Change is Good

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I will admit that I can be very resistant to change. On August 29th, 2005 my hometown, New Orleans, Louisiana, suffered a major catastrophe. Parts of the city were left underwater, and over half of the population was displaced. I was only eight years old at the time, but I will remember this event for the rest of my life. My family and I had evacuated for hurricanes many times before, and we returned to our home completely intact each of those times. I remember my grandmother having a conversation with our neighbor during which he mocked us for evacuating for every hurricane. My grandmother responded, “And we always come back.”

We expected no different from this evacuation. Katrina had other plans, however. We left the city two days prior to the hurricane and sought safety in Gonzales, Louisiana. I did not pack many clothes because I did not expect to be gone for long. It was not until we lost power in our hotel in Gonzales that we realized we could possibly be gone more than just a few days. We listened to radio reports in disbelief about what was happening. One of our neighbors called my Aunt from the roof of his house and told her that our home was covered to the roof by water; our house was about ten feet tall. After the storm passed we relocated to my Aunt’s home in Abbeville, Louisiana where we stayed for a week before finally moving to Baton Rouge, where we presently remain.

My mom found an apartment, a new car, and a new school for me. She decided not to move back to New Orleans because she already felt it was not the same city we had left just weeks before. I was too young to understand why we could not simply rebuild our house and go back to our everyday lives. Now that I am older, I fully understand why she made the choice she did, and I am happy that she did. I made new friends at my new school that I will be close to for
the rest of my life. My family remains close-knit despite the distance between us and my New
Orleans relatives, which makes me feel like we can get through anything.

I still cannot believe how much time has passed since this event occurred. I often
think about how different my life could have turned out if Hurricane Katrina had not happened. Would it be better? Could it be worse? No matter how much I try to imagine
how things could have been, I cannot change the way they turned out, and quite frankly I do not
want to. I am grateful for everything Hurricane Katrina has brought me — friends, memories,
and strength. To be able to continue life in a new environment after a disaster such as the one I
suffered is an accomplishment. Although I am grateful for the way my life is now, I am not
happy about the event that brought it to this point. New Orleans is very close to my heart, so to
watch it suffer was not easy. I feel the event happened for a reason for me. The only thing to do
is to continue living life and wait to see what my ultimate purpose will be. Some people react
differently from others when it comes to change, no matter how big the change might be. Change
can bring about an array of emotions. It takes patience and effort to cope with something new,
something that was never an issue for you before. I made the best out of the situation.