



CULTIVATING THE SEEDS OF CHANGE ©
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Embracing Change

Autumn is one of nature's reminders that change is an ongoing EXPECTED event. One of the most pleasant experiences for me is to enjoy the change of color in the leaves here in the Eastern United States. Every fall offers a different menu based on the weather conditions. I see places where the leaves look like lollipops stuck in to a backdrop of greens and other places that look like a child took a paint brush and ever so lightly dropped hints of color on carefully chosen trees.

Leaves changing color is a pleasant event for me, even though I may not know ahead of time whether the colors will be dull or vibrant or how quickly the leaves will fall. It is the unexpected that brings enjoyment and pleasure.

Can this same outlook be applied to our lives and our goals? I believe learning to view other parts of life in this way brings a greater amount of satisfaction. When the experience is the focus instead of the outcome, learning can happen more quickly and have a more profound affect.

To illustrate, let me introduce Bob (a fictitious combination of several of my clients) who has been seeking a new direction in his life. He doesn't have a clear idea of what it is he is looking for, but he is willing to explore some ideas. Even though his job is satisfying, he now wonders what other opportunities there might be for him. By being open to everything, he is finding his search for a new job more rewarding. Bob is discovering related jobs he would have never considered previously. Although he does not have to leave his current job, Bob is enthusiastically researching multiple possibilities.

The following Growth Action Plan (formerly Gardener's Action Plan) encompasses some strategies Bob has employed on his path of discovery.

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## GROWTH ACTION PLAN FOR OCTOBER 2006 ©

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Henri Bergson, famous French philosopher, once said, *“To exist is to change, to change is to mature and to mature is to go on creating oneself endlessly.”*

Bob started his journey of creation by deciding what he would do if he had no money worries. He imagined that every expense was taken care of for the rest of his life. This took some practice given that Bob was living paycheck to paycheck. Bob took some time dreaming about material things he would like to add to his lifestyle. The more “stuff” he added to the image of what his life would be, the more panicked he became. He began to find it difficult to find more stuff. His realization: there has to be a purpose behind the material things humans accumulate.

### *The first step toward change is awareness.*

Bob realized that he had not thought about what he really wanted his life to look like, what he wanted his life to mean. This was difficult for him to define. He knew he always enjoyed drawing cartoon characters and love the reaction the expressions got from people with whom he shared his raw talent. But that was a hobby from long ago. It didn’t have value-or did it?

During the time Bob was deciding what meaning he wanted his life to have, what he wanted his contribution to be, he was layed off from his job. The layoff was totally unexpected; like so many corporations today, Bob’s employer was a victim of the economy. Bob now faced unemployment and a long list of decisions. A few months before the layoff, Bob would have been confused, disillusioned, angry or desperate. Because he was aware he wanted something new, he now could move towards accepting his situation.

### *The second step is acceptance.*

Bob decided on a whim to talk to graphic designers. He asked questions about what they did, where their clients were found and what they enjoyed most about graphic design. One person in particular encouraged Bob to try his hand at graphic design. Taking a chance at looking foolish, Bob gave it a shot right there and found that his talents from long ago complimented those of “Rita”. They talked about the possibility of working together. This was not what Bob would have pursued right after losing his job. He had learned that *“Change is difficult but often essential to survival.”* Bob is now in the process of redefining his new life.

Having a strategy which prepares you for change affects the way in which you face change. Sudden change may become more tolerable, less threatening or unbalanced.

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** Renée Canali is a Mindset Coach who provides experiential programs for young adults which engage them in the process of living outside the box. Check out other articles she has written at www.ideamarketers.com.

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