
BUILD YOUR RESILIENCY TO CHANGE IN UNCERTAIN TIMES

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As Heraclitus and many other philosophers and theologians have pointed out over the ages, the only constancy in life is change; yet change is still what causes us the most stress. Why is change stressful? In general, we feel safe when we have the right balance of consistency and growth (or ‘wanted’ change). Too much consistency feels boring, uninspired, and stagnant. When we don’t have room for growth and expansion, we desire change. Too much change, however, feels overwhelming and ‘out of control.’ What tips the balance one way or the other is subjective depending on the person. It could be anything from too many emails in our inboxes, having to go to school to pick up one of our children who was just suspended, attending to an aging parent who now needs a high level of care, too much traffic on the way to court making you late, unexpected discovery in a case, or the fact that your spouse or partner didn’t take out the trash as promised. Any number of unwanted changes that we perceive as stressful and negative can result in feeling strain, worry, low energy, and hopelessness, particularly if the stress becomes compounded and gains momentum like a snow ball rolling downhill.

Maintaining this balance is challenging for attorneys because we not only have to create



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a balance of safety, reliability and calm with the right amount of passion and interest in our own lives, but we are consistently helping our clients navigate through change in their lives. As such, our profession demands a special set of skills and competencies to make sure the change our clients experience is as painless as possible. Because the practice of law is a detail-oriented profession with high stakes, and because our clients want whatever changes they are experiencing to happen in a certain way, perfectionism is one of those skills. The problem, as research points out, is that perfectionistic tendencies ironically make
