

Coping with Sudden Change

How to Get Through the Road of Uncertainty

Change is inevitable, comes in many forms, and usually means facing the unknown. It's rarely easy. After all, it means the familiar people, places or circumstances that helped structure your life have shifted. And this can trigger stress and a roller coaster of reactions, from feeling inconvenienced to resentment, fear or even panic over the loss of control. But by following a few simple strategies, you can navigate change with less stress and regain a sense of security and personal stability.

Figure out what you can control

In times of uncertainty and change, it's common to feel anxious and afraid of what this change may mean. Rather than dwelling on the unknown, it's important to focus on what you can actually control about the situation.

Reframe your response

While we may not always be able to control or change a situation, we can always control our reaction and what we tell ourselves about the situation. By better managing your emotions, you gain a better sense of control which may lead to a more effective solution.

Practice acceptance

In the face of a sudden change, it's important to accept and acknowledge your reactions—sadness, fear, anger, and confusion, for example, are normal. Acceptance can also replenish your energy, which was drained from focusing on trying to figure out why or how things went wrong.

Use stress management

Engage in something that will help calm your anxious feelings such as yoga, reading, or hiking—whatever helps lift you beyond feeling stuck by the uncertainties of change.

Make focusing on the positives a habit

Each day, think of three things for which you are grateful. Research suggests that gratitude helps improve your mood and increase your resilience to bounce back from upsets.

Limit negative, doomsday thinking

Redirect your focus toward actions that inspire you and tap into your inner strengths.

Surround yourself with a supportive network

Whether it's family, friends, coworkers, an organization or a support group, having people to talk to reminds you that you'll make it through the change. Sharing with others can also help you come up with solutions and re-channel your energy to make your own changes that can improve your circumstance.

Feeling overwhelmed? Turn to Us.

Your Health Advocate Licensed Professional Counselor offers confidential help to cope with many of life's changes. A Work/Life Specialist can help you find resources to get you through the transition. Just call. In a crisis, we're here 24/7.