

THE NATURE OF THINGS



The coming of a new year invites reflection. It beckons us to pause, assess and evolve into the persons we want ourselves to be — to better our lives and our world.

In nature, transition requires no incentive. Change comes unceasingly — seasonally from winter to spring to summer to fall, and daily from sunrise to sunset. The natural world fears no change and makes no resolutions.

For us, humans, change can be uncomfortable, even daunting. The small promises we make to ourselves like eating better or exercising more can prove untenable. For many of us, after a few weeks or months of trying, resolutions fall by the wayside. Fearing variance from routine or finding it too difficult, we revert back to old habits.

Perhaps we should take a cue from nature and understand the inevitability of change. Participate in it. Welcome it. Embrace it. Live a life of truth and depth that is paradoxically changeless and

“Change is the very nature of Nature. If there’s one thing that doesn’t change, it is the fact that everything changes.”

– Ilchi Lee

changing. Play our intended role — one that each transition brings us closer to attaining — in this giant, dynamic world.

Realizing that nothing is permanent teaches us that every moment of every day presents the chance to begin anew. This is the secret to enjoying life in the present.

Any transition is just one small part of the cycle of life. By recognizing the collective merits of incremental change, we can revisit the ambitions we once thought unachievable. We can better appreciate life’s gentle push, accept the new direction, and perhaps find that we will become closer to our true selves.

For inspiration on accepting impermanence, why not spend some time embedded in it — outside in nature? Even though we are in the crux of the winter months, this is a fantastic time to explore Maryland’s vast and exceptional natural resources.

During wintry weather, the woods appear quieter, offer increased solitude and provide a new perspective of the landscape.

Hikes are unique: footsteps sound different on the frozen ground, breaths are filled with frosty air, and views are re-created with bright snow and sparkling ice crystals.

Take advantage of special, seasonal opportunities at our State Parks like cross-country skiing in New Germany or following animal tracks across a dusting of snow at North Point. Or enjoy nature part-time in warm, heated cabins on the Eastern Shore at Janes Island.

No matter how you decide to spend the next few months, I hope the start of your new year is filled with evolutions, not just resolutions. I wish you better, healthier, happier tomorrows — in the face of, or even due to, any change that comes our way.


Joseph P. Gill
Secretary

“Life is change. Growth is optional. Choose wisely.”

– William Somerset Maugham