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Elements of Change

6 Elements of Change that Make Change Manageable

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The key to achieving more than you currently are, no matter which area of your life or work you are focusing in on now, is change. The old saying rings true: *If you always do what you have always done, you will always get what you've already got.* If you keep eating and exercising the way you currently are, you will weigh the same a year from now. If you continue to sell to the same people on the same schedule, you will make the same amount of money next year.

In order to move forward, we must change.

As I have worked with people, both in a professional setting and on a personal basis, I have found two things to be true about change. One, it is simple. Two, it is not easy. That is, the concept of change is simple to grasp. People or organizations are quick to say, "Oh, I know we need to change." Simple.

But where the problem starts, and why most people and organizations do not change, is because it is not easy to change. But, I believe, if the process is well thought out, and if we have the guts and determination to carry it out, change can happen, and we can move on to more fulfilled lives.

With that said, let me give you what I consider the elements of change.

Discontentment with your current state. The first step in the process of change is to not want to be where you currently are. You must be discontent with it. If you are overweight, you must say, "I will not accept this anymore." If you are in debt, you must say, "I cannot tolerate this any

longer." If you have broken relationships, you must say, "I will not live with this." This is a decision to change and not accept the status-quo.

The picture of your preferred outcome. What is it that you want to change to? It absolutely is not enough to say "I need to change." It must be: "I am going to change to..." This becomes the goal. I would encourage you to get a mental picture of it formulated in your mind. Get a real picture of it if it is that tangible. Perhaps write yourself a short essay, extolling the virtues of what life will be like when you get to the changed state.

New associations with the two states. You must begin to associate your current state you are in with pain, and the state you want to be in with pleasure. Let's take weight for example. We tend to think of ice cream, mounds of it, with pleasure. I know that I do. Especially chocolate chip mint. Last night we went to some friend's house and we had some ice cream. Normal portions. I don't like to eat normal portions. I like huge portions of ice cream. There is an association of pleasure there. But what I did to overcome the urge to eat scoop after scoop was to associate huge portions to being overweight, not the pleasure of the taste. I also associated not eating the ice cream with feeling better about myself. Then when it comes to exercise, I work on associating the exercise and weight-lifting with the pleasure of fitting into my clothes rather than the pain my muscles feel every time I do it. This help me win the battle of the mind.

Develop a plan of short, simple steps. "I am going to lose fifty pounds in two months." "I will sell 500% more next month." These are examples of change that are good goals to have long term, but too big for the time allotted - and this is havoc on change!

> **If your goals are too big in too short of time, you will fail and become discouraged. Then you will quit and decide change can't be accomplished.**

Instead, you must have short, workable, attainable goals if you are going to see real change happen and stay. "I am going to lose five pounds a month for ten months." "We are going to sell 6% more each month this

year (That would double your business each year)" These are the size steps you need to take. Then you will build victory after victory.

Discipline yourself. Sorry but this is where it is up to you. At the heart of change is the ability to discipline ourselves. I cannot lose your weight. Your mom cannot go out and make sales calls for you. The only real obstacle standing between your current state and your desired outcome is you! So do everything you can to get yourself motivated to change! Force yourself to get out of bed and get to work on your goals! Discipline yourself. Choose to make the right decision.

Reward yourself when you have made the change. That's right: reward yourself. You have worked hard and exerted a lot of self-discipline to get there! You deserve it!

Chris Widener is an example of how anyone can overcome any odds to achieve a successful life and help others achieve the same. Chris has overcome many obstacles... living through his father dying suddenly when he was four, being sent away from his family to live with relatives at age nine and becoming involved with drugs and alcohol by the age of twelve. Chris overcame those obstacles and has for the last ten years worked with some of the most financially successful families in America, helping them to achieve both personally and professionally. Now he can do the same for you!