



Through The Transition Tunnel

In the middle of March 2020, we all felt a very significant tremor in the foundation of our comfort zones. You know, the comfort where our lives felt fairly normal and predictable – things were, you know, comfortable.

But the March tremor did more than shake the foundation of our comfort zone. It thrust us into what I call the transition tunnel. It ejected us from our comfort zone into one of the zones in the transition process called the uncertainty zone. We were compelled to start a major transition in our lives, not just a major change.

There is a big difference between the process of change and that of transition. Change refers to the physical aspects of our current situation. It is the physical isolation of a widespread period isolation, of physically distancing ourselves from our family and friends. It is the physical loss of a job or the physical moving your office into your home. Sometimes it is the wearing of a mask or the constant need for washing our hands with soap or sanitizer. These are all physical aspect of the change we are going through.

Transition, on the other hand, is about the emotions and psychological feelings that are running beneath the surface of the physical changes. It is the feeling of being disconnected from those we love. It is the feeling of fear from not knowing what's coming next. It is the discomfort we feel when our normal routines have to change. It is the feelings of developing another level of closeness with family and children all in one place for extended periods of time.

The transition process consists of three phases or zones and I call it the transition tunnel, the less tangible psychological, behavioral, and emotional processes that occur below the surface of physical change. The comfort zone is at the beginning of the tunnel. The uncertainty zone is in middle of the tunnel between the two entrances. The new beginning, The light at the end of tunnel, is the guiding light that draws an individual or organization into the future like a powerful magnet.

The uncertainty zone can be a zone of fear, of unsureness, confusion, a lack of direction. But . . . it is also a zone of great opportunity and creativity. It is a place where major life changes can be planned and implemented. It can be a time of exploration.

Life has taught us that, for every ending we encounter, there is a new beginning on the horizon. This can be a time of unexpected surprises. It can also be a time of seeing the fruition of the exploring, planning, and changes we went through in the uncertainty zone. It can be a time of morphing into the new you.

The comfort zone, the uncertainty zone, and the new beginning – all parts of a journey through the transition tunnel. They are part of the process of growing as we move forward into the future.

We have control over our mindset as we travel through the tunnel. We can have a growth mindset that allows us to build resilience and learn from each situation we encounter. Or we can have a fixed mindset, one that tries hard to keep things the same, that sees the negative in the changes that are around us. Do you have a growth mindset or a fixed one?

There is a light at the end of every tunnel. The fixed mindset may think that it is a train coming at you. The growth mindset may think that it is the light of the future coming around the next corner!

Which one are you? It's your choice!

~ Dana