

# Master of Change

*Thriving amidst uncertainty using Rugged Flexibility*

Willem L. Middelkoop

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Change is one of life's few constants. Yet, even with its inevitability, facing it head-on can feel daunting and disorienting. In the book "Master of Change", Brad Stulberg offers a thought-provoking guide to not just survive but thrive in an ever changing world.

As you grow older change becomes inevitable. Think of [loss](#), [moving to a new place](#) or [becoming a parent](#). Change is an integral part of live and yet a lot of people seem to resist it: holding on to a desire to "return to normal" after disruptions - sometimes described as "homeostasis".

## Homeostasis versus Allostasis

In his book "Master of Change", [Brad Stulberg](#) explains that the concept of "homeostasis" can be limiting in the context of life's constant flux, as it implies stability is achieved

by resisting change. A more dynamic alternative is presented, "allostasis", suggesting we achieve balance by adjusting and evolving in response to change. Instead of clinging to an unchanging status quo, you can embrace change as an opportunity for growth and adaptation. This perspective underpins the concept of "rugged flexibility", helping us to maintain our identity while evolving with life's demands.

**Brad Stulberg**[About](#) [Books](#) [Popular Writing](#) [Speak/Coach](#) [Contact](#) [X](#) [ig](#) [in](#)



**A bit more about me.**

**My work** explores principles of mental health and mastery that transcend capabilities and domains. I am particularly interested in the philosophical and psychological foundations of sustainable excellence —getting the best out of yourself on the things that matter to you most —and the habits and practices necessary to attain it. I've learned that whether someone is trying to qualify for the Olympics, start a company, craft a creative masterpiece, break ground in mathematical theory, or raise a family, many of the practices underlying fulfillment, sustainable success, and well-being are the same, supported by scientific evidence, and available to everyone.

**I am author** of the books *Master of Change* and *The Practice of Groundedness* and coauthor of the books *Peak Performance* and *The Passion Paradox*. These books explore the art, science, and practice of motivation, values-driven excellence, and maximizing one's potential —all the while realizing a more fulfilling and sustainable kind of success.

**I write** about these concepts on *The Growth Equation*, my popular blog and multimedia platform. I am a regular contributor at *The New York Times*, and my work has also been featured in *The Wall Street Journal* and *The Washington Post*, among other publications.

*The author of the book 'Master of Change', Brad Stulberg on his website [bradstulberg.com](http://bradstulberg.com)*

[Brad Stulberg](#), celebrated for his work on human performance and personal growth, dives deep into the nature of change. His concept of "rugged flexibility" stands out as a central theme - an idea that combines steadfastness in your values with a willingness to adapt to the unpredictable. I really like how the author maintains a pragmatic, to the point, approach. It is masterfully written, drawing on spirituality and Zen wisdom without ever becoming too much "woo woo". It's a practical philosophy designed to help you face change without losing yourself in the process.

There is a story of a wise Thai Forest elder named Achaan Chaa who held up his favorite glass in front of his students and said, “You see this goblet? For me this glass is already broken. I enjoy it; I drink out of it. It holds my water admirably, sometimes even reflecting the sun in beautiful patterns. If I should tap it, it has a lovely ring to it. But when I put this glass on the shelf and the wind knocks it over or my elbow brushes it off the table and it falls to the ground and shatters, I say, ‘Of course.’ When I understand that the glass is already broken, every moment with it is precious.” Chaa’s example is a lofty aspiration, no doubt, but one worth keeping in mind.

*The book frequently draws on timeless stories and philosophies from ancient thinkers, offering insights that remain strikingly relevant and thought-provoking in today's world.*

## Key Takeaways

At the heart of Master of Change is the idea of rugged flexibility. Stulberg describes it as striking a balance: holding firm to what truly matters while allowing yourself to bend and evolve when circumstances shift. This duality isn't about being rigid or overly fluid; it's about knowing where to stand your ground and when to pivot.

Stulberg also emphasises the importance of approaching transitions mindfully. He introduces tools like:

- **Rituals:** Small, grounding habits that provide a sense of normalcy.
- **Self-reflection:** Regularly checking in with your values and emotions to ensure alignment.
- **Incremental changes:** Tackling change one manageable step at a time, rather than being paralyzed by the scope of the challenge.

These principles are designed to help you navigate change with clarity and composure, avoiding burnout or the trap of perfectionism.



*The concept "Rugged Flexibility" stands out as a central theme in the book Master of Change*

## Moment for Reflection

Stulberg's work is as much about asking the right questions as it is about offering solutions. Here are a few prompts to consider as you reflect on your relationship with change:

- What are my core values, and how can they anchor me during uncertain times?
- Am I holding on too tightly to outdated beliefs or habits? Where might flexibility serve me better?
- What small, intentional steps can I take to ease my way through the changes I'm facing?

## Conclusion

The book Master of Change offers insightful guidance on navigating life's inevitable transitions with resilience and adaptability. By embracing rugged flexibility and anchoring yourself in core values, this book provides thoughtful perspectives and practical tools to thrive amidst uncertainty and change. Having navigated various changes myself, I'm grateful this book was recommended to me, and now I'm glad to pass that recommendation on to you - it's well worth exploring.