



Routine

Chance

Change

Time for now: Facing stress with mindfulness and being in the moment

Whether it's a big move across the county, receiving an unexpected medical diagnosis, being awarded a promotion at the firm or something else – it's likely you've faced moments of substantial change in your life. When these changes occur, regardless of if they're planned or a surprise, they can lead us to feel stressed, overwhelmed, and be a challenge to manage.

Even though we can't bypass the impact these changes have on our lives; we can choose how to view and approach them. As mindfulness pioneer Jon Kabat-Zinn eloquently says, "You can't stop the waves, but you can learn how to surf"¹.

By acknowledging we have a choice in how we work through these transitions, we empower ourselves to approach life's changes with greater awareness, resilience, and compassion. But how can we do this? Here are a few ideas that may help you through your next big shift:

Double Down on Self-Care

When we think of self-care, we may picture one-off indulgences like massages, spa days and bubble baths, but self-care is so much more than that. Think of self-care as a way to support your overall well-being. This will look different for everyone, but it can include things like eating nourishing food, engaging in physical activity, practicing good sleep hygiene, making time for activities you enjoy and even steering clear of unhealthy coping strategies such as excessive alcohol consumption.

It's important to find what works for you and schedule time for self-care regularly so it becomes preventative instead of a reactionary response to life's stressors.

Build a Support System

Many of us have trouble when it comes to seeking support or asking for help. Asking for help is a courageous practice and can be a game changer when it comes to navigating life transitions.

This can look like asking a family member to watch the kids so you can run some errands, scheduling a coffee date with a supportive friend who may have gone through something similar or joining a support group. These actions can all be helpful when experiencing big changes in our lives.

Practice Mindfulness

Mindfulness is not limited to meditation. Instead, it's a way of being, one where we observe our situation from an objective place. When we're mindful, we aim to not judge our experience as good or bad, right or wrong, instead we work on accepting what is happening as it is. This can take some practice so it may be worthwhile to sign up for a course like Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) or read a book like "Radical Acceptance" by Tara Brach.

Try Therapy

Talking to an unbiased third party such as a therapist or counselor during a period of transition can provide you with guidance, perspective and coping tools that will help you understand and process your situation in a supportive and healthy way. If you need help accessing a therapist, contact The Member Assistance Program (MAP) at 1-855-403-8922.

We will all experience transitions during the course of our lives. How we choose to view and work through them is in our hands. May we all make choices that support our well-being and growth! ■

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MAKE TIME FOR
SELF CARE

¹ Jon Kabat-Zinn (2005). "Wherever You Go, There You Are: Mindfulness Meditation in Everyday Life", Hyperion