

The many faces of chance

March 2015 Newsletter



When you hear the word “chance,” what comes to your mind?

- **“Taking a chance”** by stepping outside your comfort zone?
- **“Getting a chance”** to try something new, scary or exciting?
- **“Chancing it”** by holding your breath and taking a leap of faith?

Chance can mean lots of things. Over the course of a lifetime, it can come your way in many forms. But the real question is...

What do you do when chance appears?

Chance can create stress and suspense. You don’t exactly know what it will lead to or how it will turn out.

Can you remember a time when you backed off from a chance to try something, go somewhere or meet someone new? Maybe it seemed too risky. Maybe it was out of your comfort zone. Maybe the timing wasn’t right.

Who hasn’t shied away from an opportunity at some time? And who doesn’t have a few second thoughts about certain “roads not taken”?

What’s so stressful about taking a chance?

Taking a chance means venturing into the unknown. This can be frightening. Even adventurous souls may find certain chances beyond their risk tolerance.

What’s interesting is that some people who are open to physical risks (like skydiving or extreme skiing) may be very hesitant to take emotional risks. They may find new relationships scarier than bungee jumping.

And the opposite can be true, of course. People with lots of interpersonal skills may be scared stiff to put themselves into physically risky situations. What makes people so different?

How you see risk is highly personal

Your perception of risk affects how you react. Perhaps you come from a long line of folks who’d rather sit on the sidelines than jump into the fray. Or maybe you’ve taken risks that didn’t pay off — or even caused you pain or harm. Perhaps it’s a little of both.

Whatever the reason, you can learn new ways to size up, approach and consider taking chances — if you want to. You don’t have to become the famous daredevil Evel Knievel. But, if you decide to take some measured chances, you could change your life in meaningful ways.

When and how to start

If you’re completely satisfied with all aspects of your life, it can be hard to take a risk. But, to be honest, how often are we 100% satisfied — without any wish for improvement?

If you take a chance, you may feel you’re putting everything you know at risk and losing control. But, in fact, our lives are not really in our control. For better or worse, our lives can change in an instant.

Read on for articles about boosting your stress hardiness and learning to face fear. Both relate to your decisions about taking chances. See what you can learn and apply to your own life.