Moving Through Change & Transition

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Agenda

• Welcome
• Warm-up Activity
• Change & Transition
  – Transition stages
  – Emotions
• Strategies for Embracing Change/Moving Forward
• Wrap-up
Change

“It’s not so much that we’re afraid of change, or so in love with the old ways, but it’s the place in between that we fear… it’s like being between trapezes. It’s Linus when his blanket is in the dryer. There’s nothing to hold on to.”

- M. Ferguson

Warm-up Activity

Handwriting Activity
Change

- Life is a state of constant change.
- Change – is outcome, results focused
- Change is tangible
- Changes are based on an external event.
  - Voluntary
  - Involuntary

Change

8 Key areas of Life

- Change can happen in more than 1 area at once.
- When it happens in many areas it can feel overwhelming
- Focus on stabilizing one change at a time
Transition

- A transition is the process you go through when making a change.
- A period when you react and adjust emotionally to the new situation.
- It can be brief or long (days, months, years), it depends on:
  - Type of change you are experiencing
  - How you feel about yourself
  - Kind of supports you have
  - Whether you have chosen the change or not

Managing Transitions

- “Change isn’t the problem. The difficulty lies in the transition of moving from the present state to one that is desired in the future.”

Managing Transitions: by William Bridges

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WbDNhNXwAfQ
Transition Model

William Bridges, “Managing Transitions”

The Ending Stage

Transition starts with an ending. In this stage you need to:

- Acknowledge that things have changed
- Recognize what you will lose or miss
  - Loss of attachment
  - Loss of meaning
  - Loss of control
- Realize you will probably need to do things differently
- Need to let go of the past – recognize that something is over.
Slide 11

In this stage you may feel…

• Angry
• Shocked
• Sad
• May not want to accept the new situation
• You may worry, doubt yourself, lose confidence
• You may have conflicting feelings of excitement

Slide 12

The Neutral Stage

• The most uncomfortable stage because of its uncertainty
• See opportunities and challenges where you once saw threats and barriers
• It is like “a bridge you decided to cross” – you don’t know what is on the other side
• Time to question, reflect, talk to others, explore options and search for answers
At this stage you may feel....

- Scared
- Unfocused
- Depressed
- Helpless
- Lonely
- Stuck

The New Beginning

- After exploration you start taking things step by step
- You have decided to move on, try new things or take a calculated risk
At this stage you may feel…

• More energetic and positive
• Excited and a bit nervous about the future
• Happy that you are moving forward

Self-reflection Activity

1. Think of a change that recently has happened to you
2. What emotions are you feeling?
3. Which of the 3 stages of transition do you see yourself right now?
4. What can you do to help you move through the stage/transition?
Face Your Fears

• “People don’t fear change, they fear loss”
• Fear triggers other emotions:

  - Sadness
  - Guilt
  - Anger
  - Anxiety
  - Acceptance

• Fear is one of the major obstacles to embracing change
• Even the most confident people have fears

Common Fears in Times of Change

Fear of
• Failure
• Success
• Unknown
• Embarrassment
• Looking bad/disapproval
• Rejection
• Trying
• Taking risks
Self-reflection

1. Name your greatest fear related to a transition you are going through?
2. Ask yourself “What if?”
   – What is the worst that could happen if your fear became true?
   – How would you feel if your fear really happened?
   – What could you do? How could you handle it?

Don’t Waste Time Worrying..

• Research suggests that 90% of what we worry about never happens
  – Turn your unknowns into knowns
  – Face your fear
  – Believe in yourself
• Planning how to handle something in advance reduces the fear of the unknown and increases your ability to manage it.
• Change your “I can’t” to “I can”
Thoughts – Feelings - Behaviours

• Everyone uses different coping strategies to deal with change and uncertainty

http://www.youthspace.me/CBT/CBT.aspx

Strategies for Moving Through the Transition
Examples of Strategies

1. Recognize the change
   – Choose the change and find meaning in the change

2. Get informed
   – Be proactive and seek the information you need from reliable sources
   – Don’t succumb to the “rumour” mill
   – Improve communication

3. Analyze the situation

   Identify positives
   Identify negatives
   Identify unknowns

Focus on minimizing the impact of the negatives, anticipating any unknowns/problems and search for possible solutions
5. Take control
   – If the change is involuntary you may feel that you have lost control or threatened.
   – Put your energy into areas that you can have some impact and see results
   – Accept that there are things that are out of your control and let go to move forward
   – You will feel more empowered and positive

I can control I can control somewhat I cannot control

5. Acknowledge your feelings
   – Realize that your emotions will fluctuate
   – Be vigilant for survival behavior
   – Accept your fears and look for ways of managing them
   – Use your support system, vent to “safe” people, contact your EAP
6. Manage Your Thoughts
- It impacts your emotions and affects behaviour
- Make a conscious effort to have a positive thought about the change
- Recognize and eliminate survival mentality

7. Take care of yourself, manage your stress
- Use relaxation techniques, eat right, exercise
- Take care of yourself at work – take breaks, go for walks, do deep breathing
- Establish daily goals to keep yourself focused on your tasks; don’t get sidetracked
- High level of stress impacts your ability to see the situation clearly, affects your problem solving ability, leads to poor judgment and inability to search for appropriate solutions,
- Reach out to others
Wrap-up

• “There is nothing permanent except change”
  (Heraclitus - pre-Socratic Greek philosopher)