

Richard Fox: Happy New Year!

Celia Fielke: Happy New Year!

Richard Fox: This is Messages of Hope with Richard and Celia.

Celia Fielke: The new year is a time when we're looking to the future and we're thinking about things we want to do differently, or things we want to change. What changes are you hoping for this year?

Speaker 1: Probably our marriage. Been married for 20 years now. Life is so busy. My husband's in a busy job, works 12 hour days. I'm a shift worker. We pass each other at the door sometimes not seeing each other for days. So yeah, we don't have a chance to spend any quality time together anymore.

Speaker 2: Look, if I could change anything, and I'm certainly not alone here I don't think. I'm time poor. I spend too much time away from home. Too much time working. It's hard. It's really, really hard at the moment.

Speaker 3: To slow down enough to spend more time with the kids. We spend lots of time with them, but to actually spend time just doing the real simple things and not getting so wrapped up in everything else that's going on.

Richard Fox: There are things we'd like to change, but how do you, especially when they're out of your control?

Celia Fielke: So Richard, what's changed for you that was a bit of a surprise?

Richard Fox: Well, it's a bit of a first world problem, but I had to change phones recently.

Celia Fielke: That's always a drama.

Richard Fox: It's amazing how much of your life is organized on these things. And so, when my old phone died and I had to get a new one, I thought, "Oh, this is too difficult and too tricky."

Celia Fielke: It's such a drama, isn't it? You know, transferring everything over. I think there's sometimes things just take us by surprise when like my son has just got his P plates and so I just felt like I turned around and that's two of them driving, two of them independent. And, they don't have to ask me... they're very polite and they do, but they're going, they're doing things and I don't have that control anymore. It really frightens me. It's something I wasn't ready for. So how do you cope with these unexpected changes?

Speaker 4: Life changes whether you like it or not. So you either embrace it, or you curl up in a ball and don't participate.

Speaker 5: I've been through three jobs. There were times when I got depressed and so on. You've got to look at the positive side eventually. So you take it as an opportunity not a downside.

Speaker 6: One thing that makes change easier is when you're doing it with people that you know supporting you and beside you.

Speaker 7: Well, I had to change my lifestyle. I've had cancer. That's made me look at life differently. From then on I knew that, okay, don't worry about changes. Just take it as it comes and let God do the worrying for you.

Richard Fox: We all deal with change differently. So Celia, when has changed significantly affected you?

Celia Fielke: I reckon a few years ago was the biggest change that had happened to me for as quite some time. We moved from one community to another. And, I think it was the reality of what the move entailed. I had no idea. I was very excited, but when it actually came to it, I remember sitting on the side of the road when we were looking for houses to rent. And I just cried. I burst into tears because it was all too hard. I couldn't grasp the enormity of moving my whole family from our home where I'd had my babies to a totally different environment. And I didn't know where the shops were. I didn't know what doctors, dentists, all of those things. And, leaving my family and history... I guess that expectation that a life I'd built over the last 20 years would be my life and then suddenly it's changed.

Richard Fox: There is so much to change, isn't there? There's so much to consider.

Celia Fielke: Just the emotions too, isn't it? That you don't factor in. The grief really surprised me. And, even now, I have moments where it just squeezes my heart.

Richard Fox: Yeah. It can be such a stressful time and can be incredibly difficult. So especially when you're not really expecting it, or knowing what's coming at you.

Celia Fielke: Oh, absolutely. And, I know that we all experience change, big changes, little changes all the time. And I guess it's just that matter of well, how do you really deal with it?

Celia Fielke: Change is inevitable and can be quite emotional and very unexpected. So, how do you come to terms with things that you can't change?

Speaker 8: I don't cope well, especially when it's someone that I want to change and they're not changing to the way I think they should be. That is a big struggle for me.

Speaker 9: Well, I've realized at this stage of my life, I can't change what's happened in the past, but I'll look towards the future and I guess today, I'm learning quite a bit. Even at my age, yes.

- Speaker 10: I need to remember my experiences, being that God will not let me fall down into the abyss, but he's going to hold me in the unknown. So it's a call to trust.
- Celia Fielke: So Richard, how do you cope with change?
- Richard Fox: Well, what helped me with my change of phones was having an expert on hand. Having someone there who knew what to do, where to look if there was actually anything went wrong as part of the change. But just someone who could reassure me and go, "Now, this is how we do it. We take this phone and we move it to this phone." So that helped enormously.
- Celia Fielke: Oh, that's good because I always just press buttons until it doesn't work anymore.
- Richard Fox: Thankfully there are instructions, so they could also... yeah, we could follow the instructions. So that was a big help and following those steps through and just taking our time to get through it. Not being in such a rush to go from that one to this one, but actually to take our time, step through the process, and ensure that this phone was now, the new one was going to work.
- Celia Fielke: And I think it also helps in terms of just allowing yourself to understand that you don't know everything and you can't necessarily manage that change. I think a thing that really helped me was that allowing myself to be vulnerable. When I moved to this new community, I had to put myself out there a lot more. I was used to being in control, knowing where everything was, and what I was doing. And, letting people see that I wasn't in control was a really huge thing for me. And, it helped probably break down those barriers and getting involved with people. And, I think a big thing is accepting that I'm not in control.
- Richard Fox: Yeah, coping with change is not easy, especially when it's out of your control. But if, yeah, when we let go like with our phones and just that the expert worked me through that process-
- Celia Fielke: Whilst there's bad things that go with the change, I think there were some really positive things. Our family really bonded together as a family because we had to rely on each other and I just think... it's a really difficult time and knowing that you've got that family and I guess for me also knowing that God is there is a really important thing as well.
- Celia Fielke: Coping with change can be difficult, but not impossible. Richard, how have you found coping with change?
- Richard Fox: Well, if I use my phone analogy, having God as my expert really in life. So when change happens, to rely and trust on him. Having him as the person I can go to who can actually help me through change and that gives me a huge amount of comfort and peace. I might not know exactly what's going on, or what's actually going to be the end result, but knowing that he's there with me on that journey

and guiding me through and someone who doesn't change and is a constant. That just gives me so much peace and reassurance and having his guidance and instructions like he hasn't just left me with a vacuum. He tells me what to do and how to live through.

Richard Fox: And so, following him and his instructions-

Celia Fielke: And I guess, it's a matter of just hearing.

Richard Fox: That's right.

Celia Fielke: And listening to that, isn't it?

Richard Fox: And when it gets all out of control and a little crazy, just hearing those words again that he says, just rest in me. Just be still and know that I'm here. And so, having that helps me then, clears my mind, clears the fog and the cloud, and helps me see a direction of where to go through this. What's helped you?

Celia Fielke: I see God through the people he puts in my path and I've had an amazing journey, I guess, in my faith since I've moved over here. And I think that's because I've had to let go and I've had to say, actually, "God, you've got this." And, actually seeing that in action, you can talk it, but until you actually feel it and are in that situation, I think it's a really hard concept to understand.

Celia Fielke: And for me, I feel it in my heart. I was put out of my comfort zone and I truly believe that God put me and my family in this situation because he wanted to draw me closer to him.

Richard Fox: That's right. Sometimes in change, it's not always a bad result at the end. Sometimes it's often even better, whether it was a strengthening, it might not be a better circumstance, but by going through the process of change and not always fighting it...

Celia Fielke: Yeah, that's a big thing.

Richard Fox: We can grow and develop and come out stronger on the other side.

Celia Fielke: I find that I talk to God a lot more. When I was on that side of the road crying, I actually had to say, "God, I can't do this. I can't do this." People talk to God in a whole bunch of different ways and it's a very personal thing and people call it prayer and I guess that is what prayer is, is talking to God, having that conversation. And so, how does prayer help?

Speaker 11: If I don't know what's going to happen, or if I'm worried, I need to pray about it to be able to do life normal.

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Speaker 12: Sometimes when you have an issue and you talk about it with someone. For me, prayer is the same thing, but it's giving that information to God.

Speaker 11: I get peace from prayer.

Richard Fox: Praying to God is a great way to cope with change. He's always there. He's always available and he never changes. Even though change is inevitable and it's always around us, thankfully he's always there for us and never changes.

Celia Fielke: I find that a real comfort and one of my favorite passages from the Bible is in Jeremiah where he says, I have a plan for you and that's a great comfort for me. Every time I feel like I don't know what I should do, or what's coming next, I breathe and remind myself that God has this. God knows.