Who Moved My Cheese?

Book Critique

Megan Sadler

Longwood University
Throughout the book *Who Moved My Cheese?* the author includes several motivational quotes and ties them to the story. One in particular was a quote that challenged me to ponder how I am always told that life is about the journey but not the destination. One of the very first quotes in this book was, “Having Cheese Makes you Happy” (Johnson, 36). I found it interesting that this quote was stated at the beginning of the book instead of the end. Thinking back, I now realize that the author was trying to demonstrate that life is indeed all about the journey and not the destination.

As a Therapeutic Recreation Specialist, I think it is important to be aware that clients will need assistance when it comes to stepping outside of their comfort zones and adapting to change throughout their journey. The book *Who Moved My Cheese?* confides in that statement. It tells the story of four characters that all have different perspectives of change and explains each perspective for the reader. Two of the characters immediately took action and decided to adjust to change instead of dwelling on it. On the other hand, two of the characters were not so accepting to change. These characters wanted it the way it was and were not open minded about the situation whatsoever.

Overall, I believe the primary message of this book is to never let your fears hold you back. Individuals are smarter than they believe. Allowing fear to consume your knowledge is one of the biggest mistakes people can make. When considering fears first, it hinders the intelligence of an individual. It also gives the message of how important it is to be able to know oneself and identify self-characteristics when necessary. This way, when it is time for change to occur, an individual does not stumble, but takes action in order to adapt to the new situations. The book allows us to look at the stepping-stones
and not just glance at the big picture. This is another lesson that can be learned from *Who Moved My Cheese?*.

The character from this book that I identify with the most is Haw. In the beginning, he is skeptical to follow in the footsteps of Sniff and Scurry, but then realizes that he should have listened to his heart instead of holding back because Hem was determined it was the best decision. Sometimes, I wait for the permission or opinion of others before allowing myself to make the first decision. If another individual who I am close to makes a different decision, I will lean more towards what they are deciding for themselves. However, I think it was a great learning experience for Haw to see how the adaptations of change affected his peers and he learned from witnessing that event. From then on out, I believe Haw would listen to heart immediately and base his decision off that, no matter what his fears are.

If I could identify more with a character from this book, it would be Sniff and Scurry. As soon as they realized that their “cheese” was being moved, they knew they needed to adapt. I would strive to be able to have that mindset and be more open to change. It is so much more beneficial when a person is prepared for continuing change and is able to adjust even when their hearts are telling them otherwise. In order to make this transition, I would focus on setting aside my fears, just as Haw was pushed to do.

Throughout my lifetime, I have encountered many experiences that have entailed me making decisions that I did not want to make. I have never been a follower, but nor have I ever been a person to make a decision at the drop of a hat. I am one to weigh out all my pros and cons before making an executive decision and that is not always a good
thing. In my studies and practices, I have learned that it is necessary to be flexible and spontaneous.

When I was choosing a facility for an internship, my head told me to play it safe and only apply to places I knew I would be in my comfort zone. However, my heart told me to step outside my comfort zone and go for a facility that would challenge me every day of my life. I listened to my heart and it was the best decision I ever made. This related to Haw’s situation when he decided to step outside the box and go find “New Cheese”, instead of staying in the comfort of his own Cheese Station.

I believe this book was a necessity for us as students in the Group Dynamics class because it tells how important it is to be flexible and able to adjust to change easily. This also reflects back to roles that we have in groups. We cannot always conform to our personal roles, as we so often do. It would be so beneficial to be able to adapt to any role necessary in a group in order to perform a certain task or action. I think this is demonstrating how individuals step outside the box and try new roles to see how easily he or she can adapt.

As I said in the beginning, I feel it is important as a Recreation Therapist to notice when your clients are having a hard time transitioning to change. It is my job as a professional to notice this as well as figure out how to assist the client in their journey in adjusting to the change they may be encountering. I think clients with low self-esteem would benefit from this story. I would suggest this book to clients with self-esteem issues to encourage them to listen to their heart and be more confident in themselves.
References