



Face It Until You Make It

A Human Centered Growth Guide
to Change Readiness

Introduction

The pace of change is accelerating. For many people, the result isn't momentum. It's fatigue. Uncertainty. Friction. Overwhelm. A persistent sense that the world is changing faster than we feel prepared for or prefer to change ourselves.

I've spent more than two decades working with some of the world's best organizations, first as a chief revenue officer and now as a keynote speaker and advisor. In that time I've watched what separates the leaders and organizations that grow through uncertainty from the ones that stall or get stuck.

Before change becomes organizational, commercial or cultural, it must first become personal. That belief sits at the center of my work. How we respond to change shapes not just our own lives — it shapes how we work, how we lead and what we co-create together.

This guide is designed to help you do three things:

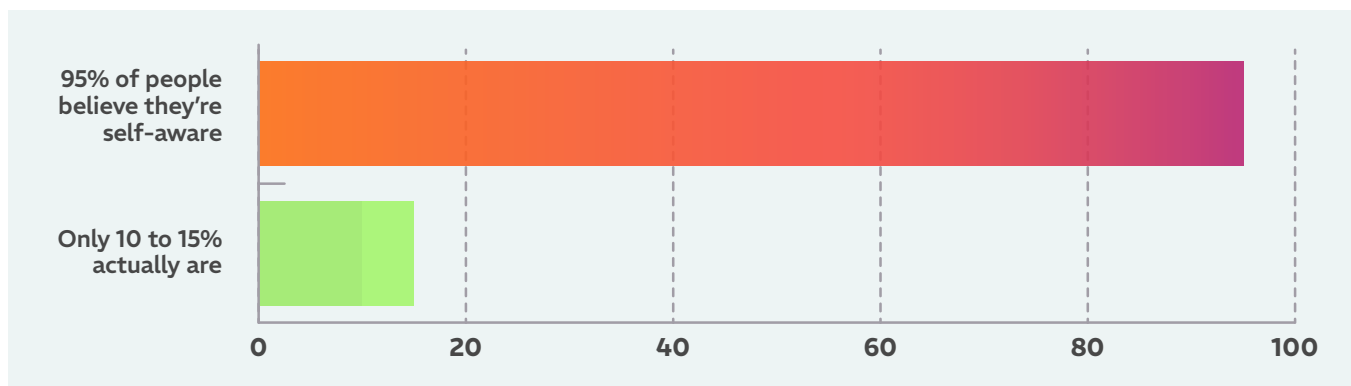
- **Understand your personal relationship with change.**
- **Build the mindset and habits required to respond more effectively.**
- **Take practical action toward meaningful personal and professional growth.**

Looking Inward

Before anything changes on the outside,
something has to shift on the inside.

Growth is an inside-out process. It begins with introspection, self-awareness and with the willingness to confront yourself.

Here's the challenge: most of us are convinced we've already done that work. Organizational psychologist Tasha Eurich spent years studying this, [reviewing more than a thousand studies](#), and found that while 95% of people believe they're self-aware, only 10 to 15% actually are. The majority of us are operating on a version of ourselves that isn't quite accurate — confident we see clearly, when mostly we don't.



That gap is where resistance hides. Most of our patterns run on autopilot, below the level of awareness — which is exactly why they feel like “just who I am” instead of a choice we’re making. The first step in changing anything is making the unconscious conscious. Looking inward isn’t the soft part of change. It’s the part that determines whether real change is even possible.

Understand Your Resistance

Most people don't resist change because they lack ambition or ability. They resist because change disrupts certainty and can feel threatening to our identity. It challenges our sense of security, safety, control and confidence. It asks us to let go of what's familiar before we can fully trust what comes next. And in a world already defined by complexity, intensity and fatigue, it's no surprise that so many people feel overwhelmed. According to [Gartner](#), employee willingness to support organizational change collapsed from 74% in 2016 to just 38% in 2022, the same period in which the number of changes the average employee faced nearly quintupled!

I'm not telling you this from the outside. I've navigated my own internal resistance to change more times than I can count.

Early in my career as a sales leader, I avoided hard performance conversations. Not because I didn't care or know they were necessary. I avoided them because they made me anxious and uncomfortable. What I didn't understand then was that my resistance wasn't really about the conversation. It was about who I would have to become to handle it well.

That's how resistance usually works. It isn't always about the change itself. It's about what the change will require of us.

The first useful shift is in the question you ask. Instead of asking *Why is this happening?* try asking *What is this season asking of me?* The first question looks for a place to put the blame. The second looks for an opportunity to grow.

Change Readiness Inventory

Before you change anything, get honest through reflection.

- Where in your life or work are you resisting change right now?

- What feels heavy, uncertain or unresolved?

- What are you holding onto that may no longer be aligned with your growth?

- Where do you know you need to evolve?

- What is the consequence of staying stuck or resistant?

Choose a Different Mindset

Two people can navigate the same change event and experience it completely differently.

One sees instability. The other sees an opportunity to adapt, learn and grow. The external reality is the same. The internal response isn't. That's why mindset matters. Not because mindset makes hard things easy, but because mindset determines whether you meet change with resistance or readiness. The World Economic Forum's 2025 Future of Jobs Report ranked resilience, flexibility and agility as the second most in-demand core skill among employers globally, and among the fastest growing through 2030.

The ability to respond to change isn't just a personal virtue. It's a professional imperative in a world where two-fifths (**39%**) of our existing skill sets will be transformed or become outdated from 2025-2030.



When I finally understood that direct feedback and accountability were one of the most important things I could do for someone on my team, my approach to difficult conversations changed completely. Not the skill. The story I told myself about the conversation. That doesn't eliminate the tension, but creates a compelling reason to move through it - avoided conflict only grows.

There's a meaningful difference between meeting change with resistance and meeting it with readiness. Resistance tells you this is too much, it will settle down, you can deal with it later. Readiness is a decision. To confront what's challenging, to control your response even when you can't control the change, to take the next step before you feel fully ready. **It's a choice.**

Fake it until you make it is terrible advice. Far better to face it until you make it.

Limiting Belief / Empowering Belief

Complete these prompts:

- The limiting belief I must release is

- The empowering belief I must practice is

Rewrite Your Story

Every meaningful change asks you to confront more than behavior. It asks you to confront your identity.

Behind every repeated pattern is a belief. A conclusion. A story you've accepted about who you are, how you operate, what you're capable of and what change means for you. If you want to change your behavior, you must first challenge the beliefs underneath it. The beliefs you reinforce become the behaviors you repeat.

The story might sound like this: I've always been this way. I'm not good enough. I always start strong and lose momentum. I missed my chance. Those stories feel true because they're familiar. Familiarity isn't the truth. And far too often our belief system evolves through conditioning rather than our conscious and intentional choices.

For a long time I believed I wasn't cut out for entrepreneurship. "People like me don't start companies" was the story I told myself. I was far better suited to support someone else's vision.

That was wildly short sighted and far from the truth. A much more accurate narrative was simply that "I wasn't an entrepreneur...**yet.**"

The yet shifted the narrative completely and was my invitation to expand.

Identity expands through introspection and examination of the narrative, beliefs and behaviors that shape how we operate. Self-awareness enables us to see the truth and expand beyond the version of ourselves that produced prior success.

Shift the narrative. Shape the belief with intention.

The Narrative Shift

Complete these prompts:

- The old story is

- The belief underneath it is

- The new story I am choosing is

Looking Outward

Once you've done the internal work, it's time to look at your environment. Change doesn't happen in a vacuum. The conditions you create — the people you bring into your corner, the cost and consequences you're willing to name and the habits you're willing to embrace and release — are what make change sustainable over time. **This is where the work moves outward.**

Build Your Personal Board of Directors

Change is easier to sustain when it's supported.

Your personal board of directors is the small group of people who help you grow with more perspective, honesty and accountability. These may be mentors, peers, colleagues, coaches, friends or family members. The right people don't just support you. They challenge you. They remind you who you're becoming when your commitment gets weak. [Research from MIT Sloan Management Review](#) found that informal support from colleagues and mentors has a significant impact on an individual's career and personal growth.

When I left a secure corporate job to start my business, I needed people around me who would tell me the truth, not just validate my choices. There's a difference between people who make you feel good and people who make you better. You need both. In times of real change, you especially need the second kind.

My accountability partners include my own personal board — a small group of carefully vetted advisors whose judgment I trust and respect. They bring expertise that shores up my gaps and I call on them for guidance whenever I need it. They aren't cheerleaders. **They are truth-tellers. And that distinction matters.**

You don't need a business to start a board. But you do need to consider this important question: *Who will tell me the truth? Who will challenge a decision that isn't working? Who models the kind of change readiness you want to build? Who has been where you're trying to go?*

Be selective and intentional with your invitation. It can be small and informal at first, but make it official by making the ask. The quality of the people in your corner will shape the quality of the person you become.



Who's In Your Corner

List 3 to 4 people who belong in your corner for this change.

- Who helps you think clearly?

- Who tells you the truth?

- Who consistently encourages growth?

- Who models the kind of success you want to build?

- Who has the skill and experience you need to acquire?

Calculate the Cost of Staying the Same

Change is hard. But the status quo also comes with a cost.

I consistently reinforce to my team that there are two kinds of pain: Growing pains and shrinking pains.

Inaction today inevitably produces the latter.

The opportunity passes. The cost of inaction compounds until it can't be ignored. [Gartner research published in 2025](#) found that only one in three business leaders report achieving healthy change adoption by their employees — even when the strategy is sound.



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The same dynamic plays out in our own lives. We know what needs to change. We understand why it matters. But the cost of staying the same seems safe and stays abstract until we name it directly.

What is the emotional cost of not changing? What is the professional cost? The personal cost? What is it costing your confidence, your energy, your skills? What opportunities are passing quietly while you wait for the right conditions? Who else around you is this going to impact?

When the consequence of inaction becomes clear, commitment gets stronger. This isn't about creating fear. It's about creating clarity. Clarity that the path forward — uncomfortable as it may be — costs less than the one you're already on.

The Inaction Audit

Answer these questions as directly as you can.

- What is the emotional cost of not making this change?

- What is the professional cost? The personal cost?

- What opportunities might you miss if nothing changes?

- Who else will be impacted if nothing changes?

Create Capacity for Change

Sometimes growth depends less on what you start and more on what you stop.

When I started my business during the Great Recession, a mentor gave me advice I've carried ever since: Approach this moment like your life depends on it. Because it does. He was talking about focus. About the willingness to eliminate everything that wasn't essential so I could pour my energy into what mattered most. That conversation was where my Quit List was born.

A Quit List isn't about deprivation. It's making sure you don't sacrifice what you want most for what feels good right now. Every meaningful change asks something of you. It asks you to trade short-term comfort for long-term growth, distraction for discipline, familiar habits for better ones. Delayed gratification in the name of a long-term goal also builds the resilience you will need for the road ahead. It also helps you move into alignment with the person you're trying to become.

Growth requires tradeoffs. The question is whether you make these decisions consciously — or whether you keep letting the habits, beliefs and patterns of the old version of you become barriers to your vision of the future.

The Quit List

Complete this sentence:

To make this change real, I need to stop...

Then name at least one from each category:

- A draining habit

- A pattern of avoidance

- A source of distraction

Looking Forward

You have done the internal work. You have looked honestly at yourself and the systems around you. Now comes the part **where insight becomes action.**

Create a Compelling Vision of the Future

It's difficult to sustain change when all you can see is what you're leaving behind.

You need a future vision strong enough to compete with the comfort of the present. Not the highlight reel. Not an idealized fantasy. An ordinary day in a future where this change has become your lived experience. The specificity is what makes it real. Vision becomes powerful when it feels integrated.

About 10 years ago, I went through the Hoffman Process — a seven-day immersive experience designed for people who are serious about change. One of the most powerful things I encountered there was a visioning practice that asked me to imagine a specific future day in vivid detail. Not an abstract aspiration. A real day. The work I was doing, the people around me, how I felt when I woke up. I walked out of that experience with more clarity and the permission to stop considering what could go wrong and instead consider what it will be like when everything works out even better than I could imagine.

A compelling vision of the future does two things. It pulls you forward. And it gives you something to reverse-engineer into action. Get crystal clear about what you want and why it matters.

The Random Thursday

This exercise asks you to imagine an ordinary Thursday five years from now where the change you know you need to make has become real. Not the best day of your life. A random Thursday.

Walk yourself through the day.

**Make it specific.
The ordinary details matter.
Write it down.**

- How do you feel when you wake up?

- How are you thinking differently?

- What habits are now normal?

- How are you showing up in your work?

- How are you showing up for the people who count on you?

- What feels lighter, stronger or more aligned?

- What are you no longer tolerating?

- What are you now capable of that once felt difficult?

Don't Wait for Certainty

Action precedes clarity.

This is where most people stall. They know what needs to change. They know why it matters. But they wait for more confidence, better timing or a stronger sense of certainty before they begin. That is not how growth works. Action also mitigates fear. The people who grow through uncertainty don't wait for the perfect moment. They understand those never arrive. So, take the next step, pay attention, learn fast and adjust.

You don't have to feel fully ready to begin. You have to learn how to feel the fear and act anyway.

Your First Move

If the change in front of you feels overwhelming, don't lower the standard. Reduce the distance between intention and action. Ask yourself:

- The first action I need to take is
- The behavior I need to repeat consistently is
- The excuse I need to stop making is
- The standard I want to hold myself to is

Remember: Action creates evidence. Evidence builds confidence. Confidence reinforces commitment. That is how momentum builds.

Create the Rituals That Sustain Growth

Meaningful change is rarely the result of one dramatic breakthrough.

More often, it is the product of repeated behaviors that become part of how you live, work, and lead. Your new identity.

That is why rituals matter.

The highest performers do not rely on motivation alone. They create rhythms that reinforce the person they are becoming.

If you want change to last, ask yourself not only What do I want? but also What system will help me sustain it?

Consider the routines that would support the change you are trying to make.

- What needs to happen daily?
- What needs to happen weekly?
- What helps you stay focused, grounded and accountable?
- What environment supports your best thinking and behavior?
- What patterns consistently pull you off track?

Your Ritual Inventory

Identify 3 rituals that would support this next season of growth.

1.
2.
3.

Now

Identify 3 patterns you need to reduce, remove, or interrupt.

1.
2.
3.

Sustain Your Progress Through Reflection

Success is rarely linear.

Some weeks you will feel clear and capable. Others you will feel frustrated and that forward progress seems elusive. That doesn't mean the change process is failing. It means you're doing the real work. The people who sustain change don't expect a perfect path. They build reflection into the process. They review, they learn and they adjust when the inevitable setback arrives.

In every pivotal moment I've faced — whether it was building a business during a downturn or reinventing myself after a big setback — I started by asking myself better questions:

Path to Clarity

Whenever you feel stuck, ask:

- What can I learn from this?

- Where's the opportunity I'm not seeing?

- How can I make decisions today that I will be proud of six months from now?

Those three questions have served me through some of the hardest seasons of my life.

They work because they shift your attention from what you can't control to what you can. They replace paralysis with a plan. And they create enough space between any present moment difficulty and the agency you are going to need to make meaningful progress toward the future you desire.

Adversity is often our very best teacher if we are awake to the learning and emerging opportunities. When things get hard — not if, when — remember the setback is so often the set up for the breakthrough! You just have to keep going.

Sustain momentum by building introspection and reflection into your schedule. Recognize that progress is success. Schedule time each week to pause and celebrate the small wins. My favorite way to do this is a “Done List”. That’s the opposite of the to-do list. The to-do list is a running tally of everything undone; you can work all day and still close it staring at what’s left. A Done List flips the frame. At the end of the week, record what you actually did to move forward. And consider just how far you’ve come.

The Done List

At the end of each week, record your progress:

- **One action you took toward the change you’re making**
- **One moment you chose readiness over resistance**
- **One piece of evidence you’re becoming who this change requires**

Commit to What Comes Next

Use this guide to reflect, reset and recommit. Use it to identify where resistance is showing up, what the moment is asking of you and how you can respond with greater confidence, consistency and ownership.

Change is never going to be this slow again. Our ability to meet it — with clarity and conviction — may be the most important skill we can build right now.

Reading about change isn't the same as becoming change-ready.

The value of this guide will come from what you do next. Not all of it at once — just the next thing. One honest reflection. One meaningful conversation. One decision and commitment to advance in the direction of your dream.

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We must all suffer from one of two pains: the pain of discipline or the pain of regret. The difference is discipline weighs ounces, while regret weighs tons.

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— Jim Rohn

Continue the Conversation

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- Subscribe for more insights and tools on leadership, growth, and navigating change
- Bring this conversation to your team through a keynote, workshop, or leadership experience
- Explore more tools, insights, and resources on human-centered growth, leadership, and change readiness.

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