

Bloom

Hope...for the uprooted woman

A Ministry of Just Moved

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Life is change. Don't miss the benefits

by Ann Kelley, Director of Marketing & Website at Just Moved

Some respond to change with excitement, some with fear, some with a combination of the two. Which are you?

Whether your life change was a choice you made or was thrust upon you, you'll have less fear and anxiety if you can be open to the possible benefits that lay ahead.

Creativity. New experiences can lead to new ways of thinking. New ways of thinking foster creativity as you approach problems, solutions, and the changing demands of life.

Flexibility. A rigid, controlling response to change will only make you crazy. When life around you is changing, you have more opportunities to learn to adjust and adapt. It may not be easy at first, but adaptation can become a way of life and serve you well.

The courage to risk. I'm not talking about base jumping. Reasonable risk is going after something that's important to you, but success isn't guaranteed. Weigh all the options and the ramifications of failure and decide if it's worth it. Is your need for control keeping you from going after your dreams? If you never try, will you regret it?

Empathy and understanding. Being uprooted from the familiar can help you be more empathetic to others going through something similar. Being transplanted into a different culture, with people who observe a different way of life, can broaden your worldview and your appreciation for different perspectives.

Discover your personal strengths and abilities. Being stretched beyond your comfort zone can lead you to discover new abilities and a confidence you never knew you had.

Strengthen your faith in God. If everything in your life is controlled and "safe", you'll never need to rely on God for courage, strength, wisdom, and guidance. As God reveals more of himself to you, he reveals more of *you* to you.

Keep in mind that these benefits and opportunities for growth can be short-circuited by fear, anger, anxiety, comparison, and the need to control. If any of these have their ugly grip on you, resist the urge to push them down or smear them all over the people around you. Spend time with these feelings, ask yourself why they're there and invite God to look at them with you. Ask Him to show you what's at the root of these feelings.

Now, read on for more about the importance of change in our lives.

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Life is change.
Growth is optional.
Choose wisely.

Karen Kaiser Clark

Hated the process, loved the results by Ann Kelley

My friends, love is better than anger.
Hope is better than fear.
Optimism is better than despair.
So let us be loving, hopeful and optimistic.
And we'll change the world.

- Jack Layton

Why does it seem that personal growth usually requires some kind of life change or shake-up? In my younger years I proclaimed (with more seriousness than I wanted to admit), "Growth is overrated!" I saw myself as an enlightened, mature adult doing a pretty bang-up job of wife, mom, friend, and community participant.

Fast forward through years of wringing my hands over a wayward son, caring for ailing parents, and being blind-sided by marriage struggles and...well...now I was *sure* that growth was overrated. If going through trials was necessary for growth, I wanted none of it.

There was no changing my circumstances, so I was left with a choice: shake my fist at these changes in my life, bury my head and ignore them, or accept them

into my life and allow God to lead me through them. Thankfully, I chose to do the latter – on good days – and eventually learned to give up any – or, in all honesty, *most* – expectations for how things would turn out. The road through these life changes was never easy, often very hard, but I love who I'm becoming and how my relationship with God is deepening because of what I've been through.

My feelings about growth now? Hate the process, love the results. Don't get the wrong idea, this is not some self-improvement project. It's surrendering to whatever God is doing.

History is full of examples of life change leading to great good, even to historically significant events. You may be tempted to think the following individuals were special or extraordinary, but think again. They were regular people – like you and me. These real people must have approached their life change with a healthy dose of fear.

Abraham. God tells him to pack up his family and belongings and leave his home. Just start moving and I'll tell you when you get there. Along the way, Abe gets a promise that he'll beget a great nation. *Twenty-five years later*, Isaac is born. **For some reason**, the great-nation begetting couldn't happen back home.

Joseph. Things aren't looking so good for Joseph when his brothers sell him into slavery. Joseph winds up working for an influential Egyptian leader; things are looking up. Joseph gets falsely accused of coming on to the boss' wife and is thrown in prison; a turn for the worse. Joseph can interpret dreams, is redeemed from prison, and winds up being Pharaoh's right hand man to save Egypt and neighboring peoples (including his dad and brothers) from a devastating famine. **For some reason**, being torn from the familiar and enduring great hardship was important to being able to wisely lead a great nation and humbly offer forgiveness (to the brothers).

Moses. He's got the world on a string. Nothing is beyond his grasp as the adopted son of Pharaoh. But he can't deny his heritage as a Jew and watch the beating

of a fellow Jew. He kills the offending Egyptian and must flee to the wilderness. What ensues is 40 years as a Jewish shepherd. God calls him, through a burning PA system, to go back to Egypt and lead the Jews to freedom from slavery. Moses essentially responds, "Who, me? You must mean someone else. Let me tell you why I would be lousy at this...." Moses made a major career change. **For some reason**, being forced from the familiar to forty years of humble, obscure work was necessary training for a new career as the liberator and leader of the Israelites.

Esther. Orphan Esther is minding her own business when the king decides to find the most beautiful maidens in the land and take them for his own. Though she is one of the king's favorites, she has lost her freedom and must hide her heritage as a Jew – an unpopular status at the time. Esther gets wind of the king's plan to kill all the Jews and she feels she must risk her security to do what she can to save her people. Gutsy stuff. **For some reason**, to be a voice for the Jews, an innocent young girl was torn from her home to be part of a degrading concubinal system.

ENCOURAGE

EMBRACE

Naomi. A famine forces Naomi, her husband and two sons to move to Moab. Her husband and sons end up dying, leaving her with her two daughters-in-law. Naomi decides to move back home and daughter-in-law, Ruth, goes with her. Life isn't easy as they are forced to glean the leftovers in the field after the harvesters have been through. Long story short, Naomi winds up marrying the owner of the field and giving birth to the grandfather of King David! **For some reason**, God used the difficult changes and struggles in the lives of two women to create the lineage of David, "a man after God's own heart."

Mary. Yes, *that* Mary. The mother of Jesus. A conscientious, responsible teen-ager, engaged to a hard working carpenter is suddenly pregnant. Who's going to believe immaculate conception? The risk is great: Joseph could reject her, the community could – and probably did – gossip about her. But she trusted God, gave birth to His Son, and raised Him to adulthood. She watched Him die a horrible death too. Tough stuff for a mother. **For some reason**, this young, faithful girl was chosen to give birth to the Savior of the world.

Like me, Mary was a mom doing her best to raise a child. No super powers. Just chosen by God to be faithful to a special responsibility. My wayward son is doing great now and my marriage is being transformed. I know that not all wayward children find direction and not all marriages find healing. I'm grateful mine did.

What life change are you facing? You may not be the next freedom fighter, but this change may open the door to opportunities you never dreamed of. Or maybe you've dreamed of them, but needed a nudge to get started. Wherever your path leads, God goes with you, leading you to greater growth, wisdom and faith. You just need to follow.

What's next?

by Kathy Herrick

I landed in a *Moving On After Moving In* study with heart problems, an [ailing] mother, twins just married, other family challenges, and a loss of identity as a [retired] principal, a mother, and a daughter.

I found I couldn't control any of these. God finally was breaking down the door. I was finally getting it and seeing I needed to let go, I needed to listen, and I needed a daily relationship with God.

I had this superficial faith, this crisis Christianity, but I had no deep and daily relationship with God. I couldn't figure out my purpose and my "what's next".

One main topic in the...study is **Moving Ahead**. In my life, that meant accepting that my one real role was that of a child of God and that I needed to quit worrying and planning and controlling each day. I needed to give it all up to God and trust that He would take me down the path that He needed me to go on, every day.

And what is next? I don't know, but I do know that I am willing to walk *by* the closed doors without banging on them and walk *through* the open ones with God at my side. I may not see where the next step leads, but I know God is there, walking the journey with me.



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But Mom, I Don't Want to Move! gives mothers the guidance they need to get their children through this major change. Author Susan Miller, who relocated with her family 14 times, provides practical ways to ease the uprooted feeling children may have before, during, and after a move. Offering specific ideas based on the ages of children and the variety of reasons for relocating, this book is a complete guide to making the adjustment to a new house, school, and community as smooth as possible. Soft-bound cover; 154 pages

For the first time, you can get the book and the 3-DVD series, *Journey of a Move*, in one money-saving package. In each DVD, Susan Miller guides you through an essential step of Letting Go, Starting Over, or Moving Ahead with your life after a move. This is the perfect gift of welcome encouragement for you or friends and neighbors who have relocated. (This is NOT the *Moving On* study in the DVD Teaching Series.)

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