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The only constant is change. In the past year, Minneapolis saw tornadoes change our neighborhoods, America saw unemployment numbers change in the wrong direction and the world saw governments topple under protests. If you know anyone who has not seen significant change in the past twelve months, I'd like to meet them. The rest of us can anticipate more of the same in 2012: more change.

Ready for it or not, positive or negative, change can be stressful. Learning to tap your inner anchors will help you stay strong through the storm and come out for the better at the end of it.

An anchor is a symbol you choose for yourself. It can be an object, word or gesture or anything that reminds you of a past success. Think about a time you beat the odds, overcame a challenge or completed a difficult task. For example, many years ago, I completed the New York City Marathon. I wasn't fast and I wasn't able to walk for a while afterwards, but my goal was to finish within a certain timeframe, and I did it.

Now choose an anchor that brings you back to that success. At the end of my race, I was handed a thick gold-colored medal on a ribbon; then, someone I'd never met wrapped a silver foil blanket over my exhausted shoulders. I keep both the medal and the blanket. They are tucked away in a closet somewhere, but when I am faced with a tough challenge, I recall the weight of the medal in my hands and it reminds me that, with perseverance, I can reach the finish line. I also remember the warmth of the foil blanket over my shoulders and it reminds me that other people will help me get where I need to go.

Use your imagination to remember the sights, sounds, smells and feelings surrounding you when you were doing your best, winning the race, beating the odds. Choose an anchor that ties it all together, that helps you recall that positive, confident, calm feeling.

The next time you are faced with a major change, a difficult situation or an impossible task, bring out your anchor, mentally or physically, and let it take you back to that other accomplishment. No one says change is easy. Tapping into your own strengths and resources will help you through it.

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