

29 Life Changes

CHANGE IS NORMAL

It is vital that you learn how to deal effectively with change and transition in your life. Change is normal. People do change and often need something different or something more. It is important to evaluate your growth, maturity, and development and to analyze the forces within you that may be calling for change. Consider also your need to change in respond to environmental or external forces.

LIFE STAGES

In general, people pass through various stages in their lives. These stages, phases, passages or transitions occur at different age intervals throughout the adult years, and represent significant life changes.

20s... A testing of skills, extensive learning, and establishment of independence and identity represent this stage. Peer groups are very important. In this stage, the individual seeks intimacy in relationships. There is also much impatience with tangible goals. This period is the end of fulltime education and the beginning of fulltime work. It is a time of great opportunity and variety of experience. Individuals find themselves at the bottom of the organizational ladder. This is due's paying time.

30s... This is a time to re-evaluate life's purpose and question earlier decisions. It is a time of career progress, greater self-confidence, and higher pay and status. The individual spends a lot of time on the job, juggling work & family responsibilities, and enjoying less leisure time. The early signs of aging begin. Regarding success and achievement, there is a tendency to compare one's self with others.

40s... This stage involves re-evaluation of dreams and goals. It is time to integrate and learn from successes and failures. It is a time of personal and professional upheaval. Individuals may face a mid-life crisis. This stage sees rich career growth and more chances to relax and help other people. Career opportunities are fewer, while service, community and social opportunities increase.

50s... This is a time for settling down and mellowing. It is a time for realistic reassessment of dreams and goals. The individual is less driven, and experiences an increased sense of self-acceptance. Leisure is more important, there are fewer family responsibilities, but more family involvement. Sometimes in this stage, especially as retirement approaches, there may be feelings of resignation, withdrawal, discouragement, negativity and fear.

60s... This stage is characterized by increased concern with aging and retirement issues. New types of lifestyles and activities are introduced. It is a time to help others. Usually it is a time of financial security. Increased time is spent in leisure or with health-related activities.

LIFE EVENTS

Major events in our lives bring about major change. Some major life events are really crises. Crises oftentimes present challenges that can be a positive stimulus for change and growth. This is a list (in order) of the top 42 life-changing (stress-causing) events:

Top 10... Death of spouse, Divorce, Marital separation, Jail term, Death of close family member, Personal injury or illness, Marriage, Fired from work, Marital reconciliation, Retirement

11-20... Change in health of family member, Pregnancy, Sex difficulties, Birth or adoption, Business readjustments, Change in financial state, Death of close friend, New line of work, Arguments with spouse, Large mortgage or loan

21-30... Mortgage or loan foreclosure, Change in work responsibilities, Son or daughter leaving home, In-law troubles, Outstanding personal achievement, Second income begins or ends, School begins or ends, Change in living conditions, Change in personal habits, Boss troubles

31-42... Change in work hours or conditions, Change of residence, Change of school, Change in recreation, Change in church or social activities, Small mortgage or loan, Change in sleep habits, Family get-togethers, Change in eating habits, Vacation, Christmas Holiday Season, Minor law violations