

The Truth in a Fortune Cookie

Description

Reflections on Change, Courage, and Starting Over

Life is a series of natural and spontaneous changes. Don't resist them; that only creates sorrow. Let reality be reality. Let things flow naturally forward in whatever way they like. • Lao Tzu

Can we talk about modern fortune cookies for a second? I feel like they aren't what they once were. Most of them sound like knock-off motivational posters, *You are the sky, everything else is just the weather.* • (Ha! How is this even a fortune?) But about five years ago, I got two that felt real, important, and timely. So much so that I taped them to my desk.

Now, I sit in this precious house that I love; I'm cleaning it, packing my things, and putting it on the market. Not because I want to. But because I have to.

After a cascade of personal and financial challenges, I've found myself in a season of tough transition. The kind that turns your world sideways. The kind that forces hard decisions. The kind that makes you question your worth and wonder if everything you've built is slipping through your fingers.

Transitions like these are disorienting. They are full of loss- loss of identity, routine, stability- and yet, we often feel like we're supposed to manage them with grace and grit, quietly and alone. But I know I'm not the only one. Many of you, dear friends, may be carrying similar weight right now.

Here's my truth: I've felt anything but graceful. My confidence has taken a hit. Business has slowed. I've applied to dozens of roles I feel genuinely qualified for- most with no response, a few canned rejection emails. I've reached out, connected, (reconnected), and shown up in conversations, all while quietly wondering: *Am I on the right path? Does the market still see my value?*

And yet, I'm still here. Still taking the next step. Still choosing to believe that the right door will open, and that this chapter is shaping something in me I'll one day be grateful for.

Through this transition, I've had to grieve the loss of several dreams. Have you ever grieved the loss of an unmet expectation in your life? I was taught this practice many years ago and it has been a very freeing and healing practice through various phases of my life. It is not easy, but important.

And today, as I peeled those two tiny fortune cookie papers off my desk, I cried. They read:

Your courage will guide your future. •

Your genuine talent will find its way to success. •

These little cookie papers reminded me of something I so easily forget when I'm in the trenches: I *am* courageous. I *do* have talent. (And you too!) In fact, those qualities remain essential assets as I navigate what's next. Even amid uncertainty, they anchor my approach and decisions.

As a coach, I often support people through transitions- some chosen, some forced. Career changes, leadership shifts, health setbacks, approaching retirement, returning from family leave, becoming an empty nester, identity evolution! All of these moments test us. **But they also reveal us.**

If you're facing a difficult change right now, here are a few reflective questions I often offer my clients:

- What part of this transition is within your control?
- What's one small action you can take this week to regain a sense of direction or stability?
- What strengths have helped you navigate past challenges? How can you bring them forward now?
- What are you grieving in this transition? And what might this change make space for?

You don't need to have all the answers. But stay curious! About yourself, your needs, your next step, this can be more powerful than having a perfect plan.

Transitions are rarely tidy, but they can be transformative.

Are you in the midst of one? If so, I'd love to hear what you're learning.

Category

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