



(from Chapter 5: *The Mentally Strong Leader*)

The TO and FOR Behavior Brief

Change can either happen TO you, or FOR you – it’s up to you how you’ll see it.

Here’s what **TO Behaviors** look like (that you want to avoid):

- You get frustrated, angry, and stuck in “It’s not fair.”
- You catastrophize what might happen to you because of change. For instance, you worry that the new computer program you have to learn at work will make you look dumb and feel inadequate.
- You play the victim, believing and acting as if you’re powerless.
- You obsess over what you’ll lose that’s associated with change. For example, there’s a reorganization at work and you panic that you’ll lose your status, identity, confidence, income, support network, or even your job. Your fear of loss causes logic to fly out the window.
- You assume change will mean nothing but more work for you.
- You never commit to the change, bury your head in the sand, and just wait for it to go away.
- You actively resist change, seeking out others who think like you in an effort to form an anti-change support group.
- You yearn for status quo because it’s safer.

Mentally strong people choose **FOR Behaviors**. Here’s what those look like:

- You know the only thing constant is change, and that adaptability is a critical skill.
- You simply observe uncertainty – without overreacting. You acknowledge its presence and move from thinking, “beware”, to “benefit” – as in, the benefits that uncertainty unlocks, like creativity, resilience, and agility.

- You think of change like a personal software upgrade, a way to download a better version of you (You 2.0, if you will).
- You spend less time fighting change, more time forming it to fit a desired goal. For example, you get involved with the change, ask questions, voice your concerns, get clear on the case for change, explore how the change will make life better.
- You accept that change comes with some discomfort, as does growth.
- You understand that you cannot get to what you yearn to be, by remaining what you are – change is the catalyst.
- You believe that you have the competence for change. You've been through it before and more than survived, and will again. For example, think of when you took on a new role or started working with a new technology. Perhaps you were apprehensive at first, but soon enough, with a little training, practice, and trial and error, you adapted just fine. We tend to forget these little victories and instead imagine defeat.
- You give change structure, breaking it into manageable pieces and developing supporting routines to quickly reestablish the familiar.