



July 2007

# The Challenge of Change

**W**hy is change so challenging for most of us? Along with death and taxes, it's one of the only certainties in life.

My guess is we find it so challenging because we have this built in desire to be comfortable, to not have our boat rocked. We want things to stay as they are. When you think about it, what's really happening is that we're more comfortable in the past that we are in the present. Some of us are also more comfortable with the future, or what we perceive our future to be.

The bottom line though is that by finding comfort in the past, we're not in the present. If you've taken notes from any of the spiritual teachers who've been trying to hammer this home to us for millennia now, you'll know that at the end of the day; the present is all we have. So, before you turn off because I've "gone all spiritual on you", hear this:

Being present has nothing to do with pretending there is no future. It has nothing to do with pretending the past doesn't matter. Being present means accepting the reality of what is, right now in this moment. Accepting first what it is, then questioning what that means, and finally, deciding what you're going to do about it.

## Accepting what is.

If you can't accept what is, you can't move forward; simple as that. Accepting what is does not mean giving up. In some cases it means finding the current situation unacceptable before moving on to step two. Let's use the economy as a case in point. You can refrain from using the "R" word all you like; that doesn't change the fact that the game has changed. I've said this before, I'll say it again: It doesn't matter whether we're in a recession or not; it's your responses to the changes taking place that will determine your success or

failure. First step, as in all things, is acceptance.

## Question what that means.

To some, this current economic downturn/recession/depression (oops, did I just use the "D" word?) may well spell the end of the world. For those who are determined to look at it that way; guess what? They are probably right. But what if the rest of us choose to look at it differently and decide instead to look for the *opportunities* in what's unfolding? What would that look like? Let me give you an example:

I have been working closely with a financial services company this past year. As you can imagine, these are very challenging times for anyone working in the financial services industry. I would imagine that a number of financial advisors are feeling that the end of their world is near. That being said, the top performers are excited. They're doing what they've always done;

connecting with their clients; providing unparalleled service and showcasing their industry knowledge to reassure the client that they're there to help them navigate the chaos. By reaching out to their clients, by acting with honesty and integrity, they're winning loyalty while others are running for cover...

So, what does this mean for you? It means that if you're not a top performer, are you OK with that

reality? If so, that's great, but don't say you haven't been warned. Mediocrity has no place when the going gets tough.

If you're *not* OK with that reality, the question becomes;

**What are you going to do about it?**

You can choose to be a victim of change, which I have to point out will be a lifelong vocation as change "is here to stay",

or, like our top performers you can choose to see the opportunities in change. You can *choose* to recognize as they do that the greater the upheaval; the greater the opportunities available.

You can start by accepting what is.

Then by asking yourself: "What do I need to do *today* to move forward? What do I need to do to become the top performer I know I can be?"

*Warren Macdonald works with innovative, forward thinking organizations and associations looking to foster "out of the box" thinking; the kind of thinking that led him to become the first double above-knee amputee to climb Mt. Kilimanjaro, Africa's tallest peak (19,222ft); the kind of thinking that empowers potential and inspires you to grow and prosper. Visit <http://www.warren-macdonald.net/> or call your local speakers bureau.*