

**Action Pact, Inc.**  
www.Culturechangenow.com

# Culture Change in Practice

## Comfort Zone

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Posted by Steph Kilen at 10:17 AM



***"Culture Change in Practice" is our own weblog where people can become involved in a conversation about Culture Change as it is practiced by professionals in real nursing homes. Feel free to join the conversation, or post a comment about something you have learned on your journey.***

**[www.culturechangenow.com/weblog.html](http://www.culturechangenow.com/weblog.html)**

Sometimes the comfort zone only seems comfortable. I mean, really, are you comfortable with the thought of your parents, or you for that matter, living in the institutional model that has dominated long-term care for so long? Would you be comfortable in the place of the elders who live in your organization? Probably not.

And, truth be told, it is probably more of a struggle than a comfort to get elders to "comply" with the way the system runs. "The way things are done" is familiar, but truly, not comfortable. But, if we change "the way things are done" we will have to learn new things, make new routines, pay a bit more attention and grow. Reserve "stuck in your ways" for resisting text messaging, or the order in which you do your waking up routine. Stay true to the way you eat your sweet corn and do your holiday traditions. (Let your family get you to do away with marshmallows on your sweet potatoes, that is not my sphere.) But please, use this [free download](#) guide to examine your comfort zone and the level of comfort it

actually brings you and the elders. Try to be truthful as possible when you answer the questions. No need to share with anyone (unless you want to formally – in a learning circle – or informally). Before you start to answer, take a couple of deep breaths, get yourself to relax and focus. Tell yourself you are honestly going to look at your thoughts and feelings on this issue. If you are the one in your organization shaking things up, use this in team meetings or as a way to introduce culture change to others in your organization.

Whenever I know I need to do something to move out of my "comfort" zone to something that will serve me (and sometimes others) better, I replace my comfort zone with something else of comfort, a nice bath, a new book, cookies...ok, if you could see my thighs you would know that it is usually cookies. But anyway, it is tough, tough work to move on, especially in your job, so it might help to dangle a new comfort "carrot" in front of you. Soon, you will find new comfort in the pride and joy you feel in helping create home for elders.

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## Comfort Zone Handout

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### Comfort handout

1. Define the system, behavior or routine that is your “comfort zone.”
2. What is its allure or why is it comfortable?
3. What would it mean to step outside your comfort zone or what is the change to be made?
4. What emotions or thoughts are holding you back?
5. What emotions or thoughts want you to change?
6. What’s the worst that could happen?
7. What’s the best that could happen?
8. What is likely to happen?
9. How will you find new comfort in the new behavior, system or routine?

