



No Way... My Way... Gateway... Freeway!

TONY MAGEE, MS, MBA—THE DESTINY DOCTOR™

In a way, experiencing change is exactly the same as experiencing loss. When you've lost something of value in your life—for example, your home burns down or you lose a loved one—you go through a forced change. Even when the stakes aren't quite that high, the process of any kind of change has four distinct phases:

- **No Way:** This isn't really happening
- **My Way:** I'm under attack, I need to hold onto what's near and dear
- **Gateway:** OK, let me see what this is all about
- **Freeway:** Wheeee ... this isn't so bad, let's go for it

I call the first phase **No Way**. You're in a state of shock. This isn't really happening. If you just close your eyes tight enough and turn away from the fire, bury yourself in comfort food, turn the TV up to its full volume, get nice and cuddly under the covers, it will all go away. It's just a bad dream.

In a lot of ways, this is normal. (Keep in mind, I'm not a big fan of "normal." It's "normal" to do a lot of things, but "normal" doesn't usually move the ball ahead.) The **No Way** demon has many faces. First you deny it's happening (not me), then you try to brush it aside (ignorance is bliss), then when it's ugly head pops up again, which it will, you minimize it (if I do just a little fine tuning, it will be peachy keen).

Regardless of how good you are at the **No Way** phase, eventually it becomes clear that change is underway. What's your response?

You go into the **My Way** phase. In this phase, it all gets worse. You begin to resist. You lash out. Surely there's someone to blame for this indignity that you're enduring. You see this a lot in business when a major shift occurs. Most everybody finds

someone to blame for it. (Of course, in business there is always a convenient scapegoat up the line to take the rap.)

It's not unusual in the **My Way** phase to break down, to become physically ill or emotionally upset. This is a tough transition. I call it **My Way** because we're trying so hard to hold onto to what we think is real, to not have to change. "At all costs, I need to continue to do it my way." (My apologies to Frank Sinatra. **My Way** may be a nice song, but it's not a nice way to confront life.)

Buried at the bottom of the pile is a voice whispering "it's over, life as you know it will never be again" but you're more focused on crying about the past than you are on adjusting to this change. You may even slip back into the **No Way** phase.

"Why not go out on a limb? Isn't that where the fruit is?"

— Frank Scully

Thankfully, nothing lasts forever. One of two things is going to happen: 1) you're either going to create great distress or disease in your life, or 2) you're going to move on.

The next phase I call the **Gateway**. Once you face up to what's happening in your life and admit how you feel, you start to feel better about things. You come to the gateway and walk through. You let go of

the despair and judgment and begin to explore your possibilities. You realize that you're going to survive. You go to the drawing board and open up to the potential of your new situation.

You accept the change.

The last phase I call the **Freeway**. Once you've accepted that change is afoot, hopefulness returns, you adapt. You focus

on the solution that is the most appropriate. You make up a game plan and a commitment to go along with it. You're off and running. You start to get excited about the new possibilities in your life. You begin to express from these possibilities.

Compared to the first three phases, you're free, baby bubba! ★



About the Author

Tony Magee, MS, MBA—*The Destiny Doctor™* is an author, popular speaker, and Peak Performance Consultant. He is President of PlatinumStar® Performance Systems and celebrated author of the uplifting book *Can't Shove a Great Life into a Small Dream: 12 Life-Essentials to Grow Your Dreams to Match the Life You Want*. Tony lives with his wife, Aloria, and their four children in West Hills, California. He can be reached by email at tony@platinumstar.com or phone: 1-866-ASK-TONY.

