

# WEISE WORDS

## WORDS OF WISDOM FOR HEALTHY LIVING

### Navigating Unexpected Change

Change can be difficult especially if it is unexpected and forced upon us; a spouse walks out, we experience grief at the untimely death of a loved one, perhaps we lose a job or receive a bad medical report. Each of these changes brings unexpected pain into our lives. What do we do? We can embrace the situation and run to God for hope and encouragement or we can fight the change and experience depression and bitterness.

How can we best navigate this type of unexpected change in our lives? Here are some key points to consider:

- 1. Recognize that change is followed by a sequence of stages.** First there is denial – we refuse to accept the change. After we've overcome our denial, we move into the stage of resistance. We acknowledge the change but we resist it. Then comes exploration – we begin to process how this change will impact our lives. Finally comes acceptance. We are reconciled to the change and live at peace with it. It is also important to remember that we can remain stuck in any one of these stages and any one of these stages may be repeated as you process all aspects of the change.
- 2. Choose to become knowledgeable about the change being forced upon you.** If you are fighting cancer, find out all you can. If you are being divorced against your will, talk to others who have been through it and survived. Knowledge is essential and will aid you through this process, so gather as much information as possible.
- 3. Be prepared for a lot of reversals and disappointments.** Unfortunately, our emotional response to change is not a linear process. There will be good days and there will be bad days and you may feel that you are on an emotional roller coaster. Just when you think you've accepted the change, you may be blindsided by yet another ripple of it. Give yourself grace during these times.
- 4. Our greatest opportunities for positive change are to be found in times of apparent failure and disappointment.** In God's eternal plan there is no such thing as failure – only forced growth! He may not cause bad things to happen to us, but He always uses them to fulfill His work of grace in us.
- 5. Never attempt to process unexpected life changes alone.** It is of greatest importance to surround yourself with godly people who are encouraging and supportive. They will help you process your pain and direct your focus back to the Lord and His unlimited grace and provision.

*For more information about this article or to receive help with processing unexpected change in your life, please contact me at [pwcounseling.com](http://pwcounseling.com) or call 813.643.2600. I am here as a resource for you.*