



*Focus,  
Execution,  
And Results!*

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## Tips for Surviving the Waves of Change

*If you find yourself being tossed like a piece of flotsam on the waves of change, whether at work or in your personal life, here is what I have found helpful:*

- **Acknowledge how difficult it is – to someone!** I recognize that in many parts of our lives we need to both look and stay in control. At the same time, acknowledging to a trusted friend where you are *not* in control and how difficult it is, is important. Otherwise you may find your emotions slipping out sideways, triggered by seemingly unrelated events.
- **Find a regular confidante** – find someone that you can talk to when you are at your worst, who will not judge your “crazy talk” even though they may challenge it.
- **Do something that makes you feel skilled and valued** – it may be your work, it may be a hobby, or it may be just spending time with a loved one. You need to find ways to feel good about yourself.
- **Look for the little things in life that help you smile** – and then smile! Notice small kindnesses and say “thank you” to someone at least once a day.
- **Think about “starting fresh”** – Can you start a new chapter in life? We may not have control over the future, but we can influence it!

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## Upside Down and All Around: Tossed on the Waves of Change

*By Cathy Perme*

On a vacation to Mexico one year, I decided to take a dip in the Pacific Ocean while my friends stood on shore only about 25 feet away. When I decided to get out, I found that I couldn't. The surf kept sucking me under. I was tossed upside down and all around, to the point where I was starting to get confused and dazed. I panicked, realizing that I could drown. My friends did not see the fright– they thought I was playing a game and enjoying the waves!

Like many of you, I too have experienced a set of life events that could be categorized near the top of any stress assessment. Usually, I would just “gut” my way through them and no one was the wiser. At times, I felt like I was dancing on a razor's edge as I would weather one big wave of change and then, the next wave would hit. While difficult and humbling, these life-changing events have delivered me to a healthier place. This is what I have learned:

- **Confidantes** – My greatest gift has been a handful of close friends and colleagues with whom I could share my frustrations and fears, and get support during these tough times. I am generally closed about my private life, so to open up to them was no small feat.
- **Asking for help** – It is still hard to admit that I could not control what was happening, and that perhaps my need for control was making it worse. I sought help in learning how to let go, stay present, and make good choices amidst the chaos.
- **My work** – The opportunities to immerse myself in client issues and facilitate the development of plans and processes allowed me to do what I love and provided welcome relief from my personal reality. I did take the precaution, however, of clueing in associates and key clients, and asking for feedback if they ever thought my work was being impacted negatively.
- **An “attitude of gratitude”** – This is coming late in my journey. There is so much that can and does go wrong in life, but being that negative person who focuses on what is bad is not who I am or want to be. I am trying to acknowledge and appreciate the good things that happen– even if just a smile from the barista as I am handed my coffee – and saying “thank you” more often.
- **An opportunity for a “fresh start”** – even though my life is not what I thought it would be, I realized that I could decide to start fresh. What do I want it to look like? I now try to push past my fears and think about what I want to do from this point forward.

This July, my company, C. M. Perme & Associates, will be celebrating 24 years in the business of planning and facilitating organizational change. It has been a wild ride so far, one that I have loved. I don't see myself ever retiring – maybe just slowing down a bit once I get “old,” whenever that is. For now, it is full speed ahead! ☐