

March 2016

Focus: Ch-ch-ch-changes

Spring is a perfect reminder that change is sometimes inevitable, and it doesn't always happen when we want it. If the winter has been especially harsh, we wish for spring to come sooner. If it's been as mild as our most recent Dallas winter, we wish it would hold off for a bit; we're not prepared for hot weather! But all of our wishing is just that: wishing. The season will change when it's time. Change is an important part of life.

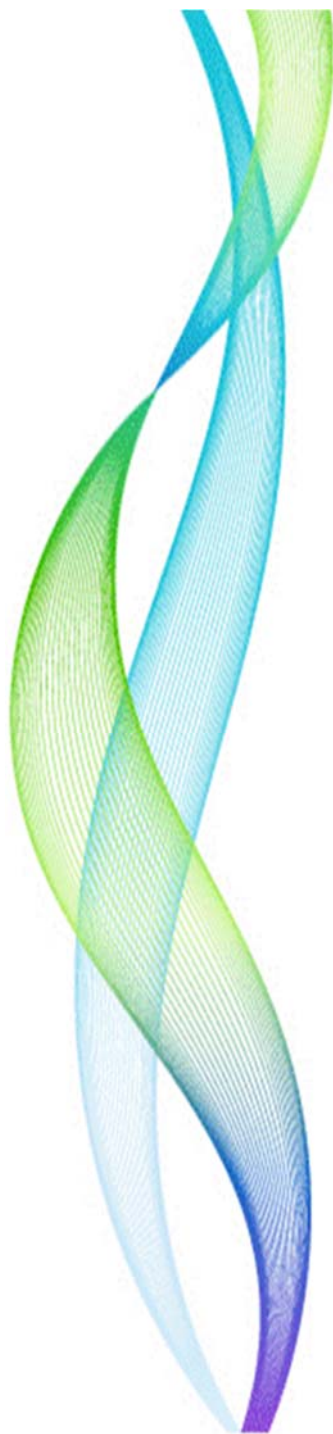
Other changes also occur, whether or not we're ready for them. Some changes are "happy" events but still make us feel sad, or empty: children grow up and get married; a better career opportunity comes along and with it—a cross-country move, leaving good friends behind. Some changes are things we would never actively choose, and yet from time-to-time, they still come: a close family member or beloved pet passes away; a job gets phased out. It's so easy resisting change; it's less so, embracing it.

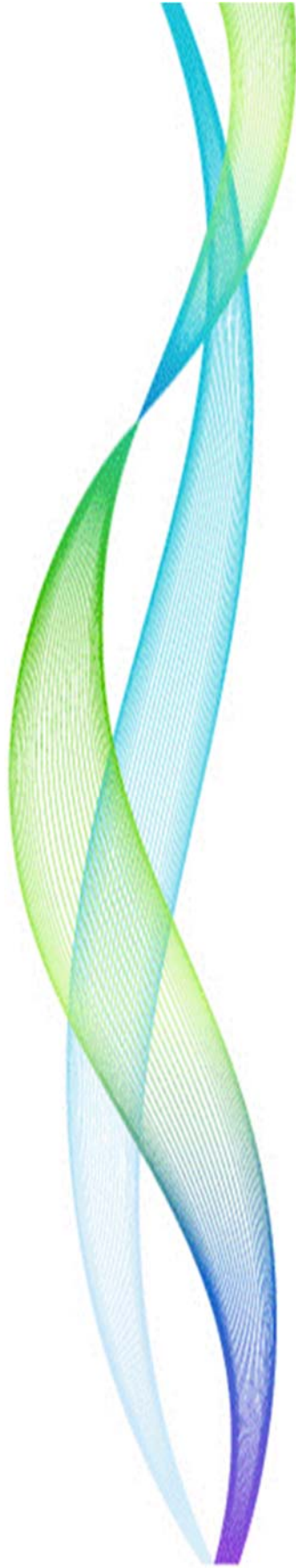
If you're resistant to change, try looking at it from a different perspective. Undoubtedly you've experienced change in the past, and survived, right? Perhaps it even made you stronger, or put you in a better place, or helped you become more empathetic toward others. We cannot always stop change, nor hurry it up. We can only focus on our attitude toward it and try accepting it as it comes. And if you still struggle with change, that's okay. That's what friends (and therapists) are for.

For more information on therapy for life crises, contact Insights therapist [Murphy Foster](#). For more information on therapy for Empty Nest Syndrome or other women's life transitions, contact Insights therapist [Suzanne Johndrow Feiler](#).

Reconnect: Develop a Secret Language

If you don't already have a dorky pet name for your partner, you might want to get one. According to a study published in the *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, the more silly nicknames, made-up terms and sly requests for intimacy a couple





has between them, the higher their relationship satisfaction tends to be. It may be that this type of “insider language” indicates to each partner that they share something the rest of the world isn’t privy to, underscoring the intimate aspect of their relationship. So go ahead: Schmoopie it up.

Bibliotherapy: *Amy & Isabelle* by Elizabeth Strout

And you thought *your* relationship with your mother (or daughter) was complicated! Written in 1998, this was Strout’s first novel about a distant mother and her teenage daughter’s sexual secrets. “In most ways, Isabelle and Amy are like any mother and her 16-year-old daughter, a fierce mix of love and loathing exchanged in their every glance. And eating, sleeping, and working side by side in the gossip-ridden mill town of Shirley Falls doesn’t help matters. But when Amy is discovered behind the steamed-up windows of a car with her math teacher, the vast and icy distance between mother and daughter becomes unbridgeable.” With Strout’s typical deft hand, everyday characters and events become rich and complex, making this one nearly impossible to put down.

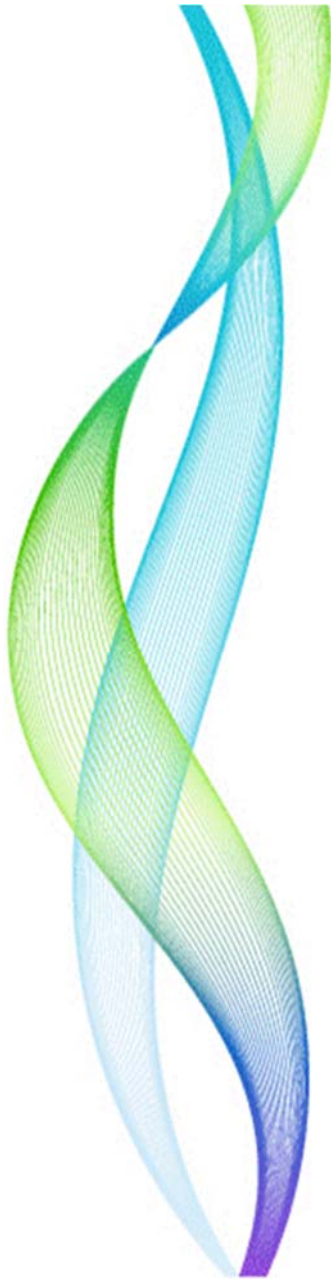
– source: www.Amazon.com

Time-Out: Teaching Empathy

If you’re the parent of a young child, you’re probably already experienced the deep sting of embarrassment felt when she or he says something in public (loudly) about someone who’s different from them, perhaps a person with physical challenges or disabilities. And even though your first instinct is to apologize and get the heck out of wherever you are, it’s actually a wonderful teaching moment for your child. If appropriate, talk to the other person in front of your child. Then, later you can privately discuss with them what they noticed about that person. Ask questions: Have they seen anyone like that before? What do they think would be the toughest part about (being in a wheelchair, autistic, etc.)? What might they have in common with that person? Engaging your child in a conversation about those who may look different encourages empathy, and ultimately teaches them that deep down, people aren’t so different, after all.

Self Care Strategies: Go Fly a Kite (or, Ride a Bike...)

Including movement and play in your everyday life is one of the best things you can do for mind, body and spirit. Dallas has so many opportunities (and nice weather) to get outside and do something you love. It’s really tough feeling depressed or stressed out when you’re flying a kite or zip lining. Try it!



Take Two: *Hail, Caesar!*

If you're a fan of the Coen brothers, you'll enjoy this all-star comedy set during the latter years of Hollywood's Golden Age. Four-time Oscar®-winning filmmakers Joel and Ethan Coen (*No Country for Old Men*, *True Grit*, *Fargo*) wrote and directed this day-in-the-life of a "studio fixer who is presented with plenty of problems to fix." Typically Coen-quirky and well-acted, with some terrific music by Carter Burwell.

– source: www.moviefone.com

Our Time is Up: Stayed tuned for our April issue...