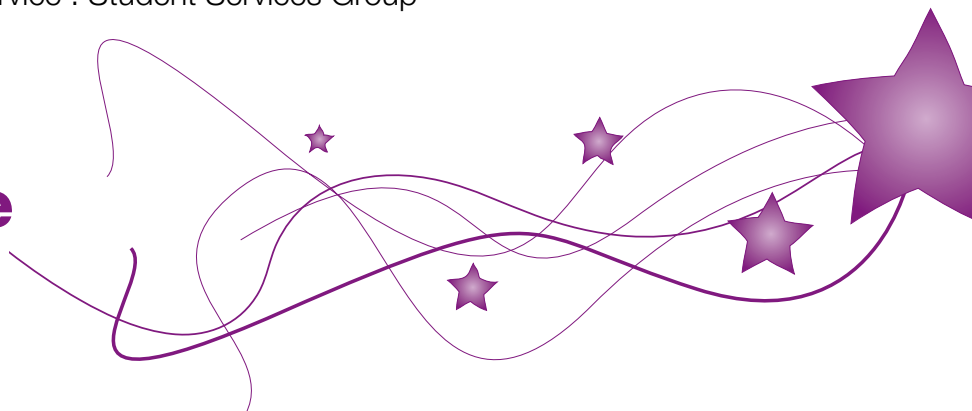


# Seeking Change



*“If we do not change our direction, we are likely to end up where we are headed” - Chinese proverb*

People often come to counselling in a distressed state feeling that other people or the world are treating them badly. Not surprisingly, they want change to occur in these situations so that they will feel better.

## **Who do you have control over?**

We are all part of a system. Unless something changes all elements within the system will continue to behave as they have in the past. Thus, if you want to change something within your life the only way to ensure that change is likely to occur is if you change in some way.

What is the process of change like?

Think about your hobby or recreational pursuits. Consider your experience with basketball (or any activity that is meaningful to you) when you were asked to change the way you shoot at goals. You were aware that you were not getting the goals you were capable of. You were conscious of wanting to change your situation. When the coach suggested a change you accepted the suggestions because they made sense to you.

## **Did the goals start coming immediately?**

No. They came only after considerable practise on your part. It would be unrealistic to expect any pattern of behaviour that has been repeated on thousands of occasions to disappear immediately a more helpful behaviour is practised. It makes sense that the more you practise the new behaviour the easier it becomes and the less you carry out your earlier unsuccessful behaviour.

## **How did it feel doing this new behaviour?**

It felt terrible! Because you had repeated the old behaviour thousands and thousands of time it repeated itself easily. Although it was not helpful it felt easy and “natural”. It had become virtually an automatic response on your part. But, the more you do the new helpful behaviour, the less uncomfortable and the more natural it will become.

To change a behaviour requires practice and tenacity to overcome the feelings of awkwardness that are inevitably associated with change.

All our thinking, feeling and behaviour are intertwined. It is virtually impossible to isolate one to the exclusion of the others. Thus any change will involve looking at these three areas. They are all critical components in what we do. These interactive components need to be examined in the process of change. The cost of change, the price of getting what you want, is the pain and discomfort of changing. You have the ability to choose to engage in this difficult process, or to wait until you feel ready and able to change.

So you would like to change your situation!

Answer the following questions to see if you really are ready to engage in the process of change.

Do you want the benefits that change will bring you?

**Yes / No**

Are you prepared to consider thinking, feeling, or behaving in a different way?

**Yes / No**

Can you accept that during the process of change you will feel uncomfortable, awkward, and perhaps even phoney?

**Yes / No**

Will you be able to put in the time require to engage in the process of change?

**Yes / No**

If you have answered Yes to these four questions you have begun the journey of accepting responsibility for your situation and have commenced the process of improving your life.

Assistance in the process of change is not only beneficial, it is also often advisable. Counsellors are experienced and able to support your efforts at change. They have experience and skills in helping people through the process of change and in attaining their goals.

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You can also find further information and resources to assist you in your studies on our website at [www.rmit.edu.au/counselling](http://www.rmit.edu.au/counselling)

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