

# Healthy coping with change

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## Change is inevitable

It will happen. When it does, it can be sudden and unpredictable, and often brings uncertainty and stress. Some people are risk takers; they have a higher level of comfort with change and uncertainty than others. But almost everyone has a limit; a point where change can become too much. An inability to properly cope with change may lead to overwhelming feelings of distress, hopelessness and helplessness.

The good news is that you can learn to embrace the uncertainty and grow through change. On balance, most people find that change provides stimuli for growth, and the losses are more than offset by the opportunities change can bring.



## How to help yourself healthily cope with change

- Make the leap from worrying to problem-solving. Focus on the parts of a problem or situation that you can control, even if it's just your attitude.
- Don't suppress or bury your fears. Facing up to your negative emotions may actually put you in a better situation to cope with them.
- Challenge yourself over why those negative emotions exist in the first place. Why do you crave certainty so much? After all, what's absolutely certain in life, anyway?
- Ask people you trust how they cope with change and uncertainty. Is their approach something you could adopt?
- Recognize what it is that triggers or exacerbates your fear of change, so you can take steps to address it.
- Sometimes, just accept that change is going to happen. However, accepting it is not the same as not being prepared for it.
- One of the simplest ways to avoid worrying about any changes the future might bring is to focus on the present. Deal with what is happening now, rather than what might happen in the future.
- Get up and move. Exercise (walking, running, dancing, yoga, etc.) can be a surprisingly effective way to relieve stress and anxiety that can come with change.

- Anxiety and stress can lead to fitful sleeping, which can then create an uncomfortable cycle by further fueling anxiety and stress. Find time to “wind down” before you go to bed to help enjoy a restful night’s sleep.
- Be sure to eat as healthily as possible. A diet rich in omega-3 fats (salmon, walnuts, soybeans, flaxseeds) and light in processed foods can have a positive effect on your mood and disposition.

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### Positive aspects

- There are many positive aspects to learning to cope with change. You develop a sense of control which can help you to manage other aspects of your life. You achieve a sense of empowerment in making everyday decisions.
- Practicing these basic tenets of living with change may allow you to look to the future with optimism, while enjoying a less stressed, less anxiety-filled present.



### Critical support when you need it

Visit [optumwellbeing.com/criticalsupportcenter](https://optumwellbeing.com/criticalsupportcenter) for additional critical support resources and information.



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