

Coping with Change

Changes in routine can often be difficult for individuals with autism spectrum disorder. This example is for an individual who has a difficult time coping with a change in schedule. The individual loves bald eagles, so the following scenario and Power Card were created to assist the individual to be more relaxed when a schedule is interrupted.

Bald eagles like to return to the same nest and nesting territory each year. They may use the same nest annually for as many as 3 decades, or they may build additional nests in their nesting territory and alternate the use of them from year to year. However, if the nest or nesting territory is not suitable for them due to weather or other environmental factors, the bald eagles will need to rebuild their nest.

It typically takes 1-3 months to build their nests. If their nest gets destroyed, they must learn to adapt to change and work to build a new one. This can be challenging for bald eagles because they don't want to change to a different nest, and it takes extra work to build the new nest. But the bald eagle has work to do and must get to it. Just like bald eagles, it is important for people to be ready to cope with change.

Bald Eagle wants you to remember:

- When my schedule changes, it is OK
- If I feel upset, I can ask an adult for a break
- I will fly back into the same schedule very soon, just like Bald Eagle

Power Card



Bald Eagle wants you to remember:

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Adapted from Gagnon, 2001