

TRANSITIONS

Much of the following information is based on the writings of William Bridges who has written several books on transition.

CHANGE VS. TRANSITION

Change and transition are not the same. Change is situational. Transition is the psychological reorientation process through which people come to terms with a change. Transition is the time we let go of the way things used to be and reorient ourselves to the way things are now. The difference between change and transition can be illustrated with the example of a geographical move. The change is the relocation itself; it involves packing and taking a trip. The transition involves all the confusion, distress, and excitement you go through. Changes are always unique to the situations in which they take place, but transitions show a remarkable similarity, one to another. Transition takes longer than Change and people go through transition at different speeds.

TRANSITION

Transition is made up of three phases: **ending, the neutral zone** and **new beginnings**. With transition the ending comes first. An old life, an old way of being, and old identity has to end before a new one can begin. Each phase is filled with both positive and painful feelings and emotions.

Endings

Bridges says, "Every phase of life has a task, and failing to complete it satisfactorily means the person makes the transition into the next phase with unfinished business." In order to move forward, we must acknowledge what has ended, what our losses are and let go our past identity. We must deal with the loss before we can have a new beginning, even if the "change" is a happy one.

The Neutral Zone

This is the time when the old reality and the old identify are gone, but the new ones have not yet taken root in your mind and heart. During this time old weaknesses can re-emerge, we can get stuck in self-doubt and we use all of our energy coping with everything. Some mistakes that people make during this time is that they try to rush through this time or they try to recreate what they just said goodbye to. At the same time, the neutral zone can be a time of great growth and creativity.

New Beginnings

This beginning is not to be confused with the "start" of the new situation, which may have happened on Day One. The beginning is when we really buy in, get on board and feel at home with the new. It's important to celebrate the successes you achieve along the way and always remember that life is full of change and transition. You've made it through before, you will again!

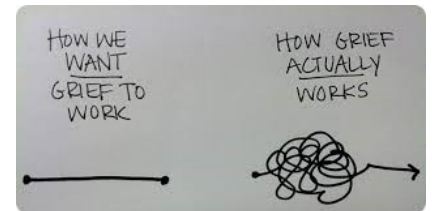
TRANSITIONS – The Reality

WHAT INFLUENCES TRANSITION?

Endings
Goodbye?
Grief
Unfinished Business

Multiple Transitions
Health/Energy
Support System
Resonance

GRIEF IN TRANSITION...TRANSITION AND GRIEF

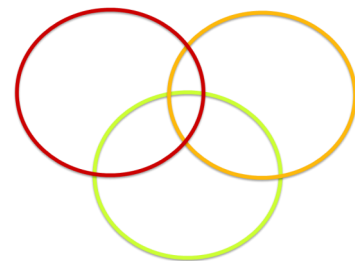


ENDINGS

- ◆ What is ending and what is not ending?
- ◆ What will be different as a result of this change?
- ◆ What are the losses that you are feeling with this transition?
- ◆ What are the losses you are feeling at this point In your life?
 Consider: health, relationships, home, community, mission, abilities
- ◆ What were/are you ready to let go of?
- ◆ What do you take with you from what has ended?

HOW TO LEAVE WELL

- ◇ Deal With the Hurts and Unfinished Business
- ◇ Acknowledge and Give Thanks
- ◇ Say Goodbye
 - ◇ Use Rituals
- ◇ Honor What Has Been
 - ◇ Review and reflect
 - ◇ Share your story
- ◇ Integration = “May it all be connected”



THE NEUTRAL ZONE

Loss of identify – “My Spirit has not caught up with me yet.”

Self-doubt

Old weaknesses

Can't find my place

Fill the Void - Try to rush through – too much too soon

Depleted energy

Set ourselves up for failure

Idealize what was

Unrealistic Expectations

Compare self to others or previous times



WHAT HELPS? MANAGE YOUR WAY THROUGH

- ⇒ Enjoy this open and creative time
- ⇒ **SCAFFOLDING** = Temporary Structures of support – People, Information, Opportunities)
- ⇒ Recognize your support system
- ⇒ Practice what sustains you
- ⇒ Strengthen areas of continuity
- ⇒ Recognize your resiliency!

FIND DIRECTION

Hopes, Concerns, Needs

Take advantage of/create temporary structures or opportunities

Take small steps

REMEMBER YOUR PURPOSE



NEW BEGINNINGS

Don't be afraid to say NO and YES

Celebrate successes

Honor your gas tank

Be patient and kind to yourself

Remember how resilient you are

Notice signs of new life

Focus on the positive and give thanks

Remember your Purpose

Have faith - Trust that God will lead you where you need to be

**All works of God proceed slowly and in pain; but then,
their roots are the sturdier and their flowering the lovelier.**

Mother Theresa of Jesus Gerhardinger