

Adapt, Accommodate, Adjust - Change is coming

By: Richard T. Dixon
Winner: Third Place

Last month the announcement was made of a short term closure of our favorite swimmin' hole. It seems that the Holladay-Lions Fitness Center pool needs to be re-surfaced. It will only take four to six weeks but reactions from the group of mostly retired folks at the pool varied.

“Even if the water is colder, I'll go over to the Fairmont pool. It'll be ok.” “I'm going for a daily walk on the new track. It'll be a neat contrast.” “I sure don't like change. What will I do? Why will it take so long?”

That last comment and complaint evolved into a discussion: “is it only the elderly who resist change?” Psychologist A.J. Schuler made a list of the top ten reasons that people of all ages dislike change. Like it or not, both big and little changes are going to happen. Anyone desiring to gracefully age needs to look forward with willingness to accept the inevitability of change.

If your list of goals has any similarity to mine in the 21st Century, then thriving and surviving are at the top. Let me reflect. I've had several career changes. We have lived in four different states. Three surgical operations came along the way. Relationships don't stay the same. Any happiness and success that I have enjoyed had a whole lot to do with adapting to many changes. Perhaps it is not simply a willingness to accept change but of an eagerness to welcome it.

Let's admit though that change is not always pleasant; it can hurt.

It's not the change itself but it's the “spin” you put on that changing situation, your attitude, and the way you choose to respond to life's losses and obstacles. Some well-known authors and speakers have suggestions: Dr. Laura said “embrace imperfection.” Joseph Wirthlin said “come what may and love it”. It was author Richard Carlson who said “don't sweat the small stuff”. Over the years I have collected literally thousands of aphorisms and quotations. It's a hobby which started as an assignment from my favorite University of Utah professor, Dr. Royal Garif. His homework requirement then was to create a personal file of inspirational ideas and philosophies from speeches and writings of persons that you respect. And I have continued to gather over the years. Some of my own willingness to adapt to change has been influenced by the messages of such authors in my files.

Let me return to our swimming pool. My wife and I have been members for half a dozen years. It's a great morning gathering place. We come from different backgrounds, religions, social and economic levels. Most of us are over 65. There is a common desire to physically and mentally stay in shape. We've survived heart attacks, cancer, artificial hips, divorces, kids and grandkids problems. With Styrofoam, we often float and talk more than we swim. We share, counsel, and commiserate. Whatever you choose to call it .adapting, accommodating, reconciling, adjusting, acclimatizing, or just fitting in .most of the people I know .most of the time, are doing it.

We're handling change. How 'bout you?

Let's join together. Let's cope. Let's welcome the inevitable.

The change will be ok.