

Anxiety about Change: Anticipating the Good

Change will occur in almost every aspect of our lives, we can learn to embrace it while releasing the past with grace.

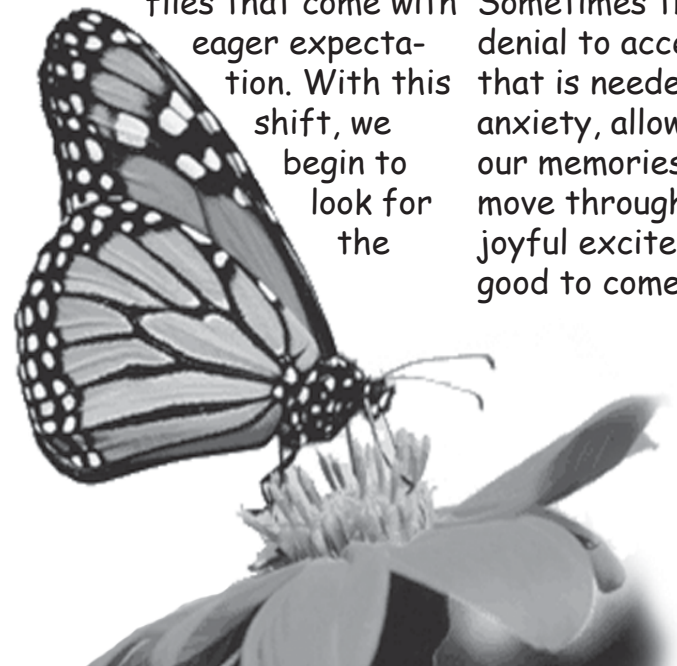
When we find ourselves going through any kind of change in our lives, our natural response may be to tense up on the physical, mental, or emotional level. We may not even notice that we have braced ourselves against a shift until we recognize the anxiety, mood swings, or general worried feeling toward the unknown that usually results.

There are positive ways to move through change without pushing it away, however, or attempting to deny that it is happening. Since change will occur in almost every aspect of our lives, we can learn to make our response to it an affirmative one of anticipation, welcoming the new while releasing the past with grace.

One thing we can do is change our perspective by changing the labels we use to identify our feelings. We can reinterpret feelings of anxiety as the anxious butterflies that come with eager expectation. With this shift, we begin to look for the

good that is on its way to us. Though we may only be able to imagine the possibilities, when we acknowledge that good is there for us to find, we focus our energy on joyful anticipation and bring it into our experience while allowing the feelings to carry us forward.

We can also choose to do a ceremony to allow our emotions to process. Every culture has created ceremonies to help people make the transition from one phase of life to the next. We can always create a ceremony too, perhaps by burning written thoughts to watch the smoke carry them away, thereby releasing them, or we can welcome new endeavors by planting flowers or trees. Some ceremonial activities such as a farewell send-off or housewarming party, we may do automatically. Society also has built-in ceremonies, like graduation and weddings, which may satisfy the need we feel. Sometimes the shift from denial to acceptance is all that is needed to ease our anxiety, allowing us to bring our memories with us as we move through nervousness to joyful excitement about the good to come.



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