



Who Moved My Cheese?

An A-Mazing Way to Deal with Change in Your Work
And in Your Life

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THE BIG IDEA

Who Moved My Cheese? by Dr. Spencer Johnson

- Cheese is a metaphor for what you want to have in life – whether it is a good job, a loving relationship, money, or spiritual peace of mind.
- Cheese is what we think will make us happy, and when circumstances take it away, different people deal with change in different ways.
- Four characters in this delightful parable represent parts of ourselves whenever we are confronted with change.
- Discover how you can let change work to your advantage and let it lead you to success!

THE MAZE

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- Four characters live in a maze and look for cheese to nourish them and make them happy.
- The maze is where you spend time looking for what you want.
 - ✓ It may be the organization you work in, the relationships you have in your life, or the community you live in.

PARTS OF ALL OF US

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- Two of the characters named Sniff and Scurry are mice.
 - ✓ They represent parts of us that are simple and instinctive.
 - ✓ Hem and Haw are the little people, representing those complex parts of us as human beings.
- Sometimes we are like Sniff, who anticipates change early by sniffing it out, or Scurry, who quickly scurries into action and adapts.
- Maybe we are more like Hem, who denies change and resists it out of fear, or Haw, who learns to adapt in time when he sees something better.
- Whatever part of us we choose, we all share the common need to find our way in the maze of life and succeed in changing times.

Wisdom in a Nutshell from Who Moved My Cheese?

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- Anticipate change.
- Adapt quickly.
- Enjoy change.
- Be ready to change quickly, again and again.
- Having Cheese makes you happy.
- The more important your Cheese is to you, the more you want to hold on to it.
- If you do not change, you can become extinct.
- Ask yourself “What would I do if I weren’t afraid?”
- Smell the Cheese often so you know when it is getting old.
- Movement in a new direction helps you find New Cheese.
- When you move beyond your fear, you feel free.
- Imagining myself enjoying New Cheese, even before I find it, leads me to it.

Wisdom in a Nutshell from Who Moved My Cheese?

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- The quicker you let go of old cheese, the sooner you find New Cheese.
- It is safer to search in the maze than remain in a cheeseless situation.
- Old beliefs do not lead you to New Cheese.
- When you see that you can find and enjoy New Cheese, you change course.
- Noticing small changes early helps you adapt to the bigger changes that are to come.
- Read the Handwriting on the Wall
- Change happens. They keep moving the Cheese.
- Move with the Cheese and enjoy it!

THE STORY BEHIND THE STORY

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- Kenneth Blanchard, Ph.D. relates how the Cheese story has made a difference in the lives of many people all over the world.
 - ✓ This simple parable has been credited with saving careers, marriages, and lives!
 - ✓ NBC-TV Olympic broadcaster Charlie Jones heard the story and it helped him overcome his anger about being transferred from his usual Track and Field assignment to Swimming and Diving, where he had little experience.
 - ✓ He realized his boss had “moved his cheese”, so he adapted, learned the two new sports, and in the process, found that doing something new made him feel young.
- His boss soon recognized his new attitude and energy, and gave him better assignments. Charlie went on to enjoy more success and was inducted into the Pro Football Hall of Fame Broadcaster’s Alley.

A GATHERING

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- One sunny Sunday in Chicago, a group of former classmates gathered for lunch to catch up on each other's lives, having attended their high school reunion the night before.
- The topic came around to change, and how each person experienced it.
- Michael tells the group The Story.

WHO MOVED MY CHEESE?

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- Haw learned several things for himself:
 - ✓ He needed to let go of his fears.
 - ✓ He realized what lies out there could be a lot better, not worse.
 - ✓ He should be alert in order to anticipate change, and next time, periodically smell the cheese to check if it is getting old.
- And to learn these important lessons he had to tell himself: **GET OUT OF YOUR COMFORT ZONE.**
- The quicker you let go of old cheese, the sooner you find New Cheese.

WHO MOVED MY CHEESE?

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- How soon came to realize:
 - ✓ The fear you let build up in your mind is worse than the situation that actually exists.
 - ✓ What you are afraid of is never as bad as what you imagine.
 - ✓ When you change what you believe, you change what you do.
- How reflected as he enjoyed his New Cheese. He realized many more things:
 - ✓ He had been holding onto the illusion of Old Cheese that was no longer there.
 - ✓ He had started to change as soon as he learned to laugh at his own mistakes, then he was able to let go and move on.
 - ✓ Sniff and Scurry kept life simple. They didn't overanalyze or overcomplicate things. They simply moved with the Cheese.

WHO MOVED MY CHEESE?

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- ✓ The mistakes he made in the past can be used to plan for the future.
- ✓ Notice the little changes so you are better prepared for the big change that might be coming.
- ✓ The biggest inhibitor of change lies within your self. Nothing gets better until You change.
- ✓ There is always new cheese out there.
- While Haw still had a supply of cheese, he often went out and explored new areas in order to stay in touch with what was happening around him.
 - ✓ He knew it was safer to be aware of his real choices than to isolate himself in his comfort zone.

A Discussion

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- Michael finished telling the story and the group of former classmates gathered at a hotel lounge later that evening for drinks.
- Nathan's retail business suffered from unanticipated change.
- Jessica's encyclopedia company resisted change when someone suggested they sell their product in disk format.
- Michael applied the story to his work, asking each person in his organization who they thought they were: Sniff, Scurry, Hem or Haw.
- Sniffs could sniff out changes in the marketplace, and update the corporate vision.

A Discussion

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- The Scurrys liked to get things done, so they took action based on the new corporate vision.
- The Hems wanted to work in a place that was safe and where the changes made sense to them, turning them into Haws.
- The Haws were hesitant at first, but were open-minded enough to learn something new, and adapted.
- Richard realized how his children had been acting like Hem lately.
- Jessica and Cory each recognized it was time for New Cheese
- Richard also thought perhaps New Cheese could mean changing the way he behaved on the job rather than completely changing jobs.

A Discussion

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- Michael concluded that the Cheese parable works best when everyone in the organization knows about it, because an organization can only change when enough people in it change.

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