

Today's column is about evolution, challenge, and change. It is fun to remember how we used to solve problems in the olden days and think about how things have evolved.

Times change and things do too. I enjoy looking at the evolution of objects. Recently I ran across a "brand new" box of stockings. The introduction of pantyhose in 1959 helped lead to the demise of stockings and stocking boxes. In their day, brand new stockings in their fancy printed boxes with tissue paper were quite elegant. It was a big deal to open a new box of stockings. The internet tells me that now pantyhose are passé. According to some, the bare leg look is in.

I enjoy books written in the days before cell phones and the internet. I've been reading some mysteries by Laura Lippman written and set in the late 90s. They are doubly reminiscent because the private investigator has recently returned to her hometown after a long absence, and she is wistful for how things used to be: the city's grandest department store has been subdivided and is now city offices.

Many everyday items have taken the slide from very special to run of the mill. As a teenager I splurged on a wonderful \$5.00 Parker fountain pen which was even guaranteed against loss. Pens were special. Then ballpoint pens were invented and now pens are a dime a dozen. Wow! I just googled Parker fountain pens and they are still available. Their price range has changed. They now range from \$512.00 to \$1,400.00. In yesteryear this kind of distraction and quick research was much more challenging. The best you could do would be to locate a telephone and call a stationery store during business hours.

Here's a quote from a magazine that caught my eye recently. The editor wrote, "Change can be unsettling. The unfamiliar takes us out of our comfort zone, and we, the producers of Energy Times, are braving these changes along with you, our readers. *But we also strongly believe that growth comes from some discomfort, and we embrace the process and the results, both anticipated and unforeseen.* (Italics mine.)

To me, embracing the process and results of growth from discomfort sounds worthwhile. Lean into the discomfort within your resources and you will come out stronger.

Speaking of growth and possible discomfort, I have been enjoying Miranda Esmonde-White's gentle program of classical stretch which airs daily in some parts of the country on PBS. Often included in a workout is moving in such a way as to challenge your balance system and wake it up a little.

A boss of mine from a part-time job while I was a student at UCLA used to advise that if nothing has changed in your life in five years, you should move or change jobs, do something to shake things up. The point is that some novelty, change and challenge are good for us. They keep us alive and growing.

My challenge to all of us this month is to embrace some discomfort and enjoy the journey through it and the changes that may result. How might this relate to dancing? It could be as simple as asking someone new to dance, trying a new dance style, or dancing the opposite role. Go forth and dance!