

## May, A Month Of Transitions

Stewart Hendrickson

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This is the month of May when Spring blossoms into a languid Summer. It is also the month of my birthday – a time to celebrate or not, to take stock of the present, look back at the past, plan for the future, or just enjoy the day.

I see my life as a series of chapters – growing up, college to graduate school, transitional jobs, a career, and now retirement. At each transition there is chance and necessity – all life is a matter of chance and we take the necessary steps to succeed. The roads I took made a difference and I have no regrets. In my octogenarian years, I also look forward to change – it is not good to stay the same.

This May is a time of transition. With the pandemic hopefully winding down, it's a time to consider a post-COVID future. A return to the old normal is not an option, we must define a new normal with new ways, return virtual into reality, and greet old and new friends again in person.

As we leave this pandemic year, with all our shots, we might experience a state-of-mind known as “languishing.” As Adam Grant explains in his recent New York Times article, this is a feeling of “blah” – something between depression and flourishing, or the absence of well-being. The past year was traumatic for many of us. Our minds react to uncertainty, change, fear of contagion, new ways of doing things – all are little traumas, a sort of PTSD. We start our day groggy, not sure of what to do. Our day proceeds slowly. Blah! We don't get a lot accomplished but as the day winds down we think of what we should have done and try to make up for the lost time, go to bed late and sleep fitfully in anticipation of the next blah day.

Our minds need change. We need something to look forward to each day. Do something new. Learn to play a new instrument, try a new art form, pick out some new books to read. Invite a friend to take a walk or come into your home if you are both fully vaccinated. The latter may be just outside your comfort zone, but after you do that and everything seems okay, it is a great feeling of freedom – I can do those things again! Invite some friends for dinner, make some long-range plans such as an out-of-town getaway – it's safe if you are fully vaccinated. Abandon virtual for reality. Get reacquainted with friends in a real world. Hug and touch, again if you are fully vaccinated. This is for you, and me as well. This is a new freedom – enjoy it.

This is a time for change. Think new and think big – we need new beginnings. Enjoy this month of May!

*Stewart Hendrickson (hend@stolaf.edu) is Professor Emeritus (Chemistry), St. Olaf College, Northfield, MN; and Research Professor Emeritus (Chemistry), University of Washington, Seattle, WA. He lives with his cat, Igor, in the Ballard area of Seattle, WA.*