

Change Hero

Module 1

‘Fortune favours the Brave’

Change Hero

Become a Master of Change and Stress

To conquer life and the challenges you inevitably face along the way, you must become a Change Hero. To do this, you need a strategy, a shield of armour, a tool to attack, an army and the ability to persevere until you become an expert.

Change comes in all forms and all sizes. It may originate from within, via a decision or change in perspective, or from outside your control.

It might be as simple as buying a new car or bringing home a new puppy or moving into your dream home. It may be more serious such as a job redundancy or retirement. It maybe be as significant as divorce or the loss of a loved one. It may also be a life stage transition that unearths negative emotions, commonly experienced as a teenager, mid-lifer or retiree.

The COVID-19 outbreak has and will continue create significant changes for people across the world. You may be impacted by schools closing, wondering what to do with bored teenagers, finding it difficult to get the supplies you need to feed your family. You may be looking after a parent and worried for their health and wellbeing. You may have suffered job or income loss overnight.

Indeed, futurists predict that people will experience more than 300% more change in 20 years’ time than we do now. And that was before COVID-19.

Change leads to stress. As the global population begins to process the accelerated changes from COVID-19 , societal health will rapidly becoming a disturbing problem. Neuroscientists have proven that the human mind likes repetition, as it uses less energy. If there is too much change, mental, physical and emotional destabilisation can result.

Anxiety was already on a rapid ascent before COVID-19, as historical precedents followed by our parents disappear. Days of having a career for life are almost gone, leaving university graduates and mid-lifers unsure about what goals to set and pursue. Accelerated device and social media use by children are presenting a whole new set of challenges for the minds of our youth. Declining wealth in retirement for middle income earners are leaving many feeling vulnerable.

While change leads to stress, not all stress is bad. In fact good stress- eu-stress- is necessary to motivate us to keep moving. It is only when we choose to resist necessary change, that great dis-stress and crisis will follow.

Change Hero is a program designed to reduce distress and ensure that you conquer any change. Personally, I think the media, medical profession and various mental health institutions are somewhat missing the mark on the prevention and remedying of mental ill-health that results from major changes in life, promoting solutions that perpetuate a victim mentality and cultivate addictions to prescription antidepressants. Im hoping that Change Hero will help you through the tough times without your needing to rely on the already stretched medical profession and more prescription drugs.

Becoming a Change Hero is a key life imperative to protect you from rising levels of change, stress and illness. It will set you up to deal with set backs faster and better than ever before and help you stay sane when life takes a turn for the worst, as is happening for so many right now.

10 steps to Conquer Change

Change Hero is a 10 part program based on a dynamic framework and formula :

The Shield : Defending yourself from stress and change

The Spear: Aiming for victory

The Army: Developing support, leading your life to victory



Change Hero can also be followed with the equation:

$$CH = Fu + ((p * m * e) + Vo + W) * D / Fe + Co.$$

where:

CH = Happiness from Change or Change Hero

Fu = Fun

p = physical health

m = mental health

e = emotional health

Vo= Core Vision

W= Will/mindset

D = Discipline

Fe= Fear

Co= Core supporters + Core self - the self you become when you hit rock bottom

Change Hero is comprised of 10 modules:

Modules 1 -4 explains 'The shield':

1. CH- Conquering change is about understanding the change cycle and the heroes journey. There must be a base level of fun- Fu- that you get out of life, to provide a base defence against stress.

2. p- Physical good health is important to help conquer stress. In this module we focus particularly on the importance of having balanced hormones.

3. m- Having good mental health is an imperative for defending against change. In the module you will learn how to better understand your psychology and control stress triggers.

4. e -The greater your emotional health the more likely you will be to conquer change. This module focuses on how to tune into and improve emotions.

Module 5—8 explains 'The Spear'

5. Vo- In order to keep moving forward its important to have a Vision. This module focuses on how to construct goals for the future, specifically focussing on Virtuosity Goals.

6. W- Attacking change is about having a commitment to action, the will and mindset to keep following your goals. This module provides some pointers to improve your will when times get tough.

7. D - Discipline and time management. In the formula, D is applied as a multiple to all the previous elements. In other words, without discipline, executing on any of the above ingredients of change management will be infinitely tougher. This module reflects on techniques to improve your discipline.

8. Fe- Deepest fears. As humans, we carry a deep fear of death. This manifests a little differently in each of us, depending on our core drivers. In this module we introduce a model to help you understand your core drivers and deepest fears.

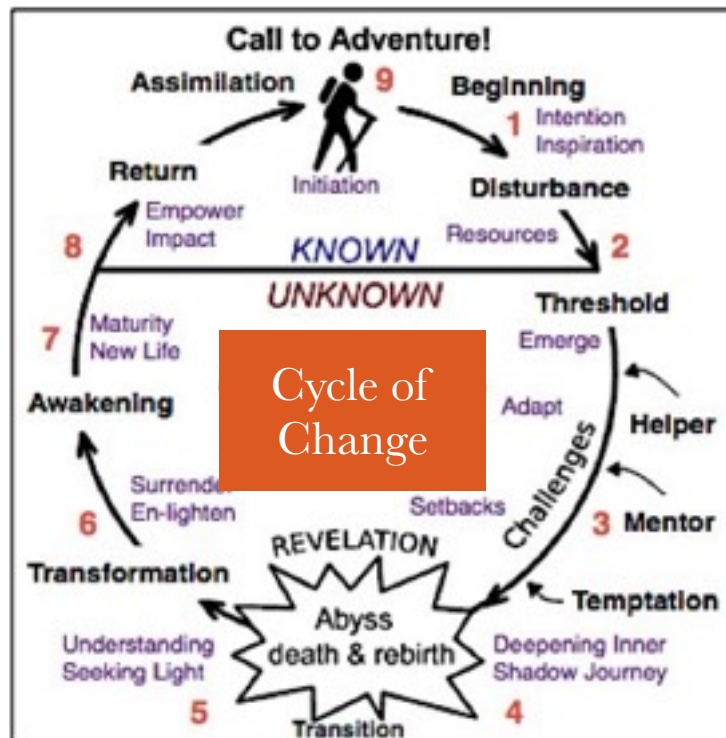
Modules 9 and 10 explain ‘The Army’ and how to lead to victory

9. Co. means ‘together, we’ ...and its link to the people who you need in support of your heroes journey. Relationships are critical and learning to manage conflict with loved ones is especially important.

10 Co. also represents Core Self. This is the self you are when all is stripped away. Finding your core- and learning to love this self- is the final step in becoming a Change Hero.

About Change

The Cycle of Change shows the events that occur from initiation to assimilation of the change



When change occurs- and you receive the call to adventure- the wheel must turn and can only do so in a clockwise direction, which is the direction of time.

To explain the model using the example of buying a new puppy:

At point 0- Initiation: You realise that you would like a dog in your family.

At point 1- Intention: You set your intention to buy a puppy.

At point 2: Resources: You research and shop for your new puppy. You get your house ready by buying food and bedding and books on training. At this stage you will likely be feeling excitement or anticipation.

At point 3: Action: The puppy arrives home and life begins!

However, the anticipated enjoyment of your new puppy is soon dampened by the realisation that your old daily routine has changed and you no longer have the same freedom to plan your day. It's also begun chewing the furniture, and crying at night. You are likely to enlist the support of helpers and mentors in the form of google searches and puppy training schools. You are likely to feel the excitement fading away.

At Point 4. As you begin to get used to your new routine and unplanned disruptions, you are beginning to suffer, feeling tired, anxious, and angry. You are likely feeling a sense of loss, realising that your old life will never be the same again. You may be tempted with an alternative, such as giving away your puppy to the lost dogs home. If you follow the temptation, however- and stop the wheel from turning- you will feel distress, realising that you have given up and relinquished your goals. This is the point at which you must remember your original intent and make the decision to be brave, keep going and complete the transition.

At Point 5: Eventually, with continued patience, investigation and practice - training, feeding, disciplining and loving- you get through the worst of it, gaining confidence as your puppy's behaviour improves and you realise you have done it! In fact, one day you wake up and realise that the new puppy slept through the night and did not chew your shoes!

At point 6: You begin to have faith that your dreams will be realised and the puppy is growing fine, helping you to relax into the natural process of its growing up. This is a necessary point of surrender- where you embrace in faith that all will turn out just fine. You allow enjoyment into each day.

At point 7: Awakening: Your puppy is now grown and cemented as part of your life. You communicate freely, each other understanding the rhythms of the day and workings of the household. You both express a natural, loving bond and the puppy brings you true joy.

At point 8: Return: Your puppy has turned into the dog you intended. You know that if you ever had to go through the process again, that you would know what to do and how to help others do it too.

At point 9: Your life is fully integrated...and you look forward to the next change!

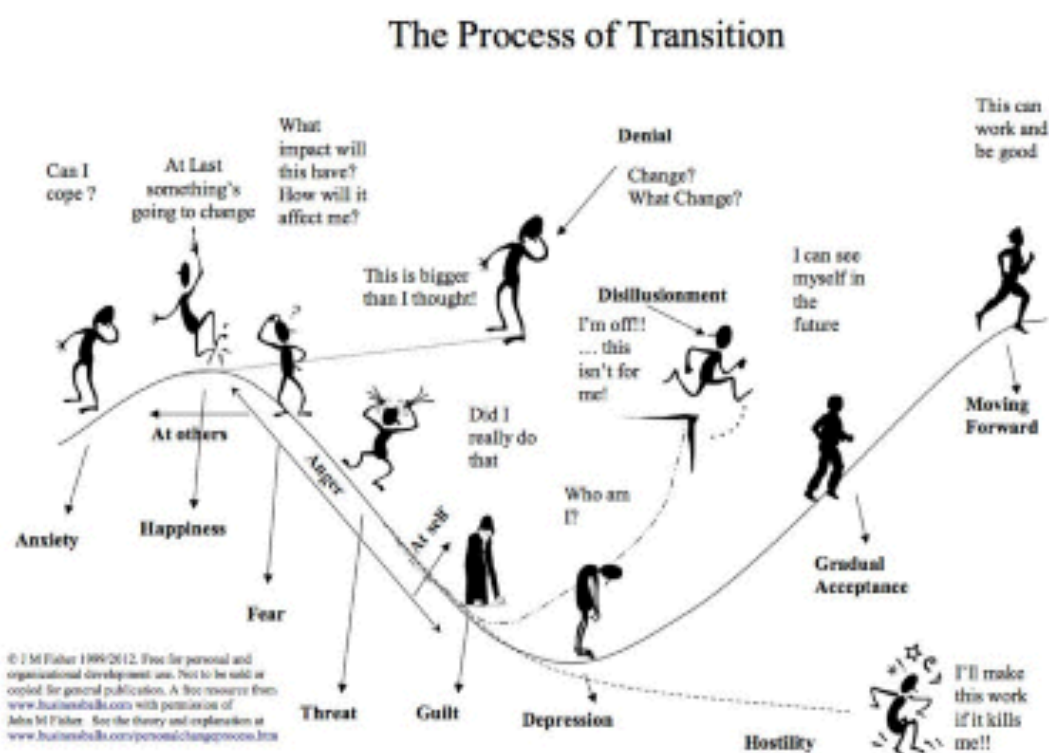
The Cycle of Change works the same regardless of:

- whether or not you are in control of the change
- the extent or size of the change

The key lesson of the change cycle is that it only moves in a clockwise direction- like a wheel turning. In fact, the wheel never stops turning. The more you lean into the change, the better and faster the wheel will turn.

If you don't lean in- if you resist change- then a great negative force will stop the wheel turning and great distress and illness will be the result.

The emotions that the cycle of change produces are also represented in the curve below:



Lets use the cycle of change and transition curve to assess the impacts from the onset of a disease that has no known cure, such as COVID-19:

0. The announcement was made that a deadly virus was circulating.

1. Its likely there was phase of temporary excitement as you watched the news and realised there was a real live drama playing out- like being in a reality TV show. Excitable conversations occurred with neighbours and friends as news spread.

2. As you began to process 'what does this mean for me ?' , a seed of fear formed. Maybe you set an intention to shore up a few more resources, buying extra wipes sand toilet paper. You might have decided to sit and wait on planning that big birthday party.

As you watched more news, fear increased. You became aware that a deadly virus could actually impact on you and your livelihood.

3. Then change impacted you directly. Schools were closed. Your holiday was cancelled. Your teenagers' sport was cancelled. Your favourite bar shut down. You were forced to socially isolate.

As time went on the streets became empty. You couldn't get your hair or nails done. Your beginning to fight with your spouse more and more.

Some are experiencing denial. Teenagers and young people tend lead the way, continuing to hang out together and party, choosing to ignore the impacts of change.

4. As the economy crashed around you and markets tanked, you were forced to take leave from your job indefinitely. You lost all your customers overnight.

You realised that you could no longer afford the school fees, the mortgage, the lifestyle you had been accustomed to.

Fear became sadness, anger, grief.

You noticed more and more beggars in the streets. You increasingly felt unsafe as rates of crime increased, with desperate people doing what they could to fight to survive.

You began to distrust everyone around you, believing that people were out for themselves.

Your mother contracted the disease and died. Your friend committed suicide.

As I write this, people from many countries around the world are at this point on a great cycle change instigated by the outbreak of COVID-19.

At a very dangerous point.

If we don't keep leaning into the cycle of change-if we are resistant to change- then there will be a great depression and lives will grind to halt.

But if we can keep turning the wheel and stay on the curve, we will come out the other side. If we can move through the abyss and create a new revelation, then collectively we will survive and one day prosper again.

This is the classic heroes journey. We are all being called into action, to turn the wheel together.

Resistance and resilience

Resistance to change is very normal. The key is to recognise your resistance and defuse the energy of it.

When you learn to defuse your own resistance you are learning to become resilient to change.

The following chapters will help reduce resistance and build resilience to change, helping to move you through the change cycle better and faster.

Seeking optimal stress

As long as you are alive and human, stress will not be avoided. In fact, when there is not enough stress, people tend to intentionally seek it out, as a certain amount of stress creates motivation and challenge. If you have ever gone snow skiing, white water rafting, or to an amusement park on purpose to ride the roller coaster, then you have been seeking stress.

During these activities the body displays all the physiological indicators of stress- which we talk more about in the next chapter- however, it feels more like you having fun. This is eu-stress: positive stress.

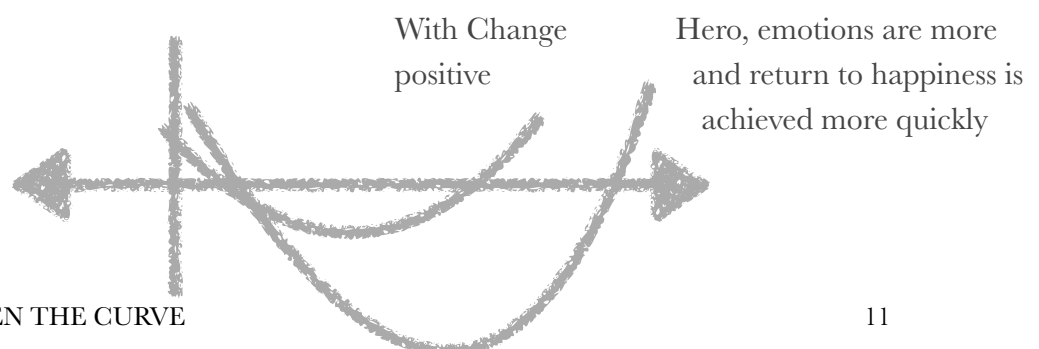
With positive stress, as we adapt and adjust we feel competent, challenged, and satisfied with our ability to cope. Negative stress, distress, however, is another matter. We do not like it and try to avoid it... however, the essence of modern stress comes from change, and change cannot be avoided.

The key is to build resilience against dis-stress and develop positive eu-stress , leading to a sense of fun and the drive, discipline and motivation to keep the wheel turning.

Flattening the change curve

Building resilience to change is about seeking optional stress and eliminating resistance. This will reduce the negative emotional effects of change and help accelerate acceptance and moving forward.

So, the change curve in the image above will look much flatter and shorter, as the new normal is achieved more quickly.



Become a Change Hero to flatten the curve

Change Hero will coach you to build resilience to distress, with solutions to manage each stage of the cycle:

1. Stage 1: Discern, don't judge and practice acceptance
2. Stage 2: Create goals and a plan and proactively source support
3. Stage 3: Engage your will and act effectively and efficiently
4. Stage 4: Persist and iterate; manage set-backs
5. Stage 5: Be grounded, practice gratitude, hold on to your vision
6. Stage 6: Have faith in benevolent forces, forgive
7. Stage 7: Believe in your strength, enjoy the new world that's been created
8. Stage 8: Become the hero, use your learning to help others
9. Stage 9: Get ready for more change

Change Hero will provide you with the skills needed to live your best possible life. It will enable you to conquer this and any future changes, set-backs and 'crisis' at faster speeds with greater satisfaction and fun.

With mastery of Change Hero the cycle of change will become easier to turn with each future change.

Keeping perspective is really important in times of great change. This is a good story to remind people to keep perspective.

A high school professor filled an empty jar to its brim with rocks.
He then asked the class- is this jar full?

Yes, replied the class.

The professor then poured in some much smaller rocks, which found their way into the cracks between the big rocks and filled the jar some more.

‘Now is this jar full? he asked’.

The class nodded.

The professor then poured sand into the jar, to illustrate the jar could be further filled. After that, he poured water into the jar, until the jar was finally full.

“Class, my lesson here is to illustrate that you have to put your big rocks into the jar first. Had I started with water, then nothing else would have been able to fit, but by putting my big rocks in first, everything else was able to fit”.

“This is an analogy to life. You’d be wise to remember to put your big rocks in first- the most important aspect of your life. You, your loved ones, your health, your hobbies. Next you need the smaller rocks- your career/ job, your house ...then the sand, some vacation time, clothes, furniture..then finally the water, which is everything else.

Keeping perspective and remembering that the big rocks are what matters most- self-love, your loved ones, your health and hobbies- will help strengthen your resilience when times get tough.

Having Fun- Fu

When the chips are down and you are facing into a tough change, its important to both keep perspective and remember to try and have fun, no matter how small.

Having fun- represented as Fu in the Change Hero equation- is a core ingredient to building resilience to change.

Change Hero Activity #1 Make your fun list

Make a list of twenty things that you like to do.

Split the list into two columns.

One column consists of those things that you like to do because they are fun, quick and easy.

On my list, for example, I have included:

- patting the dog on my lap
- making a cup of tea
- laughing with my husband and friends
- playing a game with my kids
- going for a run

The other column should contain those activities that give you a sense of achievement. Include those items that take planning and organisation such as that trip to Europe, writing the autobiography, developing the family tree , or winning the rowing competition. These items build anticipation which itself is enjoyable and can pull you along.

In order to add to your list, get another person to make their list and then compare. Both of you will be reminded of things you like to do but had forgotten about. These can be added to the list of activities. Try this with several people and the list will continue to grow.

Make sure to laminate your list and tape it to wall somewhere where you can refer to it everyday. When you feel down, take a break and use the list to remind you to have fun. Sometimes this will be enough to help you on your change journey.

Try not to include lots of caffeine, alcohol or drugs on your fun list. Ill explain more about why this is the case in the next chapter.

