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## It's Time To Decide

It is said that, "Change never leaves you the same. It's either growth or grief." When faced with change each of us must make a choice, and not choosing actually is a choice. We can go through the change, or we can grow through the change. Change will occur in our lives no matter what. It is as sure as death and taxes, but it should not be feared but rather embraced. The key factor in our approach to change is quite simply our attitude. We will either be the masters of the situations or the victims. As we plan for a new year let's take a look at how we can become masters of change.

Before you tackle a major change, you need to make sure you are taking care of yourself physically. Are you getting enough rest? Are you eating right? Are you exercising? If you are not managing your health, you won't be able to manage your stress and your attitude. Taking time each day for a brisk walk can accomplish many things:

1. It can shift your brain into a calmer meditative state
2. Spending time outdoors reduces stress
3. Brisk walking boosts stress-busting endorphins

The next step in the process is to evaluate your present attitude. How are you really viewing your life and the changes you are facing. You need to know where you are starting from. Try to see how you are viewing the change you are facing. Take time to write out your feelings. The process of spending the time needed to identify and actually write down the feelings can bring about catharsis and allow you to process away the fears and anxieties.

Once you have identified your fears, write a statement of purpose regarding the change you are facing. I believe that each one of us should become intentional in deciding to grow through the challenges and changes we face. Look

beyond what is, to what can be. What future can you create out of the change you are facing? Construct your purpose statement with inspirational words that frame a victor's mindset.

Based on your purpose statement, develop daily actions that you can take to move you in a positive direction. Activities might include reading or researching specific information. Find people ahead of you in your journey to share ideas and concerns with. Allow them to speak into your life and learn from their experiences. At the end of each day, spend time reflecting. I have found these four simple reflection questions to be very powerful:

1. What went well?
2. What didn't go well?
3. What did I learn?
4. What will I change?

If practiced daily, these four questions will ensure that you are growing through the experiences you made throughout the day. Remember, reflection brings insight and learning to each experience.

Work to make the transition from "I can" or "I can't" to "how can I?". This simple shift moves us from wondering if there is an answer to knowing there is an answer. Every problem has a solution; we just haven't found it yet. Someone once asked Thomas Edison if he was discouraged by the over 900 failures in developing the incandescent light bulb. His reply was so telling, "Not at all. I knew it would work once I exhausted all the ways to not make the incandescent bulb."

It's time to decide. Change is going to come. Will you be a victim or a victor? Choose well.