

Change

These days change seems to surround us. Indeed, just when you think... another change arrives to challenge and alter our lives in ways we could not imagine. Can we cope? What does it mean? Why wasn't I consulted? These questions worry and influence our responses to a world that offers choices and challenges.

Thomas Merton, who writes about the general dance of life, states that 'sometimes you lead, sometimes you follow.' In the spirit of this music, some observations from the orchestra:

1. We have always lived with change in our lives: from child to adult, from work to retirement, the beginning and ending of relationships. Many of these differences happen without our volition and have led us into opportunities we could not have imagined. What stories do you tell yourself about the changes that have happened in your life to date?
2. Cycles of change exist everywhere in nature. Our own lives mirror that change in many ways; every ending carries with it the seeds of a new beginning. Aging may accelerate the pace of change or transplantation may vary the landscape, but our essential self can handle it all. Attitude matters.
3. Change is a process with steps that include: letting go of old ideas, dreaming and planning the new scenario, working through the obstacles and achieving the goal. Embracing change with all its options will allow us to write new stories of coping and thriving. Have you made the choice for change? Would resistance make a difference?

There are also the questions of forgiveness that change many necessitate or prevent, and of fear and the strength that emotion exerts to colour our response to adjustments in our lives. Those details are personal and worthy of our time to explore the changes that examination would provoke. As inhabitants of the second half of life, we can enjoy this part of the journey with a willingness to learn about ourselves in new situations. What we can create in the face of change is limitless when we allow potential to be our guiding star. We are warriors; we are strong. We will live well in this Third Age.