



Editor's Note

The Many Emotions of Change

By Sharon Verbeten

Late last year, I left my twelve-year position as a part-time children's librarian to become full-time Youth Services Manager in another city.

It was a bittersweet move. On one hand, I looked forward to advancing in my career, taking on more duties, leading a team, learning a new community, and, possibly, ending my library career as a manager.

Conversely, having worked so long at one location, as you can imagine, friendships were formed—both with staff, patrons, and outreach partners. Of course, there were things I wouldn't miss—most tied to bureaucracy and budgets (and yes, I do realize you find those things in most libraries).

Coming to terms with all these mixed emotions and the dynamics of change was going to take some time; as I write this, I'm only seven months in and I feel the tide starting to shift. I feel more of a sense of belonging, and I'm definitely more confident in decision making.

The hardest changes have been those dealing with people. Personalities. Protocols. And the litany of "We've always done it that way." But I think with time, I'll be better able to navigate these changes in a more effective way.

I'm taking some leadership training and learning from the current managers on staff—several of whom have been there decades. I've welcomed having allies along this journey.

What hasn't changed is my devotion to providing excellent customer service and engaging families in promoting early literacy.

Stepping out of one's comfort zone is hard, but sometimes it takes a while to recognize and reap the rewards. And despite these being challenging times for librarians, I still feel blessed to be in a profession that provides me with so many of those rewards, both tangible and intangible. &

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