to a point
- Back away from social media

ACCEPTING CHANGE CAN MAKE YOU FEEL  
VULNERABLE, BUT VULNERABILITY IS THE  
BIRTHPLACE OF INNOVATION, CREATIVITY AND  
CHANGE

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Asking questions can make you feel vulnerable, but nobody has all the answers

Trust is built in very small moments

## ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGES: ATTRIBUTES TO HELP PEOPLE PROCESS TRANSITIONS

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1. Choice: when people feel like they have a role in shaping next steps, particularly when something negative or unexpected happens, it can help everyone move forward
2. Connection to a purpose: galvanize around a clear purpose or mission while major changes occur. How can you instill purpose into everyday activities?
3. Use something new to establish a bridge to where you are headed. What new objects, innovations or technology can serve as bright spots?

Source: Victoria M. Grady, *Harvard Business Review*, 3-30-21

# PLANNING FOR CHANGE

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- Personal: where do you want to be and what do you want to be doing in 5 years?
- Organizational: Which of these plans do you have or can you create?
  - Organizational operating system. Who knows “how we do things” and where is it documented?
  - Succession planning (staff, director, board). How are vacancies posted, filled and new folks on-boarded?
  - Disaster response/business continuity. How do you keep going when change is catastrophic?



# RESOURCES

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- *Managing Transitions: Making the Most of Change*, William Bridges
- *When Things Fall Apart: Heart Advice for Difficult Times*, Pema Chodron
- *The Gifts of Imperfection*, Brene Brown (plus other books, blogs, etc.) [Brenebrown.com](http://Brenebrown.com)
- STEPs “Standards and Excellence Program” American Association for State and Local History [aaslh.org](http://aaslh.org)
- Museum Assessment Program, American Alliance of Museums [aam-us.org](http://aam-us.org)
- Audrey Kauders [kaudersas@unk.edu](mailto:kaudersas@unk.edu) Lynne Ireland [lynnemireland531@gmail.com](mailto:lynnemireland531@gmail.com)