

BEGIN AGAIN

Change expert and author **Ariane de Bonvoisin** coaches people through the first make-or-break month of any new enterprise. In this excerpt from her book *The First 30 Days*, she shares how to make a fresh start

EVERYONE IS IN the midst of change.

1) They are either going through a change: a divorce, starting a new job, cancer, having a baby, moving, etc;

2) They are thinking about making a change: starting a business, losing weight, quitting smoking, how to make more money, etc; or

3) They are helping someone else through a change: a parent with a health diagnosis, a friend going through a tough time, etc.

(And then there is a fourth category: some people are just waiting for someone else to change!)

Most people have been conditioned to believe certain things about change:

Change is hard and is something to be avoided.

I hate change. I am bad at change.

I feel overwhelmed.

Change makes me feel alone; I'm the only one going through this.

Change takes time, energy and work.

Change is stressful and usually involves pain.

The excuses people come up with when you ask them why they aren't making changes they know are important, are quite predictable:

I'm too old or I'm too young.

I'm not qualified; I don't have the skills or education.

I don't have the money.

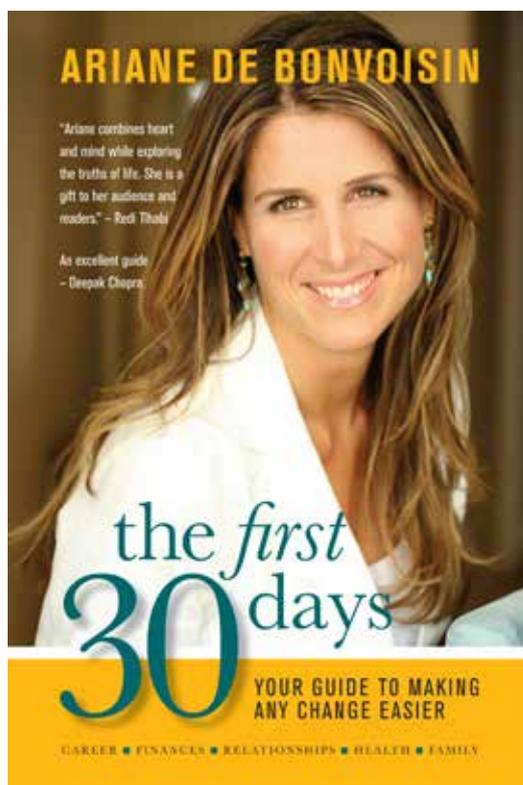
I don't have the time.

It's not my nature.

Someone is going to disapprove or get hurt by my actions.

I don't know where or how to start.

If this is how you're feeling right now, you're not alone. We live in a world where change has become the one constant. Think about it: Millions of people are in the process of getting married or divorced or caring for a parent or child. Millions of others have recently lost



a job, are trying to make financial changes, or want to start a new relationship or get healthy. And there are constant changes in politics, the environment, our jobs, technology, the law, our healthcare system and treatment options, education, the institution of marriage, and the shape of the family today. There are changes in how we eat, live, buy things and even communicate with each other. Given all these changes, it's no wonder we cling to anything that appears stable and permanent, and then go through a tough time when that, too, inevitably changes.

For some, however, change triggers a different response, one of optimism and strength. For these people, the emotional roller coaster of change can be managed; fear and anxiety are replaced with a new way of thinking and there's a true sense of the resilience of the spirit. These people still find change hard – they are very human and also realistic – but they understand how to make it a little easier. Change always

asks you to get comfortable with the unknown.

Even if you're facing an extremely challenging change like the death of a loved one or

a devastating health diagnosis, having a new mindset about change will radically affect the way you live your life. You deserve to feel differently about change. *The First 30 Days* gives you the tools necessary whether you want to initiate a change or to embrace a change that has happened to you. You will come out on the other side feeling hopeful, strong and calm, with renewed optimism about life. This book is based on the knowledge that something good can come from any change. ■

Ariane de Bonvoisin is the author of *The First 30 Days: Your Guide to Making Any Change Easier* (Jonathan Ball). To read more about the author, visit www.arianedebonvoisin.com

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