



Embracing Change

by Amelie Yan-Gouiffes



Imagine a butterfly for a moment. Not just its colors or obvious beauty but its freedom, wings, flow, and sense of exploration.

Maybe you've found yourself daydreaming of how you can be more like a butterfly: how you could fly, free yourself from attachments, decide where to go, and move purely in accordance with your will. Many of us pine for a way that we may be carefree or at least in control of our fate and life path. And many of us daydream about flying towards a point higher than where we are now, that we may show off our colors and prove to others that we can soar.

What is your typical reaction when you discover that your current comfort zone is going to be shaken? What goes through your mind when you find out, for example, that your family will be moving to another country? Or what if you lose your job or get a promotion at work? Do you see changes as negative occurrences outside of your control? Or do you view them as opportunities to spread your wings?

When we face the unknown, two choices present themselves: we can resist it or we can embrace it. Let's go back to the butterfly analogy for a moment. If caterpillars had human tendencies, there might be some that never undergo metamorphosis. There would be a number of caterpillars prepping their wings, excited by the novelty and the potential of the unknown. And there would be quite a few stubborn ones, who, feeling warm and safe in their thick bodies, opt to remain glued to the ground. Those who resist would rather stay put than deal with the discomfort of change.

Interesting, isn't it? When handed the opportunity to explore new heights, which is a desire a lot of people have, there is a tendency to flee. We might not want to stretch ourselves and expend energy to grow and deal with what may come. And it's normal. It is normal because certainty is a basic human need, regardless of nationality, background, and personal preferences. So, perhaps the majority runs away from or pushes back on the chance to transform, even when we can see the good in the opportunity.

What about when a change has been a conscious choice that we have made? After electing change, an immense fear may arrive and infiltrate when the time comes to take action. This fear can throw us off course. Why does this happen? It's because our comfort zones are cozy places. It's hard to leave them, even if they are not ideal, even if greener pastures lay directly ahead. The security of the status quo can lull us into inaction.

Happiness Toolkit



Your comfort zone might be the easier choice. Or it might actually be the demanding one. We tend to choose our comfort zone because it is habitual. For instance, maybe you've heard expatriates mentioning that going back to their home countries would be a great ordeal. Repatriation would be more challenging, in many ways, than moving from one country to another every three years. That is because frequent moving can be the comfort zone of an expat. It's not really easier than staying put; it's just more familiar. It's a habit.

Change means heading for unknown territory and that feels scary. What can we do to help us cope with change, whether it is self-chosen or not? Here are some pieces of universal wisdom about change to remember:

COPING WITH CHANGE

1. Change is always for good.

You may not foresee right now what the benefits of this new situation will be. It may not be your choice to be where you are heading. And you might not understand the reasons. But do remember that the Universe will never send you something that you cannot handle. Something good always comes out of every situation in which you find yourself.

2. You hold transformative power.

Masters and spiritual gurus teach us that we create our situations, even when they are bad. Many times these circumstances arise by way of our thoughts and omissions. Whether we are able or not to learn our lesson, we can still transform what is there. We can always dig for opportunities no matter the situation.

3. The magic happens outside the comfort zone.

The beauty of the unknown is that it gives rise to growth, power, and

achievement.

Doesn't it sound exciting to dive into something that could bring us growth, power and a sense of achievement? How do you feel when you have encountered challenges and overcome them? Empowered, right? How does it feel when you finalize a project that no one could foresee and when circumstances seemed adverse? Think of how far you bring your life, your work, and your relationship when you leave the familiar.

TO THE MAGIC ZONE

Now you might see that exiting the comfort zone looks like the best way forward. But it's easier said than done. The infamous comfort zone, which feels like a warm bubble bath, is difficult to give up. So how exactly can you coax yourself out of it? Here are some tips that can be of great support to unleash the butterfly and to jump to the magic.

1. Envision the worst-case scenario.

People who know me may be surprised that I start with the negative aspect of the situation. I always deliver feedback starting with the positive comments, the strengths; but today I ask you to look at the worst-case scenario. Here's why: Until this scenario has been consciously looked at and discarded, its possibility will roam around in your mind and pollute your ability to grab an opportunity.

So, consider the worst-case scenario. Pick it up. Turn it over. Examine it. What does it look like? What would happen to you if you were in this situation? Once you have your worst-case scenario—and let's assume it is really terrible—think of what you would then do. This thought process

helps you remember you are a resourceful person and that you'll be able to tackle whatever is sent to you.

Remember: the worst-case scenario is never as terrifying as we may think. (If you try it, you will be so surprised.)

2. Think, Plan, Act.

Now you know you will survive beautifully any worst-case scenario, so move onto designing an action plan. What are you going to create? How are you going to make use of this new set-up? What could be an opportunity? What is it you want?

Set up an objective for this new venture and go for it. The objective will connect with what you long for, give you the drive to make progress, and serve your longer-term life purpose. By reconnecting with who you truly are and what you really want—whatever the circumstances and the set-up—you can achieve something meaningful. More importantly, you'll experience a deep feeling of satisfaction.

Defining objectives and an action plan does not mean filling up the agenda to be busy. Getting busy is a cheat which, deep inside our hearts, we know increases feelings of frustration and ineptitude, resulting in sinking self-confidence. So be reasonable with your planning, without overfilling the schedule.

The caterpillar is down-to-earth, stable, solid, and loyal. There is beauty about the caterpillar. And it's okay to give way to the caterpillar in our lives at times. But the butterfly, which undergoes change and challenge, is the one that lifts us up to where the magic happens, taking our lives and our work to new heights.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

"Be The Greatest You" is Amelie's motto and commitment to support people and corporations in unleashing their inner diamonds to unlock their full potential. Amelie provides coaching, training and public speaking. You can find more inspiring tips and tools for increased happiness and higher success in Wanderlust's upcoming issues and also on Be and Become's Public Chat at viber.com/beandbecome or on Facebook at fb.com/beandbecome