

Dunker Punks Podcast



Transcription details:

Episode Number: 76
Episode Name: Make Friends with Change
Date: 02/02/2019
Episode Description:

Speakers in audio file:

S1: Dana Cassel
S2: Laura Weimer

Transcription:

Dana: Hey, Dunker Punks. Welcome to the latest episode of the Dunker Punks Podcast. Here's a question for you: How do you deal with change?

[music]

We are about a month into the new year, and you know what that means: the influx of people at every gym across the nation who resolved to workout more in 2019 has probably slowed down. All those fad diets that we tried out are showing themselves for what they are. And I know you have seen the headlines about how thriftstores are full to bursting with all those donations from people who've been watching "Tidying Up with Marie Kondo," and given away everything in their closet that doesn't, "spark joy."

How's your new year? Did you make resolutions? Are there big changes on the horizon in your life? In this episode Laura shares from strategies for dealing with change; in our own lives, in the lives of our communities, and in the life of the world.

Listen up: I bet there's a great word in here for you.

[music]

Laura: Hi, everyone. This is Laura once again. I'm writing and recording this at the beginning of January 2019; the beginning of a new year. One thing I've been thinking about recently is "change." So there will be a lot of changes for me personally and professional this coming year, and my home church, the Arlington Church of the Brethren, has been in a period of change, in transition, as we search for a new pastor. So I think my thinking about change is partially spurred by the fact that it's a new year. At least for me, the beginning of a new year inevitably makes me reflect on the past year, so in this case, 2018, thinking about maybe highlights that happened, low points, accomplishments, also things that I want to carry into the next year, as well as things that I just want to let stay in the past.

Along with this, as a new year either approaches or arrives, I begin to think about how the new year will be different from the last. And I often reflect and think about what changes or transformations are going to occur. I also think of, are these changes or transformations going to require intentional work, or are they going to occur naturally? I also think about, what are the things I'm looking forward to? What are the things I'm excited about? What are the things that I'm apprehensive about? What are some things maybe I'm concerned about?

So when I look back on the upcoming year, thinking also what's going to stand out in my mind when I'm maybe having this internal conversation with myself at the end of 2019 or 2020? What am I going to reflect on? I may think I know what the upcoming year is going to be like. I may feel as if I have answers to some of these questions, but much about this upcoming year is yet to be discovered. So I know that January 1st may be a somewhat arbitrary date, since in just one day after December 31st, but at least for me, intentionally reflecting on change and transition once in a while can be helpful. And at least, for me, this time of year seems to be a natural time to do so, and I think for many as well. This new point in the calendar year seems to be a natural time for many to reflect on change and transformation as well.

So I know this episode will probably come out once 2019 has had a chance to really kick off, but I hope either thoughts about change or transformation can still resonate and I think it's a continual process just thinking about these things. It certainly doesn't have to occur just at the beginning of the new year.

[music]

So I did a little bit of looking around. I was just sort of curious about maybe what people were saying about change, what people were saying about transformation, and sort of thoughts about the new year. You know, the standard thing is, for some at least, to create New Years resolutions. We'll talk about that a tiny bit later – not going to necessarily go into New Years resolutions too much, just more wanting to sort of explore and think about change and transformation.

So one article I found is an article by Patsie Smith, and this article's entitled, "How to Intentionally Embrace Change in the New Year." She uses the word "change" as an acronym. So "C" stands for "choice," "H" stands for "happiness," "A" is for "anchor," "N" is for "new," "G" is for "growth," and "E" is for "emergence." So she goes on to explain a little bit about what each of the letters mean, and she notes that the acronym for the letters, "Suggestions for setting your purest intentions for moving forward into the sea of change." So again, the letters that spell out "change" she created the acronyms, "Choice, Happiness, Anchor, New, Growth, and Emergence."

So for "C" - "Change," she says at every point in time, and especially confronted with imminent change, you have a choice of whether or embrace, or to resist. She says embracing change requires courage and trust because it's always unnerving to step outside your comfort zone. But when you trust and embrace, change can bring you excitement, growth, and infinite new possibilities. So that's "Choice."

"H," for "Happiness." So she says step into the new year with the intention of choosing happiness for yourself and those around you. She says happiness is a choice that comes from within. Regardless of your external circumstances, your perception determines your emotions. She says you can choose to look on the bright side of everything. She said for example, you can ask yourself what can I learn from this? She also says you can count your blessings, use gratitude, and she says happiness will abound. So "H" for "Happiness."

"A" for "Anchor." She says continue to anchor in your higher reality and wisdom. She says there's more to you than just the physical and transient existence. She said in this brief life, with all its ups and downs, it's merely a myriad of experiences for the growth of your soul. So she says staying anchored, you will ride and surf the storms and waves of life with skill and ease. So "A" is "Anchor."

"N" is "New." So she says time and chance involve flow and movement. Along with these are new experiences, people, places, and ideas. She encourages you to be open to receiving and bring forth the new and nourishing, and to let go of the old if they no longer serve you. So "N" for "New."

“G” is for “Growth.” So she says when you flow with the movement of time and change, and when you embrace the new while anchoring and trusting in the greater you, so kind of combining some of those other letters from the acronym, she says growth is the natural result. She uses a metaphor of the sun using or helping a plant sprout from the seed. She says that the happiness you soak in and project will allow you to grow and thrive. So “G” for “Growth.”

And the last one, “E” is for “Emergence.” Again, taking from some of the previous letters, she said out of the strength and solidly grounded foundation, she said new creations will emerge. You'll find yourself forging new, fulfilling relationships, friendships, successes, and joys. She says new ideas will emerge into manifestations. Imagination and dreams will become a reality. A new phase will continue and take you forward with the flow. So again, the letters she uses for the CHANGE acronym: Choice, Happiness, Anchor, New, Growth, and Emergence.

Another article I found, by Elizabeth Lesser, is entitled, “Five Ways to Welcome Change in the New Year.” So first one, she says expect change. She notes that we should expect change because we are living in a changing universe. She notes that there are multiple types of change: good change, difficult change, destructive change, and transformative change, but basically, regardless of the type of change, we should expect some type of change.

Number two: make friends with change. So she says try not to fight change. She says make unconditional friendship with it in whatever form it arrived.

Number three is: relax into the mystery. So she said there's so much more to this life than we can ever understand. And so she says in times of big change it's good to be gentle and kind and patient with yourself and relax. She says the best peacemakers are those who are at peace with themselves.

Number four is: receive change's message. So she encourages us to be still and listen deeply. She says the truth that is carried on it's winds: information about the past, wisdom about the present, and direction for the future.

And number five is: come alive. Join forces with the dynamic flow of life. So she says as the old year changes into the new year, ask what makes you come alive and then go do it. She says do it for your own sake and in service of the greater good.

So again, just to sort of reiterate some of these Five Ways to Welcome Change in the New Year; expect change, make friends with change, relax into the mystery, received change's message, and come alive.

So finally, the last article about transitioning into the new year and sort of ways to kind of conceptualize change and transformation is one more list in this context was by Maya Benattar. She wrote an article titled “Ride That Wave to Shore: Four Ways to Make a Smooth Transition into the New Year.” So this article outlines a few potentially helpful things to keep in mind, either during the new year time, or just in general periods of transition or change.

So she said number one is know that what's done is done. She also says the reverse is also the same, so basically that what didn't get done didn't get done. So maybe you made a list of resolutions, you may or may not have accomplished them. So she says find a way to make peace with everything you did as well as everything you didn't.

Number two is relive the joys. So maybe that you did something that was on your new years resolution, and that's great. Maybe you did something or something happened that wasn't, you know, an anticipated goal, and that's great, as well. Basically celebrate the joys and accomplishments that did happen.

Number three is to be gentle with yourself. So she says take some time. Just think about how you'd like the next year to look and feel. So saying it doesn't have to be a list of resolutions, but she suggests you can come up with a theme word. So she says the theme word could be something like joy, ease, abundance, or just any other word that I think speaks to you. And so that one is be gentle with yourself.

And that last one is breathe. So take a moment and just feel your breath. Allow it to fill your chest and stomach. As you inhale, breathe in something you'd like for yourself in this coming year. And as you exhale, release anything you no longer need.

So again, that is know that what's done is done, relive the joys, be gentle with yourself, and breathe.

So I highlighted these articles, not to say that I have all the answers, or that any of these authors have all the answers. I just found them interesting because change and transition, and all the ways of celebrating, coping with, and mourning them, surely vary across individuals and situations. And I also recognize that change can be really exciting, it can be neutral, or it can be something that's really difficult to cope with. I also want to lift up that I'm not trying to, you know, pretend or give the illusion that I do all of these these things, or that any of the, you know, goals or lists that I read or easy. I just personally found them, you know, either helpful as reminders, or new information, or, you know, maybe inspirations to at least begin these processes.

So as I mentioned before, I wasn't going to go too much into New Year's Resolutions, but I did find something that I thought was interesting. And it's sort of goes into another type of change and transformation, sort of taking it just from the individual sense of changes in one's own personal life or individual changes, and more into a greater scale of, you know, greater societal change. So as I did mention another way change manifests itself in the new year is through resolutions. And so once again resolutions are, and they should be, personal and meaningful to the individual who's creating them.

I found a website – or, I found an article on the United Nations website entitled “10 New Year's Resolutions to Help Change the World.” The article recognizes we are bombarded by so many tragedies in the news and maybe in our personal lives, but they highlighted these ten I guess you could call them resolutions as a way to highlight important encouraging work that's being done across the globe. If you're curious about any of these resolutions, I'd encourage you to check out the website and read some of the inspiring stories related to each resolution. I'm not going to specifically go into all the stories and all the examples within each one, but for each resolution, they give a little snippet and a little vignette of either a person or a group of people or an organization that's doing really exciting work.

So the first one from the United Nations article – again, it's titled “10 New Year's Resolutions to Help Change the World.” The first one is start at home. So they say the world's problems seem so colossal it can be hard to know where to start. But they say sometimes the best place to begin is in one's own community.

Number two is work together. They just – they say huge challenges can be overcome with teamwork.

Number three is believe in yourself. They say believe in your ability to change the world. And they note that even a small act can have a snowball effect, making a huge difference.

Number four is be a pioneer. And they say sometimes the key is a little creative thinking.

Number five is listen more. And they say problems and solutions emerge when we take the time to listen.

Number six is draw inspiration from your own life.

Number seven, be a good friend. And they note that friendship can be lifesaving.

Number eight is find support in unexpected places. And they note that everyone can be an ally.

Number nine is don't give into fear.

And number ten is refuse to despair.

Finally, another article I found from Mae Elise Cannon. The article is entitled, “A Christian Perspective on Change: Personal and Societal Transformations.” So this article sort of combines both the individual aspects I was talking about earlier as well as more of the societal and larger scale transformations that the United Nations website

talks about. She notes that, “Transformation is the process of radical change.” She also says that change “does not only occur on a personal level. Every individual is a part of a community or a larger system. One’s intimate community may begin with those in their immediate circle of family and close friends. And says when an individual experiences personal transformation and change, the entire system is affected. As one person changes, their behaviors, thoughts, ideas, and actions, others who are in relationship with that individual also experience change. And she says, family, friends, and the larger community must then choose how to respond to the changes they experience and observe in the transformed individual. Thus as each of us pursues the ongoing process of transformation into the likeness of Christ, we also have the ability to influence and provoke change within our immediate and extensive relationships in the larger community around us. She says what great hope this provides. She also says that our personal transformation is not only for our own benefit, further noting that, “we are transformed so that we might be better able to fulfill the purposes that God has ordained for us. It is a great privilege to know that not only does God desire for us to experience personal change, he also desires to use us to be agents of change in the world.”

Thinking about becoming agents of change in the world, as Mae Elise Cannon puts it, I want to leave you all a few Bible verses that stick out to me as I was searching related to topics of change and transformation.

The first one is Isaiah 43:19. It says, “Look: I am doing a new thing. Now it sprouts up. Don’t you recognize it? I’m making a way in the desert, paths in the wilderness.”

The second one is Jeremiah 29:11. It says, “For I know the plans I have for you,’ declares the Lord, ‘Plans to prosper you, and not to harm you. Plans to give you hope and a future.’”

So as we begin a new year and both reflect on the past year and experience and anticipate the current and future years ahead, I encourage you to think about change and transformation both in an individual context as well as in a larger, further reaching way. What changes are occurring in your life right now? What changes have happened in the recent past? And what upcoming changes are you anticipating? How do you feel led to use your strength and passions? And in what ways can you create further reaching change and transformation?

Thank you.

[music]

S1: 500 years before Jesus was born – an event which, by the way, was probably one of the most massive changes the Earth has ever seen – 500 years before that, the Greek philosopher Heraclitus coined a phrase that has had a long lifespan. You’ve probably heard it before: “Life,” he said, “is change.”

Man, I hate change. I hate it a lot! One time I was trying to express my dislike of change in a text message to a friend, and I was trying to type, “I hate hate hate change,” but autocorrect did not like what I was trying to say, and it got the best of me. And before I knew it, the whole phone screen was filled with these weirdly accurate, nonsensical, metaphors for what I was trying to say. Instead of, “I hate hate hate change,” my phone thought I was trying to say, “I hates theater change.”

No, no, I said, and I tried to type it again, but this time, “I hate hatchet change.” I got angry and started typing really fast, and so the rest of the dialog on the screen was just, “hate hatchet hate hatchet hate hatchet.”

And honestly, that’s sort of how I really feel, if I’m honest about it: “I hate hatchet change.” It takes me a while to settle in and embrace new habits, and new situations, and new people, and new realities. So I’m grateful to have some of these strategies that Laura shared close at hand.

In scripture, God is named as unchanging. The Psalms call out to a God who does not change. And the writer of Hebrews reminds us that Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow. And we humans, well, change is our nature, and our constant reality. Thank goodness for reminders that change leads to transformation, and redemption, and justice. Change is not always bad, despite my immediate reaction. And thank goodness for the truth that we live in the light of a creator who knows this, who knows that we might not like change, but is always doing a new thing with us and around us. A creator who herself remains, though, steadfast and sure.

I was really intrigued some of the suggestions from that U.N. article about resolutions to make the world a better place. I wonder, Dunker Punks, what can we do as people who live as the created children of an unchanging, steadfast God, who is always doing a new thing with us here in the world – what are maybe some small changes that could make, not just for our own betterment, but for the health and transformation of the world around us? What change will you make?

[music]

The Dunker Punks Podcast is a communal effort. We're made up of people around the country who are committed to the radical, transformative, joyful ways of Jesus. This episode included the work of Laura Weimer, Jacob Crass, Susan Lay, and me, Dana Cassel. Spread the good word, would you? Share this episode with a friend. Retweet us @dunkerpunkspod on Twitter, or find the archives of all 76 episodes as www.arlingtoncob/dpp.

Peace, Dunker Punks. Good luck with all that change.

[music]