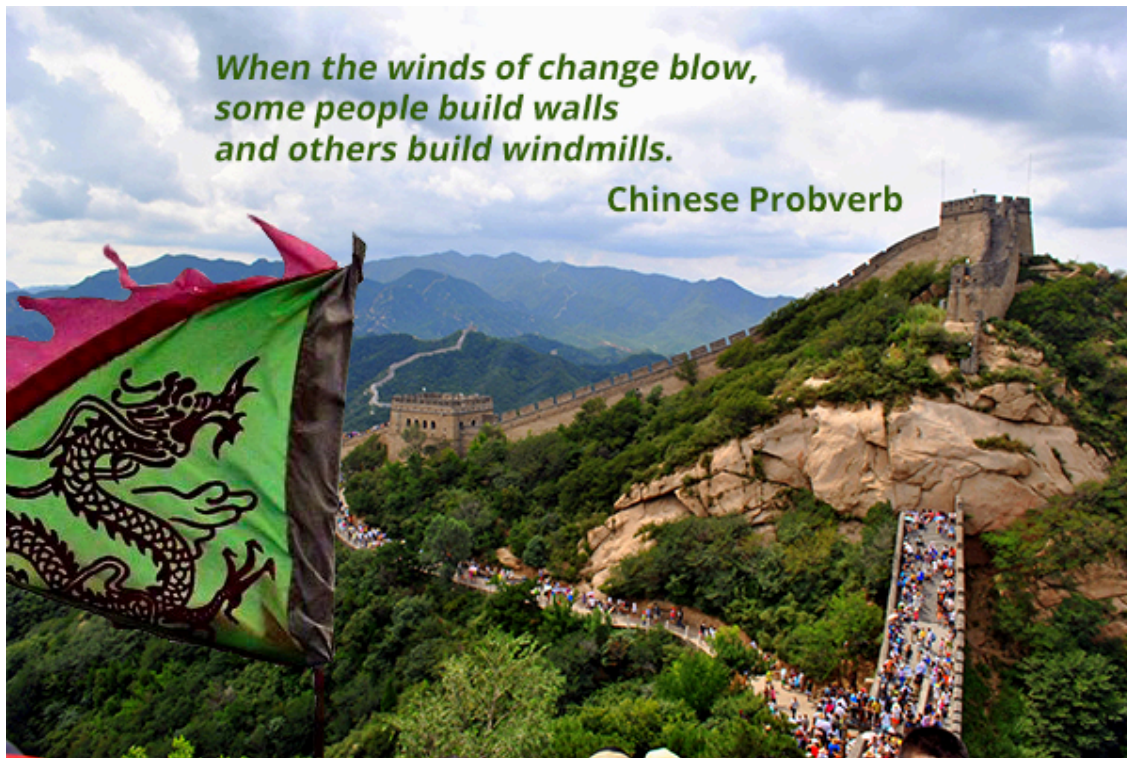


CHARLYNE GELT, PH.D.

Encouraging Self-Discovery and Empowerment



Winds of Change by Charlyne Gelt, Ph.D.



[\(Wind of Change by the Scorpions\)](#)

One can both hunger for yet fear change! It takes courage to create change in one's life, even if it's a positive one, that impacts self and others, such as family, friends, work colleagues, or even one's community. Often, the person who brings the "winds of change" is met with resistance. An example might be the person in a family who

has been drinking and then gets sober, which initially can upset the balance of the whole family. Another example is the woman who enters psychotherapy and begins standing up for herself, no longer allowing herself to be submissive or abused. Others get thrown off-center by the woman's new, unfamiliar persona.



The Ingredients for Change

In the year 2000, a movie called *Chocolat*, nominated for Academy Awards, presented the audience with the ingredients for *change* in a delicious way, chocolate. Starring Juliette Binoche and Johnny Depp, *Chocolat* tells the story of an independent woman, Vianne, an expert chocolatier, who opens a chocolate shop a week before Lent, and her lover, Roux, who shake up the rigid morality of the whole small 1950s

French village.

Vianne stands out as “different” because of her colorful clothes and red cape. She is also considered “shocking” because of her failure to attend church, and because she’s an unmarried mother. Yet Vianne’s passion for her chocolates, which she generously shares with the villagers, are metaphors for her vibrant warmth, wisdom, and ability to stand up for what she believes. She ends up having a huge impact, loosening the Mayor’s grip on the repressed citizens in the village. She helps them reveal their “true” selves, and it changes them. Her passion for life is contagious and the whole village is the better for it.

Are You the Winds of Change?

What is your role in *your* own life? Are you a passionate “wind of change” in your world, or are you stuck in a rigid, dysfunctional role learned while growing up that now holds you hostage? Perhaps you feel that your life’s role is to be the glue that “holds everything together” in order to maintain a familiar, but dysfunctional status quo? Perhaps the idea of letting anything new or different into your life makes you anxious and resistant?

Lisa

A forty-year-old mother and registered nurse, Lisa developed a “caretaker” role while growing up, with a total focus on perfectionism and external success:

“I became an overachiever, a perfectionist, to compensate for feeling worthless and for having no value because I was female. I learned to do everything the hard way, on my own.” — Lisa

People-pleasers like Lisa tend to use a smile as a way of covering up anxiety or fear of rejection. Lisa learned to defend against her pain by masking the fragile and defenseless part of herself with a mask — an *over-intellectualized* sense of identity.

Most of us, however, are unaware of how this mask came to be. As children, it is our natural instinct to look to our caregivers for protection, shelter, safety, nurturing, and guidance. These are normal dependency needs. However, if the parent is intolerant of the child’s normal needs and makes the child feel shame and humiliation for having these normal needs, it creates a profound internal shattering of the child’s whole sense of security and safety. When the child’s normal dependency needs never get met, there is a longing for them. An UNMET need. Unfortunately, dysfunctional family patterns trickle down over multiple generations and family members have relationship problems generation after generation.

The wounded child, so totally dependent upon the parents, desperately searches for self-protective ways to survive this emotional deprivation and gain a sense of fitting in and belonging in the family. In enmeshed family systems, roles get reversed and the child, acting as an extension of the parent, learns to mirror or meet the parents’ needs.

Often the child does this by concealing the “True” self behind a veil, taking on the role of “caretaker” or other false persona, one that he or she thinks others want him or her to be. This “False” self is the one presented to the world, the one that becomes the new identity — who one is. Too often the “True” self remains hidden, masked, informing critical interpersonal relations in negative ways, a very high price to pay for getting lost in a destructive family process: “I was put in this world to fix people,” is a commonly heard comment from therapy clients.

How do we rectify this gap in the core? The question is: What does it mean to lift up the veil that conceals the face we show the world? What lies beneath our persona? Who are you beneath the veil? How can you stop undermining the strengths inherent in your True self? We can all learn healthy BOUNDARIES and discover the childhood patterns, so we do not repeat “family mistakes.”

Let’s try using the movie *Chocolat* as a teaching example:

Have you ever considered that you, too, could bring the “winds of change” into your life and benefit yourself as well as others? Are you aware that down deep inside you, you have the potential to be a passionate vehicle of change? Your true self is lurking there, perhaps giving you clues. For example, have you ever been surprised by feeling the beat of your heart when listening to a certain kind of music — music you can easily access in these days of high technology by simply adding a hashtag (#) to the name of a song in your computer search window — such as #WindofChange #Scorpions #CrazyWorld. Go ahead and try it!

Awareness of the learned patterns is a good starting point. You can develop the essential skills for getting out of the “soup.” Identify the need to have your own mind, your own feelings, and emotional center. Learn the tools for emotional sobriety to find your way to the “gold” within. Discover the “True” self, who you really are hidden beneath a protective, survival role. Here are some Links to give you a head start:

<https://youtu.be/1udpQz9GnoY>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1udpQz9GnoY&list=RD1udpQz9GnoY&start_radio=1

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=huQL5SHpFJ0&list=RDhuQL5SHpFJ0&index=1>

"Every one of us is shadowed by an illusory person: a false self. This is the man that I want to be but who cannot exist."

Thomas Merton, *No Man Is an Island*

Thank you for your support!

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