



Will It Ever End?

By Dr. Linda Hancock

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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I remember when years ago I was working in a government agency. It seemed that staff was frequently complaining about change. They wanted things to always remain the same as they were. One day, in frustration I said, "If we didn't have change, we would all be chasing our supper with a bow and arrow!"

Change can be frustrating, especially if it makes us uncomfortable and if there are difficult adjustments to navigate. But change can lead to positive results.

I am from the "pre-tv" age. I have been able to see huge changes in technology, science and communications over the years. It wasn't easy (and still isn't) to keep up with the rapidly evolving computer advances. But I do appreciate the benefits all these things bring to my life. I'm glad that things didn't stay the same throughout my life.

And now we are in the middle of a pandemic! The changes that we have been experiencing over the last few weeks, however, are not the only ones that will come. Some are calling the future a "new normal". Well, I recently told a friend in New Jersey "There is no normal. Normal is a setting on the dryer!"

I hope that change will never end. I want to see progress and it looks like there are many changes that are occurring which are positive:

1. Elder Care - The pandemic has shed light on a problem that has been festering for a considerable period of time. Many in long-term care homes have been neglected and abused long before COVID-19 due to poor policies and lack of staff. Spread of the pandemic has been rampant in these settings and resulted in staggering statistics. Now that the military has been involved in assessing the situation there is an awareness across the country that is demanding change. Unfortunately, many died in order to bring Canada to a place of significant action and accountability.
2. Industry - I am thrilled when I hear about how individuals and businesses are using creativity to navigate problems. Who would have imagined a time when the Canadian Mint would be making hand sanitizer, or a kind-hearted woman would raise money for charity by creating "Stay the Blazes Home" souvenirs? Restaurants are converting their services into home-delivery options and airlines are re-training staff with healthcare courses.
3. Professionals - Psychologists, physicians, lawyers, accountants and other professionals have been learning how to set up and use virtual platforms. This has been helpful for those who are unable to be seen in person but still need services. They can now and will hopefully continue to benefit from access while in the comfort of their homes.
4. Education - Many schools, colleges and universities are developing programs that can be taken online instead of in classrooms. Right now, this might be the only option for students but, in the future will likely become one of many options for those who want to learn.
5. Social connection - The need for self-isolation has motivated many people to learn how to use the internet or Facetime in order to dialogue with friends and family. Professional musicians have set up online concerts. Groups have formed with people who have common interests. For example, I am a member of a French group based in Austria that has members from several countries.

There are many more changes that have and will occur as a result of the pandemic. In just a few short weeks, people have used ingenuity to revise practices and help others.

So, let's go back to the original question: "Will This Ever End?" If your thoughts are that you want the pandemic to end so you will have more control, choice and freedom, perhaps you just need to reframe. You do have control, choice and freedom - maybe not the way that it used to be - but you do have it.

And will change ever end - well, I really hope not!