



CONCERN:EAP

Healthy & Resilient You

BRING ON THE

CHANGE



Adapt Like a Champ When Someone Moves Your Cheese

It's been almost 20 years since Dr. Spencer Johnson published his must-read motivational book, *Who Moved My Cheese?*, but his message on embracing change is still relevant today. The book is a parable that follows two mice, Sniff and Scurry, and two miniature humans, Hem and Haw, on a hunt for cheese (a tasty symbol for success) stored somewhere in a maze.

At first, the four heroes have no trouble locating the cheese, which is dependably in the same place each time. But one day, when Sniff and Scurry devour all the cheese, Hem and Haw are faced with a tough choice. Do they stay in the same spot waiting for more cheese to appear, or undertake a quest to find a new source of dairy deliciousness?

Hem, who is set in his ways, refuses to adapt, and consequently ends each day with a grumbling stomach. Many of us approach change with this same mentality, which is understandable because, as humans, we have evolved to take advantage of consistency in our surroundings. The trouble is, in our fast-paced and tech-heavy world, consistency is... well, less consistent. Meetings get rescheduled, emergencies arise, career

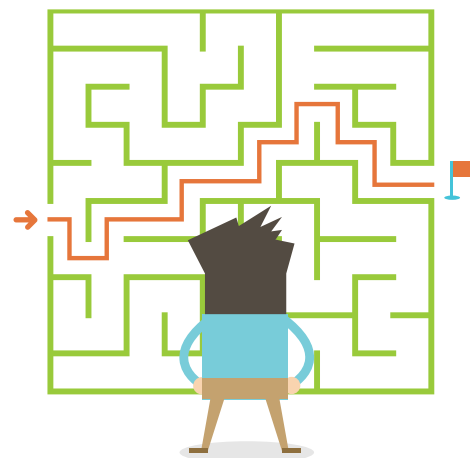
changes happen, all demanding that we adapt at a pace our evolutionary selves never encountered.

That's why it's helpful to try to be more like the story's hero, Haw. He embraces his new cheese-less circumstances and adapts a change mindset which eventually helps him find different paths to Swiss-y success.



PRO TIP

Amusing dairy parables aside, this same mindset can be applied in your life anytime things change, improving your chances of finding your own cheese—metaphorical or otherwise—whenever and wherever it's been moved.



Cultivate a Change Mindset

Much like the parable in *Who Moved My Cheese?*, Eastern philosophy suggests that it's better to flow through life unimpeded, like a mountain river, as opposed to being the stone it flows over. We can build this kind of flow in our lives by adopting a change-friendly mindset that can help us stay mentally flexible and adaptive. Consider the following ideas for building resilience in the face of change.

* Embrace the Impermanence

Also from Eastern thought, we get the notion of impermanence, the idea that nothing lasts forever. The good times are great while they last, and the not-so-good ones will eventually pass. Accepting the idea of impermanence is a good first step toward an adaptive mindset and helping you to roll with changes as they come.

* Mindfully Decide Where You Stand

Often, our instinctive reaction to change is to dig in and say *no*. If the change negatively impacts you, that may be the right approach. In cases where the change will have a neutral or positive effect, not so much. When faced with change, take a moment to breathe, calm your thoughts and think mindfully about how it really affects you. This will help you act in your best interest instead of just acting instinctively.



* Re-Label Your Feelings

The words we use for self-talk can directly affect how our bodies and minds respond to change. Something as simple as substituting the words *I'm excited* for *I'm afraid* can help you reframe your perspective and embrace change. For example, if you've just been promoted, try reframing any anxiety you might be feeling as excitement and eagerness to take on new responsibilities.

* Focus on the Good

Having an optimistic perspective can help make the most of change, enabling you to identify the good that can come from it. Even when it's unwelcome, change often comes with an upside or two. Try actively looking for the opportunities in every change to more easily embrace it.

“It is not the strongest of the species that survives, nor the most intelligent, but the one most responsive to change.”

— Charles Darwin

Looking for more useful information on ways to take care of yourself? Check out the Resilience Hub™.

If you are a first-time user, type in your company name to access the site. www.ConcernResilienceHub.com

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