

# Transitioning from Foster Care



## An Experiential Activity Guidebook

Shannon Heath and Nancy Markowitz

Institute for Public Sector Innovation, Edmund S. Muskie  
School of Public Service, University of Southern Maine

# **Transitioning From Foster Care** An Experiential Activity Guidebook

Shannon Heath

Nancy Markowitz

April, 2006

# Contents

Introduction	1
The Experiential Model	2
Role of the Facilitator	3
Understanding the William Bridges Transition Framework	5
Experiential Transition Training	11
BINGO Activity17	
Animal Call	20
Group Juggle Activity	22
Shoe Scramble	24
The Change Game	26
Calculator	28
Neutral Zone Field	31
Pipeline Activity	34
The Neutral Zone	37
Transition Sculpture/Model	40
Getting Clear Brainstorm	42
Transition Bags Activity	45
References	47

## **Acknowledgements**

This experiential guidebook was made possible by a grant from the Andrus Family Fund, a philanthropic foundation that explores new perspectives and innovative models of practice. Their work involves collaboration with programs and individuals working to create safer physical, emotional, and psychological environments for youth in and transitioning from foster care. The board members of the Andrus Family Fund challenge themselves to contribute to the body of knowledge and experience about what is necessary to create and sustain effective social change by focusing on transitions – those critical junctures in time and process which if properly attended to, affect positive change.

The Andrus Family Fund believes one vital factor in creating successful social change is recognizing and addressing the emotional and psychological effects of the change process. They find William Bridges' work on transitions to be a helpful framework in defining the psychological process people experience throughout their lives. This guidebook uses Bridges' framework to help trainers and facilitators utilize experiential activities as a way to help illustrate what happens during transition and then help young people apply the learning to their lives.

Transitioning out of foster care to independence is a precarious and daunting time. These experiential activities provide a common language and the tools to assist in beginning conversations between young people and the significant adults in their lives about the challenges involved in transitions.

## **The Program's Partnerships**

Community Mentoring, a program of the Youth Development Unit of the Muskie School of Public Service at the University of Southern Maine, partners with the Maine Department of Health and Human Services' Office of Child and Family Services and community members.

Community Mentoring is the only mentoring program in Maine specifically dedicated to match youth in Maine's foster care system with Mentors. It provides an opportunity for youth in care to achieve their hopes, dreams, and aspirations through the creation of meaningful relationships that help them rebuild a sense of community.

## Purpose Statement

This guidebook is designed for programs who primarily work with youth in and transitioning from foster care. The described activities utilize William Bridges' transition framework and are incorporated within a three stage experiential learning model. Specific transition activities and facilitation techniques are provided as a resource for program development and/or the enhancement of current program orientation and training.

The curriculum provides readers with a step by step experiential facilitator guide designed to engage participants in activities and reflective discussion while exploring the concept of transition. The first part of the guidebook provides general information about the role of the facilitator and the transition framework. The second part of the guidebook offers specific activities with step-by-step instructions for facilitation and debriefing strategies.



## Introduction

Young people in foster care are familiar with the concept of transition though the specific terminology utilized in this guide book may be unfamiliar. Many young people who have been part of the foster care system have experienced extraordinary changes and multiple transitions throughout their lives. Many times the changes they have encountered occur with little or no warning, leaving young people feeling as though their lives “just happens to them” with little control or input into how the events unfold.

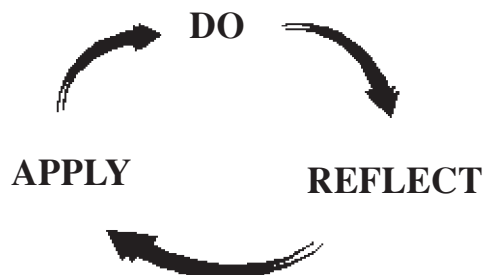
The daunting reality of “aging out” of the system is an opportunity for young people and the significant adults in their lives to reflect on previous transitions and identify the challenges associated with these experiences. This information can be used to begin planning for their present or future transition from the foster care system.

The experiential activities in this guidebook provide the opportunity for participants to learn about the Williams Bridges’ transition framework. Debriefing these activities will encourage and provoke meaningful, thoughtful discussion between young people and the significant adults in their lives.



## The Experiential Model

For the purpose of this guidebook a three stage experiential model is used—doing, reflecting, and applying.



### ***Doing the Activity***

The activities are the “doing.” They provide groups a series of shared experiences to support their discussion about the challenges of transition through the lens of the William Bridges framework.

### ***Reflecting the Experience***

“Reflecting” is a way for participants to connect the experience that occurs during the activity to similar life experiences and the impact of these on their development and sense of well being. Reflections explore the internal and external transition process that occurs. The facilitator models the reflective practice throughout the training as a way to successfully navigate transition in daily life.

### ***Applying the Learning***

“Applying” happens within activities, during reflections, and ultimately long after the training ends. The process of “applying” is guided by the facilitator within the scope of the training. The application of learning is dependant on the participants’ ability to transfer the reflective practice to their day-to-day life experiences.

# Role of the Facilitator

## ***Ensuring a safe environment***

The primary role of the facilitator is to create and sustain a safe environment, enabling participants to fully engage in the activities. The experiential process can be difficult for many people as they are expected to engage in an activity and then reflect on the connection to their personal experiences and feelings. Adults may feel inadequate or intimidated by specific activities and young people may feel the activities and reflections are silly or threatening to their newly forming sense of identity. Everyone may at times feel self-conscious as they go through the training.

This type of training can be a particularly intimidating process for youth in foster care since it is based on sharing personal experiences that require a high level of trust within the group. Many youth in foster care have experienced ongoing traumatic experiences and sharing or reflecting on these events may be difficult. The facilitator must pay attention to individual and group reactions to these issues.

Therefore, to ensure safety, it is necessary to establish clear expectations at the outset of the training. The facilitator and group members need to talk through group expectations and agree together on final guidelines. Some basic components to consider in group agreements include:

- Fun—a key element in an experiential model is to have fun. It makes the training engaging for all the participants, including the facilitator.
- Challenge by Choice—while there is an expectation that all group members participate, each person is responsible to choose their own level of participation.
- Confidentiality—everyone needs to agree that what’s shared in the group, stays in the group, except when anyone expresses danger to self or others.
- Safety (physical & emotional)—there needs to be agreement that everyone will respect each other and themselves. This includes supporting all group members, no put-downs of self or others and no minimizing of anyone’s experience. Safety also includes ensuring no one gets hurt physically or emotionally.
- Questions should be inviting and create safety—the manner in which questions are framed influences how individuals will respond. Questions should invite participants to apply and reflect on their own experience and how it relates to activities. A participant’s experience should never be forced into an existing model or into a set of predetermined outcomes.

**Role Clarification-** everyone's role in the training must be clearly defined.

- The facilitator job is to empower participants so they benefit from activities.
- Adults participate by exploring and discussing their experiences and being available to support a young person's process through their own experience and new learning.
- Young people are asked to explore and discuss their reflections and discover strategies to apply new and old learning to their lives.

### ***Framing the Experience***

The purpose of framing is to provoke proactive thinking to help participants make meaningful personal connections between the activity and their real life experiences.

For example, framing the group juggling activity (pp. 22) in a transition training, participants may be asked to think about how the juggled balls represent some aspect of change in their lives. This gives participants the opportunity to identify these parallels within the activity and then express those parallels and meanings in their reflections. It is important to ensure young people participate with some understanding of what is being asked of them beforehand so they can make the connections to their lives at the end of the activity.

The facilitator also needs to frame the experience so participants walk away feeling successful. This happens by capturing and presenting the opportunities and successes inherent in challenging situations. Throughout the training the facilitator must consistently and actively frame whatever happens in a way that adds value to participants' lives.

### ***Debriefing the Experience***

Debriefing is an opportunity for participants to discuss what happened in the activity, how it affected them and the possible connections to their lives. The facilitator empowers participants to discuss and share their personal internal and external observations—feelings, actions and reactions experienced during the activity. Then the facilitator assists participants to make the connections between what happened in the activity to past, present and possible future events in their lives. From this information, the facilitator can help participants identify a variety of strategies for working with personal challenges.

## Understanding the William Bridges Transition Framework

It is helpful for a facilitator to have a clear understanding of the transition framework to best help participants make the connections between the framework, the activities and their personal experiences with transition. The clearer the facilitator is about intended outcomes, the more likely the training will achieve them.

William Bridges makes a clear distinction between **change**, an event or situation that happens relatively fast, defined by an outcome, and **transition**, a slowly occurring process that is the psychological reorientation experienced when individuals come to terms with the change. **Change** is external, **transition** is internal. Unless transition occurs; change will not work. Everyone has experienced change throughout their lives and Bridges' framework helps us to more clearly understand the process of transition that accompanies these changes. The focus is on the experiences that occur within that help individuals come to terms with change (the event) that has happened. One analogy used in the framework is to understand change as a wall and transition as the gate in that wall; the gate is there to go through. Transition represents a path to the next challenges in your life. (Source: Bridges – "Transition as the Way Through"). Transitions happen developmentally, in stages that are predictable and normal. First people let go of the way things used to be, then enter into an "in-between time," and eventually come to a new reorientation to the way things are now. Bridges describes these three phases as:

- **Endings**
- **The Neutral Zone**
- **The New Beginning**



## ***Endings***

The first phase, endings, is described as a time when one experiences a loss or letting go. For example, when a young person in foster care is removed from one foster home and placed in a new home. The “change” is the specific move to this home while the transition or psychological process includes much more. It encompasses the loss of parental figures, a familiar home, friends, school, the identity associated with that community and all the psychological effects this will have on the individual. There are a multitude of transitions set into motion as a result of what might seem like one single, simple change. Some of these endings will be processed slowly while others will happen quickly. Bridges states that, “endings are marked by losses and a letting go of what has been, regardless of whether the old way was good, bad, pleasant or unpleasant.” Acknowledging these losses enables an individual to move into the second phase. Take a moment to go through this brief exercise to ensure “endings” are understood.

### **Facilitator Exercise:**

Recall your childhood and the earliest experiences you can remember involving endings. Conduct a tour of your life noting all the endings—some may have been physical moves, some involved relationships inside or outside of the family, places, social groups, hobbies, interests, sports, responsibilities, or jobs.

How many endings can you retrieve from your memory? As you begin to remember your old reactions to endings, you might also realize your old mind-set gets reactivated whenever something ends in your life. For example leaving to take a better job may cause the same grief and confusion as when one reaches the sad end of a core relationship. It is important to recognize this, for it means that some of the feelings you experience today may have nothing to do with the present ending but come instead from old associations. What you bring with you to any transitional situation is a style or pattern you have developed for dealing with endings. Both early experiences and later influences create your own way of dealing with external circumstances and the inner distress they create. Your style is likely to reflect your childhood family situation—for transitions tend to send family members off on different tracks; one person might feel all the grief and anxiety for the whole group, while another comforts the griever, while yet another may take over the daily routines.

Ask yourself:

- What can you say about your own style of bringing situations to a close?
- Is it abrupt and designed to deny the impact of the change, or is it slow and gradual?
- Do you tend to be active or passive when situations end?
- Does your initiative bring things to term or do events just happen to you?
- What else do you notice about your own endings?

One of the benefits of reviewing your experience of endings is to see how often they have cleared the ground for unexpected beginnings. It may also show the number of times when the ending did not provide a starting point, as well as times when you started a new journey without unpacking your baggage from the old one. It is important to understand this concept to see how it manifests in your own personal experience to help others understand this stage.



## ***The Neutral Zone***

The second phase of the framework is called the “neutral zone.” This is the uncomfortable in-between time, when the old way of being is gone and a new way of being hasn’t yet been realized. This “neutral zone,” or in-between time, can be confusing, chaotic and scary; but it may also be a time of great innovation and creativity. During this period, a person may feel lost and even discouraged about the very change that sounded so good only a little while earlier. If the change was not “by choice,” this period can be experienced with even greater confusion. The dangers presented by the neutral zone may take several forms for youth in foster care. Their anxiety may rise and their motivation fall and it may trigger all their previous experiences creating anxiety, self-doubt and/or resentment. They may devote most of their energy to resisting their emotions or utilizing old coping tactics, leaving little energy for the actual management of their new situation. One of the most difficult aspects of the neutral zone is that most people don’t understand it. The neutral zone represents a journey from one identity to the other, and that takes time. It’s natural to experience confusion and anxiety—but the inability to see the light at the end of the tunnel can be overwhelming. For a greater understanding of this phase try the following exercise.

### **Facilitator Exercise:**

Think about a time when you experienced a change; i.e. job, move, marriage, divorce, loss of a loved one, etc. Remember some of the emotions you felt, your fear of failure and the attempt to let go of “old patterns” of thinking and behaving. Then think about after the “loss” happened and all the experiences you went through. Ask yourself if during that process there were any unexpected opportunities that took place? Did anything unexpected happen, any surprises you would never have anticipated?

Think about how young people might feel when part of their identity changes such as when they become “part of a family,” “a foster youth,” “part of the foster care system,” or “part of the community”? What emotions might they experience? How might they deal with these changes? The neutral zone is a time when reorientation and redefinition are taking place.

## ***Beginnings***

The last phase in the framework is called “beginnings” and the timing of a “beginning” will differ for every event and every individual. It can not be measured by dates or be predetermined, but rather follows the timing of the mind and heart. Beginnings are interesting and even though we want them to happen, they also may create fear and ambivalence. Beginnings reactivate some old anxieties originally triggered by the ending. They establish the ending as real and the new way of doing things represents a risk, and sometimes new beginnings destroy what was a pleasant experience in the neutral zone. Beginnings are a time of integration, a “new chapter” in one’s life and may bring an ease and a sense of comfort. All the pain of the loss may not be completely gone but life seems to be fine for now.

It is important to identify yourself with the final result of the new beginning and envision what it is going to feel like with the completion of whatever it is you’ve set out to do. Try out the following exercise for a better understanding of new beginnings.

### **Facilitator Exercise:**

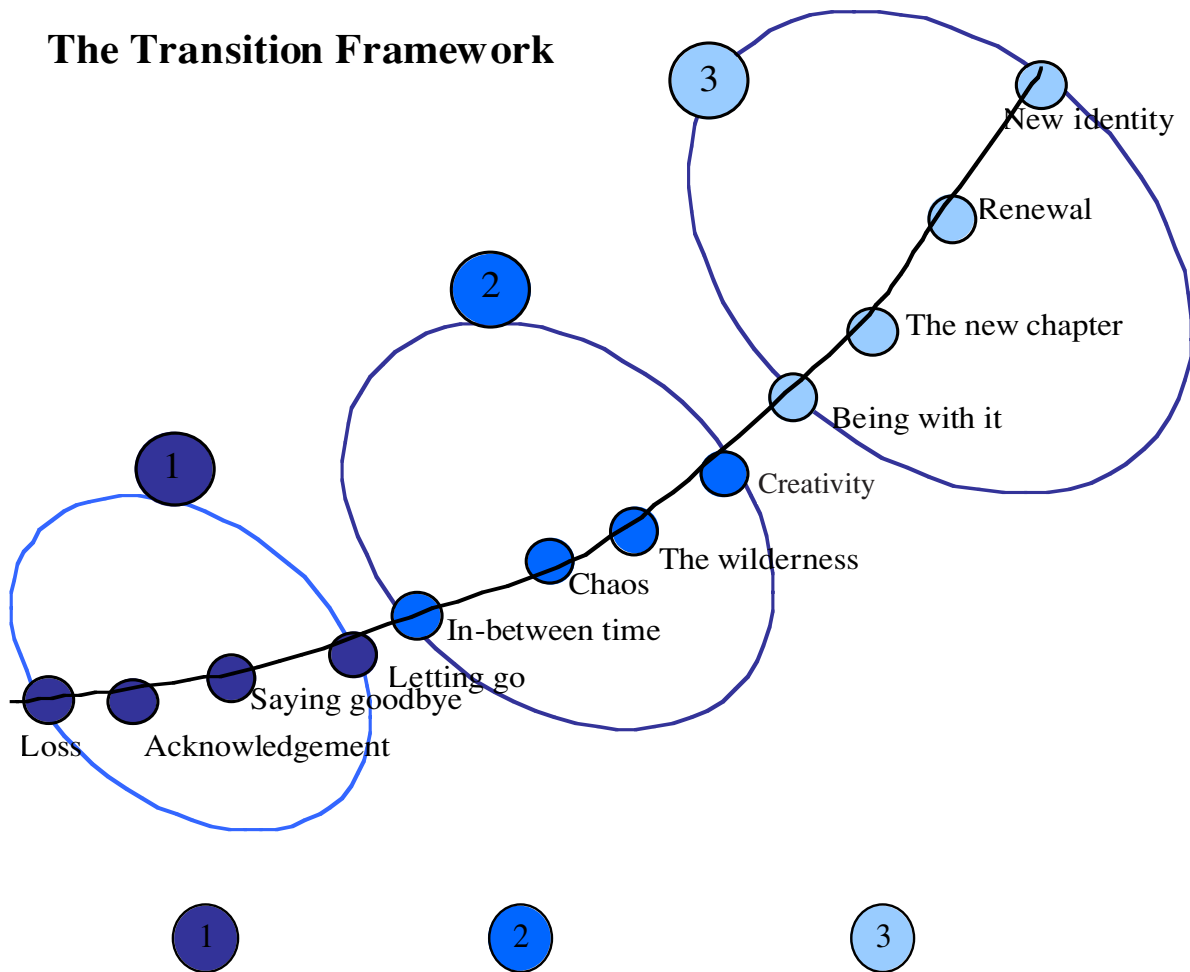
Think about a time when a transition felt complete, when you felt fully integrated into your new situation. Did you feel disengaged from your old identity and accepting of this new way of being in your new situation? Did your perspective change, enabling you to seize opportunities and try new things? Were you able to actualize and realize the ideas and possibilities that emerged in the neutral zone?

During transition it is important to take things step-by-step and resist voices that tell of some other route where everything is exciting, meaningful or safe. In making any beginning, it is possible to become so invested in the results that whatever you have to do to reach them looks very insignificant. Attention might need to be shifted from the intended goal to the process and each step viewed as accomplishments. At times creating rituals of success or internal and external incentives along the journey help to acknowledge a beginning has been reached.

William Bridges states, “The transition process is really a loop in the life-journey, a going out and away from the main flow for a time and then a coming around and back. The neutral zone is meant to be only a temporary state.” The return from the neutral zone involves the reintegration of the new identity and elements of the old.

Source: William Bridges, *Transition: The Role of Transition in Personal or Organizational Change*, Presentation Andrus Family Fund, June 11, 2001.

# The Transition Framework



## 1 Endings

For change to work people need to end, acknowledge and let go of the old way—not only in terms of behavior, but also in terms of attitudes, self-image, assumptions, beliefs, and the hopes and fears that motivate behavior. To let go of those things is to experience a loss and one must mourn its passing, even though the old way may have been bad, hurtful, unpleasant, or even destructive.

## 2 Neutral Zones

People not only have to let go of the old way to embrace the new one; they also have to get through an uncomfortable in-between time, when the old way is going, but the new way doesn't yet wholly work or feel comfortable. This "neutral zone," or in-between time, is a very confusing and chaotic time; but can also be a very creative one. Everything is in flux, so it is a time when people can work out innovative ways of doing things; there is less holding people back than at other times. At the same time, people are likely to feel lost and even discouraged about the very change that sounded so good only a little while earlier.

## 3 Beginnings

The final phase of transition is the "new beginning" not the "start," which may occur the very day a change is announced, but the "beginning," which occurs when people (have ended the old and traversed the neutral zone) are actually emotionally ready to do things a whole new way. Like birth—the archetype of all new beginnings—this third phase of transition happens on its own schedule. Things can start on the day that you say that they will, but the beginning will happen when people are inwardly ready. And that will take a while, so transition always takes longer—sometimes much longer—than change does.

William Bridges' Transition Framework: Andrus Family Fund  
330 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10017

# Experiential Transition Training

## **Goals**

Training goals help determine the concrete training objectives a training is working toward. Once goals are clear, a structure can be designed to meet these goals through activity and discussion. For this specific transition training, the first set of goals represents a minimum target to be achieved in an introductory or short training (approximately 3 hours). Additional goals are suggested for additional trainings that would continue to build on the framework. Designing longer trainings or offering subsequent training provides the opportunity for an enriched understanding and experience of the framework.

### ***Suggested Goals for an Introductory/ short training:***

- Have fun
- Learn something new
- Introduction of the Williams Bridges Transition Framework
- Discussion of the difference between change and transition
- Development of a common language and understanding of transition
- Recognition of the emotions that accompany transition and the impact of these emotions
- Understanding of the relationships between specific life experiences and the William Bridges framework

### ***Additional Goals for enhancing future or longer trainings:***

- Exploration and development of insight about personal experiences with transition
- Development of personal strategies for giving and receiving support through transition
- Development of personal strategies for effectively managing transition
- Recognition of personal ways to deal with transition and how they may be different from others

**Beginning the Training:** As with any training the first task is to establish rapport with the participants. The facilitator does this through their introduction—both the actual words and the enthusiasm they bring to the training. As the participants arrive, it is helpful for the facilitator to greet people and if a warm-up exercise is planned, ask them to participate while waiting for the training to begin (see transition bingo activity p. 17). It is important to pay close attention to the training audience. Specifically, when working with young people, a trainer might encounter individuals who have reservations about meeting and talking to new people and/or who might be hesitant to engage in any beginning activity without support.

**Facilitator and Participant Introduction:** After most participants have arrived, the facilitator gathers them together to begin the training. Depending on their arrival time, some people will be anxious about starting on time, or worried about what might happen next. It is always helpful to gather in a circle enabling everyone to see each other and have a clear sense of “who’s in the room.” The facilitator introduces themselves first, as a way to set the tone for introductions. Clear instructions for participant introductions should be given, with some question that connects with the purpose for this particular training. For example, have participants say their name, where they live and one recent (or not so recent) experience with change in their lives (may be related to what they discovered during Bingo).

**Purpose of training:** Describing the purpose of the training helps participants begin thinking about what they might learn from the activities. In describing the purpose, the facilitator can utilize the examples participants shared during the opening exercise and their introductions. This can lead into a conversation about the difference between change and transition—or the facilitator can wait until after the first activity.

**Full Value Contract:** Participants need to understand they will participate in a variety of activities, asked to react to their experience and then share personal information about their lives. Having training guidelines helps ensure both physical and emotional safety for the group. The Full Value Contract is a widely used tool for establishing group norms and allows each individual in the group to ‘have a say’ in what is expected and accepted in the group. Everyone must agree to abide by the contract and to ensure a safe and positive learning environment for everyone.

**Guidelines:** Write these guidelines on an easel or other highly visible medium in the training space. Gather the group in a semi-circle around them for discussion.

1. Challenge by choice.
2. Be here.
3. Be safe.
4. Speak the truth.
5. Confidentiality.
6. Be open to surprises.
7. Have fun.

Tell participants these are some simple group guidelines to ensure everyone feels valued and supported during this training. Explain each of the tenets as follows:

- 1. Challenge by choice.** Everyone agrees to participate; and if an activity is too difficult for anyone, an adjustment will be made to help them to participate differently (i.e. observing, close your eyes instead of being blindfolded, etc.)
- 2. Be here.** Everyone agrees to be present mentally, physically, and emotionally and if anyone is having difficulty they will work with the facilitator to identify a solution.
- 3. Be safe.** Everyone agrees to help in creating a level of physical and emotional safety so people are able to relax and feel comfortable.
- 4. Speak the truth.** Everyone agrees to share thoughts openly and honestly and allow others to do the same.
- 5. Confidentiality.** Everyone agrees that what happens here stays here.
- 6. Be open to surprises.** Everyone agrees to be open to what is happening and recognize and let go of preconceived notions about what can be learned or experienced.
- 7. Have fun.** Everyone agrees to have fun.

After each guideline is explained, ask the group to give a “thumbs up” if they agree or a “thumbs down” if they disagree or cannot commit. Address any “thumbs down” concerns people may express. Some participants may need clarification and/or need to talk it out with the group.

Once the guidelines are accepted, ask the group if there is anything else they want to add. Check with the rest of the group about any new additions, and allow time for participants to clarify questions.

There are many ways to establish a Full Value Contract. If groups need more preparation around these guidelines, more in-depth methods of presenting and establishing group norms and expectations might be helpful.



## Designing your training:

It's useful to have some kind of optional activity for people to do independently when they arrive. Some people show up early and it's a way for them to meet other participants in a fun way. Some examples of this are the Bingo game or flip charts on the walls with questions about training expectations, recent changes or other questions related to the training topic.

Below are some suggested training outlines. Facilitators can also draw on their own repertoire of activities and experience to design and adapt trainings to teach the William Bridges framework.

### 1. A 4-hour training outline:

- Transition Bingo Activity—warm-up activity (15 minutes)
- Name Games—Introductions and Welcome (20 minutes)
- Describe Purpose of Training (5 minutes)
- Full Value Contract (15 minutes)
- Group Juggle—to introduce the difference between change and transition (20 minutes)

Break (15 minutes)

- Shoe Scramble—applying the concepts learned in Group Juggle (15 minutes)
- Introduction of William Bridges framework (15 minutes)
- Pipeline—experience the three phases of transition (30 minutes)

Break (15 minutes)

- Debris Field (45 minutes)
  - Transition Bags (15 minutes)
- Debrief and Closure (10 minutes)

### 2. A 4-hour training outline:

- Transition Bingo Activity—warm-up activity (15 minutes)
- Name Games—Introductions and Welcome (20 minutes)
- Describe Purpose of Training (5 minutes)
- Full Value Contract (15 minutes)
- Mergers—exploring change and the response to change and transition (20 minutes)

Break (15 minutes)

- Animal Call—applying the concepts learned in Mergers (20 minutes)
- Introduction of William Bridges framework (15 minutes)
- Key Punch—experience the three phases of transition (30 minutes)

Break (15 minutes)

- The Maze (45 minutes)
  - Transition Bags (15 minutes)
- Debrief and Closure (10 minutes)

3. A 4-hour training outline:

- Name Games—Introductions and Welcome (20 minutes)
- Describe Purpose of Training (5 minutes)
- Full Value Contract (15 minutes)
- Group Juggle—to introduce the difference between change and transition (20 minutes)

Break (15 minutes)

- Introduction of William Bridges framework (15 minutes)
- The Maze—to understand the neutral zone (45 minutes)
- Transition Sculpture (1.5 hour)

Debrief and Closure (10 minutes)

4. A 4-hour training outline:

- Transition Bingo Activity—warm-up activity (15 minutes)
- Name Games—Introductions and Welcome (20 minutes)
- Describe Purpose of Training (5 minutes)
- Full Value Contract (15 minutes)

Break (15 minutes)

- Group Juggle—to introduce the difference between change and transition (20 minutes)
- Mergers—exploring change and the response to change and transition (20 minutes)
- Introduction of William Bridges framework (15 minutes)

Break (15 minutes)

- Getting Clear Brainstorm (30 minutes)
- The Maze—to understand the neutral zone (45 minutes)
- Pipeline—experience the three phases of transition (30 minutes)
- Debrief and Closure (10 minutes)

## BINGO Activity

(Adapted from the Community Mentoring Curriculum)

**Purpose:** A warm-up activity designed to introduce participants to each other at the beginning of a training. A way to discover changes others have experienced.

**Time:** 15 minutes

### Materials:

- CHANGE BINGO sheet (page 19)
- Pens
- Prize for the winner

### Preparation:

- Disseminate the BINGO sheet to people either as they enter the training room or after all participants have arrived.

### Doing the Activity (instructions):

1. Ask participants to move around the room and have others initial an item that pertains to them.
2. Participants can have people sign more than one space as long as everyone signs at least once (unless there are more than 15 people in the room, then they can only sign once).
3. The first person to complete the sheet yells "BINGO" (or if a small group when a line across, down or diagonal is completed) and wins a prize.

**Facilitators Note:** Some people may be shy about talking to others in the group. Make sure to mingle among the participants and introduce people that seem to be hanging back or not participating.

### ***Reflecting the Experience:***

**Facilitator:** This exercise illustrates that everyone has gone through many changes in their lives. Possible questions to ask:

- What are some examples of changes you had in common with others?
- How did it feel to share with people you don't know very well?
- What are the most common changes people identified on their sheets?

### ***Applying the Learning:***

**Facilitator:** Think about some of the changes you've gone through in your life. How might this activity relate? Possible questions to ask:

- Considering all the changes you might have experienced- what learning might you take from this activity?
- What impact does change have on our lives?



<b>B</b>	<b>I</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>G</b>	<b>O</b>
Started a new job	Tried something new	Moved	Have a baby	Added or lost a family member
Took a new class	Lived in more than one state	Tried a new haircut or color	Tried a new food this year	Bought a car recently
Took a vacation	Have a good friend that moved away	<b>FREE</b>	Achieved a personal goal	Knows the difference between transition and change
Have a new friend	Broke up or has a new partner	Likes to move	Lived in another New England state	Asked for help
Went to more than one school	Cleaned out some clutter	Has/had a mentor	Joined a new group	Exercises

**Directions:**

Each blank space identifies something about the people at this training. Seek out your fellow participants, introduce yourself, and if one of the listed items pertains to them, ask them to sign their name in the appropriate place on your BINGO card. Each person can only sign one item and you cannot sign your own card. Call out BINGO when you have signatures in every box.

## Animal Call

(Adapted from Quick Silver p.202)

**Purpose:** This is a warm-up activity to quickly engage participants to get to know each other. It works to illustrate the value of developing a common language or lens that can be used to discuss concepts related to change and transition.

**Time:** 20 minutes

### **Materials:**

- One blindfold per participant
- One animal assignment per participant

### **Preparation:**

- Prepare 3-4 small cards with the name of the same animal on each. You want several animal groups such as; Wolf, Cat, Pig, Kangaroo, Snake, Lion, Crow, Monkey, Frog, and Elephant.

### **Doing the Activity (instructions):**

1. Evenly divide animal sound cards among participants, instructing them not to share their card with anyone.
2. When everyone is blindfolded escort them to different areas in the room.
3. Tell participants they have to find other animals that sound like them. They are only allowed to make their animal sound, **No Talking!** Then give a go signal.
4. Once everyone has found all the members of their animal group they take off their blindfolds and quietly observe.

## Reflecting the Experience:

**Facilitator:** One of the goals is to develop common language about transition and how it affects us. People who have common language easily find each other, while others who do not have a common language may stay "lost."

Possible questions:

- What reactions did you have to the directions you were given?
- How challenging was it to find everyone in your group?
- What made it challenging?

## Applying the Learning:

**Facilitator:** Sometimes when we really want someone to understand us, it is helpful to have a "common language" to talk about our experiences. If you said to someone, "Please pass me that fork," while you were pointing at a knife, there is a good possibility that the person you're talking to might be confused. The same is true when we try relating our personal experiences to others. Unless we have a "common language" for identifying our experience it can be difficult for others to understand our experience.

Possible questions:

- Who in your life shares a common language with you?
- Who in your life speaks a different language than you do?
- How are the outcomes between the two different?
- How might having a "common language" in our lives help us in communicating our experiences and feelings with others?



## Group Juggle Activity

(Adapted from Community Mentoring Orientation Manual)

**Purpose:** A name game to introduce the difference between change and transition.

**Time:** 20 minutes

**Materials:**

- 4 or 5 Koosh balls
- A balloon

**Preparation:** Ask participants to make a circle.

**Doing the Activity (instructions):**

1. Have participants gather in a circle, close enough that their shoulders are touching
2. State that the object of this activity is for everyone in the group to juggle together.
3. State that during this activity participants just need to remember two things; who they throw the ball to and who throws it to them.
4. The idea of this activity is to create a pattern that will never break.
5. Toss the first koosh ball to someone and help the group create the pattern one time.
6. Once the group has the pattern down, add up to three additional balls (depending on the proficiency of the group you can add more or less).
7. As the group develops proficiency add a red balloon to the sequence to create a new dynamic in the activity flow. The group may continue to keep the balloon in the air by making a variety of changes or they may just give up. Either way is fine and should be used for debriefing.

## Reflecting the Experience:

Possible questions:

- How did you feel before the balloon was thrown in?
- What happened once the balloon was thrown in? How did you feel?
- What might the balloon represent to you?

## Applying the Learning:

**Facilitator:** This activity can open up a discussion about the response to change—which is the internal, emotional transition people go through when change happens.

Possible questions:

- Think about a change that has happened in your life. If the balloon represents change, how might it compare to your experience?
- How would you describe your response to this change?
- What are the opportunities in this transition?
- What are some of the difficulties or challenges in this transition?



## Shoe Scramble

(Adapted from Quick Silver p. 185)

**Purpose:** This activity is intended to have participants practice identifying the difference between change and transition through their experiences.

**Time:** 15 minutes

### Materials:

- Blindfolds for each participant
- String for tying shoes together

### Preparation:

- Distribute blindfolds to the group.
- Have participants remove their left shoe and place it in the middle of the circle.

### Doing the Activity (instructions):

1. Blindfold participants
2. Place each participant a distance away from the pile, facing the pile.
3. While the group waits, the facilitator ties the shoes into pairs.
4. Ask participants to locate their shoe and put it on AS THEY FIND IT.
5. They will now be paired with whoever their shoe is tied to.
6. Once everyone has found their partner, they take off their blindfolds and share with their partner a recent change they have gone through.

## Reflecting the Experience:

**Facilitator:** The change is represented by the experience of having a new partner while the transition is the internal, emotional reaction to having a new partner and having to share with them.

- How difficult was it to find your own shoe?
- Did people work together and help others while trying to find their shoes? If not, why? If yes, what was it like to help others?
- How did you react to the idea that your shoe was now tied to someone else's shoe?

## Applying the Learning:

- How might this experience relate to any changes you've gone through?
- How would you describe the difference between the change and the transition in that experience?



## The Change Game

(Adapted from Quick Silver pages 172 & 173)

**Purpose:** This activity explores change and individual's response to change. It provides an opportunity to explore how the variety of responses to change can affect the ability or efficiency in developing relationships. The activity also involves problem solving and relationship building.

**Time:** 30-45 minutes

**Materials:**

- One 18" to 24" rope per participant

**Preparation:** Tie each rope into a loop.

**Doing the Activity (instructions):**

1. Ask participants to make a loop and place it anywhere on the floor. They should put both feet inside the loop with **NO PORTION** of their feet extending outside the loop.
2. Explain that loops cannot be moved from their location or re-tied into larger loops.
3. Tell them that when you say "CHANGE," everyone must find a new loop to occupy. They may take as much time as they need.
4. After a few changes the facilitator removes loops (1 or more at a time, depending on the length of time you want to spend)
5. Continue to remove loops until there is one loop for the whole group.

**Facilitator Note:** There are many solutions to this game. Some groups have "piled" everyone's feet into the circle while lying on the floor while others have created their own circle by standing together outside the loop. Be open to the different solutions that groups come up with. Innovation and creativity only begins when the group enters the Neutral Zone.

## Reflecting the Experience:

- What was it like to have your very own loop? What changed?
- How did it feel to have a loop taken away?
- Did anyone wonder if they would be the one left without a loop? How did that feel?
- What adjustments did people have to make as the number of loops lessened?
- Did any one experience hesitation about how to adjust to the change? What was your hesitation?
- How did people make decisions about who they shared a loop with? Did someone invite them, or gesture for them to join, or just look welcoming?

## Applying the Learning:

**Facilitator:** This activity is about change and how when change happens it is necessary to make adjustments. Our reactions to change may be different from someone else's—shorter, longer, more anxiety, easy, etc.

- How might your initial reactions in this activity relate to a life experience where you had to adjust to a change?
- How have you adjusted to changes that have happened in your life?
- How did you feel about the facilitator as the “circle-taker”?
- Who has taken circles from you in your own life?



## Calculator

(Adapted from Quick Silver p. 167)

**Purpose:** To facilitate participants' exploration of the key concepts of change and transition and the unexpected challenges created in these situations. This activity allows the group to share and collect ideas and then work with others to problem-solve under pressure.

**Time:** 30 minutes

**Materials:**

- Tape or rope to mark out a play area 10'x15'
- 30 paper plates numbered from 1-30
- One cone or chair.

**Preparation:**

- Spread out numbered spots within the play area.
- Have consecutive numbers on opposite sides of the play area to form a keypad.
- Place tape or a rope to designate start/end point—approximately 10-30 feet from the keypad (this is the planning area).

Planning Area

start

Key Pad

1	5	9	15	13	19	21	24
7		11	23	17	25	29	
	3		14	27		30	
6	2	10	26	8	20	4	22
		12	18	28	16		

Please note that odd and even numbers are on opposing sides of the play area—and then they may be randomly placed.

## Doing the Activity (instructions):

1. Have the group gather behind the starting point. Explain that a virus has infected the main computer and their mission is to disinfect the system.
2. To disinfect the system, the team must:
  - a. enter the "restricted area" (anywhere beyond the start line);
  - b. press the keys (paper plates) on the keyboard (anywhere within the rope boundary) in sequential order from 1 to 30; and
  - c. leave the "restricted area" in as little time as possible.
3. Time begins when the first person of the group enters the restricted area and the last person exits.
4. Only one person can be on the keyboard (inside the play area) at a time. If more than one person enters the keypad there will be a 5 second penalty added to their time.
5. Keys must be punched in sequential order. If the group fails to do this the computer is fried and they must begin again at #1. Time will continue to tick.
6. The group gets three attempts or 30 minutes to disinfect the computer before the computer crashes without any hope for salvaging its contents.

### Facilitator Note:

The first attempt might be longer than 30 seconds as the group has never seen the keyboard before. Successful groups often use the first or second attempt to study the situation and attempt multiple solutions while letting the clock run.



## Reflecting the Experience:

**Facilitator:** Sometimes we're presented with situations with unexpected challenges. These situations can sometimes require us to act fast, to plan for and then solve problems. Possible questions:

- What was your reaction when you first saw the "key board"?
- What were some strategies you tried? What made them successful or unsuccessful?
- Did it seem important or helpful to have everyone in the group involved rather than just one person? How might it have been different if the group had decided to do it a different way?
- Did you choose to use your hands as well as your feet to touch the keys? Would this have made any difference? How does opening up multiple choices fit in with this experience?
- Did you think about slowing down and using some of the time to study and practice? Do you think this might have impacted the experience in any way?

## Applying the Learning:

**Facilitator:** In some ways this activity might parallel experiences in our own lives when we have been in a situation with other people and had to act quickly, plan, rely on others and solve the problem. We might also go through an ending (something changed), a neutral zone (when we were confused and lost about what to do next but also experiencing an influx of information) and a beginning (when everything finally comes together).

Possible questions:

- Can you think of a life experience that might have felt somewhat similar to what happened during this activity?
- In what ways was it similar and how was it different?
- What did you find most helpful to you in that situation?
- Can you identify any of the phases of transition that occurred during this activity? (Ending, Neutral Zone, New Beginning)

## Neutral Zone Field

(Adapted from: Quick Silver p.146)

**Purpose:** This activity emphasizes the need for support during the neutral zone including receiving support, giving support, and asking questions. This activity can initiate discussions about trust, communication and frustration.

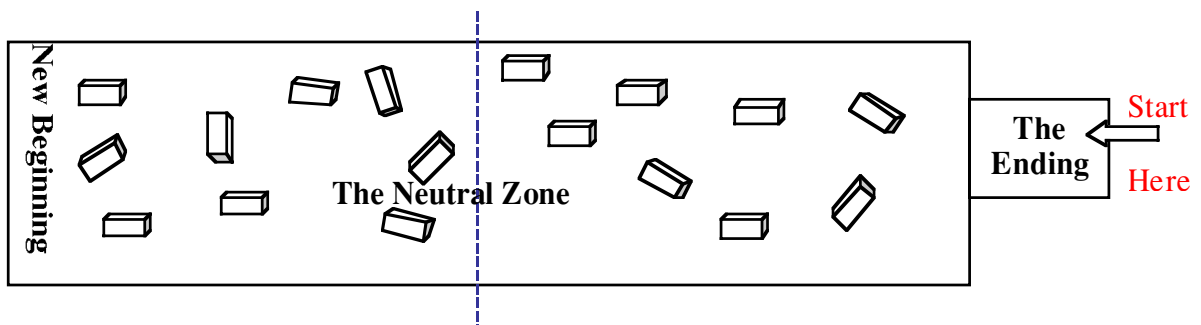
**Time:** 45 Minutes

### Materials:

- One 50 foot boundary rope or masking tape
- One 20 foot rope
- Blindfolds for each participant
- A variety of balls, bean bags, chairs, and miscellaneous other props.
- Four or more cones
- A sack of sheets of crumpled paper.

**Preparation:** It is necessary to introduce the Transitions Framework prior to this activity. Then use the layout as a large scale interactive model in which participants can successfully navigate with a little help from their friends.

- Make a rectangle debris field using a 10' X 15" boundary rope.
- At the half way point in the field, stretch the other rope across the width of the field approximately 4ft high.
- Spread out props within the boundary in a way that someone could walk, but not easily, from one end to the other without touching any of the props. (i.e., there are no obvious clear paths).
- Distribute blindfolds to the group.



**Facilitator Note:**

This activity has the potential to be a fully interactive large scale version of the Bridges Transition Framework. Before you begin ask participants to identify a change they have experienced recently or expect to experience in the near future. Ask them to keep that experience in mind as they participate in this activity. Name the stages of transition within the field. The "ending" is when they place their blindfold on (make an area for this to happen); the "neutral zone" is the field, the "new beginning" is the few feet before they step out of the field.

**Doing the Activity (instructions):**

1. Break the group into pairs, and have them decide which one will be a "coach" or "walker" (the walker is blindfolded)
2. Say that the goal for each pair of partners is for one of them, while blindfolded, to successfully cross the debris field lengthwise without touching any of the props.
3. The other partner will "coach" the blindfolded "walker" though the field.
4. Rules of the activity:
  - a. Only the "walker" may be inside the debris field.
  - b. The "coach" must stay outside the debris field and may only provide verbal assistance, i.e., no touching the walker or otherwise assisting physically.
  - c. If the walker touches any obstacle (even a little bit) the walker must begin again.

**Facilitator Note:**

Before doing this exercise, tell the group that there are times you will say STOP (or use a bell or other noise maker). When they hear this, they must freeze in their tracks because you have seen a potential safety issue (e.g., a participant about to walk into another participant). You will tell the group when to begin again. Be sure to test the group before beginning the activity.

## Variations of the activity:

- Place objects (such as stuffed animals, cups of water etc.) for walker to retrieve in addition to all the props walkers are avoiding.
- Halfway through the activity (the rope stretched across the field signals the halfway), have someone different take over the role of "coach." Be sure the new coach identifies themselves and tells the walker they will now be helping them.

## Reflecting the Experience:

This activity can take some time to debrief. Possible questions to ask:

- What was it like to be blindfolded?
- Was anyone frustrated at any time? Why? What happened?
- What was it like to depend on someone else's vision and their ability to communicate?
- What were your feelings as you went through the activity?
- What was it like to give just verbal directions? How did it feel?

**Facilitator:** Be sure to assist participants in drawing connections between their experience with the activity and the Framework.

## Applying the Learning:

**Facilitator:** Think about a time you went through a transition. Possible questions to ask:

- Were any of your feelings during this activity similar to those you've experienced during transitions in your life? If so, how?
- Were you aware of the phases as you navigated your way through?
- How did you know when one phase ended and another had begun?
- How did each of the "phases" feel?
- How might your life experiences have been different from what you felt during this activity? What made it different?
- How could this experience with transition affect the next transition you go through?

## Pipeline Activity

(Community Mentoring Orientation Manual)

**Purpose:** To demonstrate the experience of moving through transition—from the neutral zone to new beginnings. To have participants experience the necessity of working in a team in order to accomplish their goal.

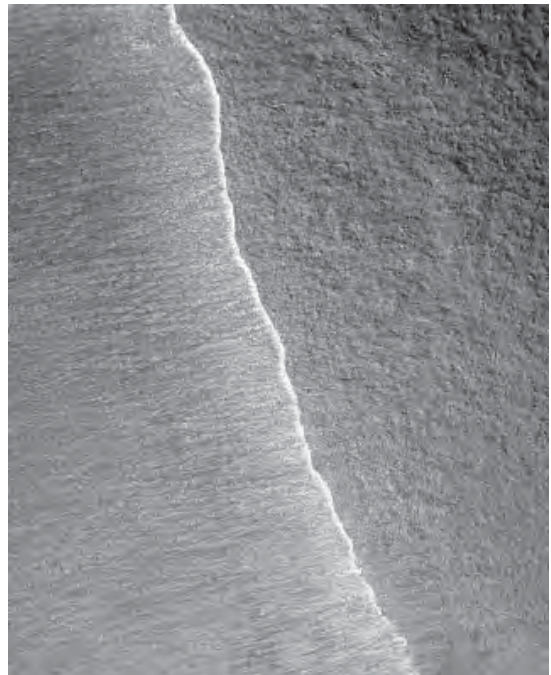
**Time:** 20 minutes

### Materials:

- Pipeline tool kit (ordered through Project Adventure, Inc. 978-524-4500 or [www.pa.org](http://www.pa.org)) that contains a variety of plastic shoots and rolling objects
- Container large enough to hold all the rolling objects and that makes a satisfying “clunk” when an object is dropped inside.
- Boundary Marker—a length of webbing is important for designating the starting area.

### Preparation:

- Divide the group into two or more teams (depending on size of group and number of pipes and balls available).
- Give each participant a pipe (divide sizes and colors among teams).
- Designate a starting place by marking it off with masking tape.
- The distance from the start to container is flexible, the farther the distance, the more difficult the activity becomes.
- Have each team gather together around a start line.



## Doing the Activity (instructions):

1. Place the boundary marker on the ground. Measure one full pace for each participant and place the container on the ground. To make the challenge more difficult, set the course with a bend in the route, or place the start area in one room and the container in a different space so the container is not visible to the teams.
2. Give each participant a chute—using the variety of colors and sizes in the kit.
3. Depending on the number of participants either just have one team or divide up into 2 or more teams.
4. Tell the group the rules of the activity:
  - a. All participants must begin behind the start line.
  - b. Once the ball begins rolling it can't stop moving.
  - c. The rolling object may not be dropped.
  - d. The rolling object may not touch any team member.
  - e. When the object is in someone's chute, that person may not move their feet.
  - f. Everyone must be involved.
  - g. If any rule is broken, the object is returned to the start and the team must begin the delivery process again.
5. If the group decides to try another object after it is successfully delivered into the container, the group does NOT have to reassemble in the starting area to send the next object. Only the designated delivery person must start behind the start line, all other participants may arrange themselves in a way they believe will help them successfully perform the next delivery.
6. Tell the group they have 5 minutes of planning time and 15 minutes to complete the task.

### Facilitator Note:

Tell the group that every transition begins with an ending and this ball represents any one of us in transition—our first move from home, a first apartment or job or any small change we've experienced. The ball may represent any one of us on our journey through life. Throughout these journeys things happen and we experience many transitions both good and challenging. When the ball arrives in the container they have reached their "beginning."

## Reflecting the Experience:

Thinking about your experience during the activity:

- Did the group plan effectively?
- Did the group implement the plan?
- How would you describe the way you worked or didn't work together?
- How difficult was it to work as a team?
- How did it feel when the team began to work together and the ball successfully went into the container? Or not?
- Did the team use all its resources effectively?
- How did the group inform all members of the plan?
- How were members able to communicate their needs and ideas effectively?

## Applying the Learning:

- What can the pipes represent about being in the neutral zone in your life?
- What are two things you learned that can help you manage the neutral zone? (you can focus on the support of others, work the process, focus on the goal, etc)
- How can planning help when in the neutral zone?
- How can other people support you when you are experiencing a transition?



## The Neutral Zone

(adapted from Quick Silver p.203 & 204)

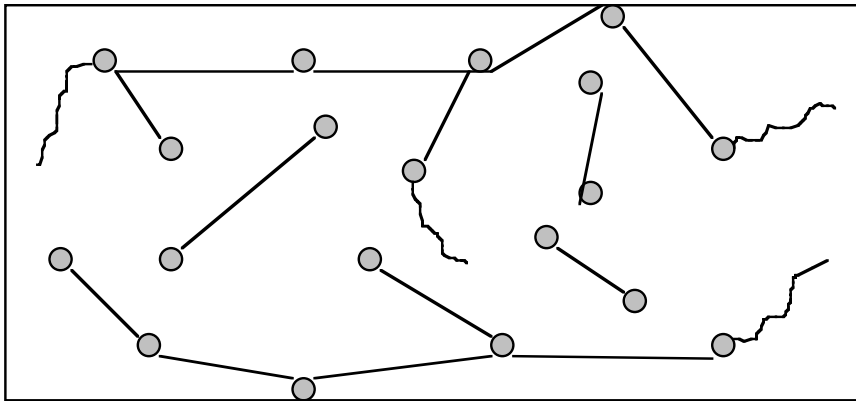
**Purpose:** To explore the variety of feelings and behaviors people may experience or exhibit while in the neutral zone. During this activity participants may learn more about how they deal with issues such as asking for help, risk-taking and giving or receiving support

**Time:** 45 minutes

### Materials:

- 19 chairs or cones/stakes
- 50-ft of cord or other small rope
- 1 blindfold per participant

**Preparation:** Set up the maze according to the diagram below. Do not allow participants to view the maze prior to being placed within it.



### Doing the Activity (instructions):

1. Assign a few participants as spotters and instruct them to observe quietly.
2. Blindfold participants away from the maze and escort them to the maze.
3. Place their hand on a rope and instruct them to stay put until they are given additional instructions.
4. Once everyone has been escorted to the maze tell participants they must find their way out of the maze.
5. Tell participants that if at any time they are frustrated or confused and need help they can raise their hand and a facilitator will come and help them.

**Before Beginning:**

Tell the group that if you say stop (or ring a bell or some other noise) they need to freeze in their tracks—you have seen a potential safety issue (for example a participant about to walk into another participant) that needs to be corrected and then you will tell the group when to begin again. Be sure to test the group.

**Facilitator Note:**

The only way out of the maze is for a participant to raise their hand and ask for help. When they raise their hand, the facilitator goes to them and asks what they want or need. Whatever they say, you quietly tell them that they have found their way out and may take off their blindfold and observe.

Participants often feel unsure of where and how to move around while in the maze. Some participants may stand still, while others let go of the rope and wander. These behaviors may help participants draw relationships to transition experiences in which they felt or behaved similarly.

While participants are in the maze look and listen for examples of working together, individual frustration, support between participants, individuals who let go and wander, the commentary that happens within the maze, the participant that refuses to raise their hand because they're determined to find their way out, and any other things that strike you as notable to reference in the debrief.



## Reflecting the Experience:

- What was it like for you to be blindfolded and have to solely rely on the rope to make your way through the maze?
- What was the way out of the maze?

### Facilitator Note:

It is inevitable that participants will say, "You came and said I was out," etc. If possible lead (instead of tell) the group to understand that the only way out of the neutral zone was for them to ask for help. Raising their hand was the way out. You might remind them of the directions that said "if they were frustrated or confused they should raise their hand and someone would come and help them."

## Applying the Learning:

- Can you think of a life experience where you had to "feel" your way through?
- How might you relate your experience with this activity to the Transitions Framework?
- Are there feelings you had in this activity that might be similar to the experience in the "Neutral Zone"?
- Have you ever been in a situation where it was difficult for you to ask for help?



## Transition Sculpture/ Model

**Purpose:** This activity is great for getting participants to apply the Williams Bridges Transition Framework to personal experience.

**Time:** 1.5 hrs.

**Materials:** A variety of art & craft supplies

**Preparation:** It is helpful to try this activity out with co-workers or peers familiar with the Transitions Framework beforehand. Share these models as examples in a presentation. Keep in mind that maturity level affects the amount and level of insight that will be demonstrated.

### Doing the Activity (instructions):

Tell participants they are going to create their own interpretation of what transition might mean to them. Using the materials supplied (or whatever they can find on their own), they can create a 3-D representation, write a story/poem/song, or draw something that represents a transition experience they've gone through.

The guidelines are that whatever is made or created needs to:

- Show an Ending, Neutral Zone, and Beginning.
- Should differentiate Change and Transition.

Let participants know they have an hour to work on their projects and then will have an opportunity to share/explain with the whole group. Write the following questions on a flip chart as visual aid for their presentations.

## Reflecting the Experience

- Does your creation have a name?
- Describe the parts? (Ending, Neutral Zone, Beginning)
- What personal experience did you use for building your model?
- How does your model represent your transition process?

## Applying the Learning:

- What did you learn about yourself and transition?



## Getting Clear Brainstorm

**Purpose:** The primary purpose of this activity is for participants to develop some self-awareness about how to identify and handle the phases of transition and begin to develop strategies for managing each phase.

**Time:** 30 minutes

### Materials:

- Flipchart and markers
- A visual representation of the William Bridges Transition Framework
- 1 flipchart page with the heading: Changes
- 1 flipchart page with the heading: Feelings
- Six flipchart pages with the headings: Ending (2), Neutral Zone (2), Beginning(2)
- Copies of suggested strategies for each participant

**Preparation:** Depending on the size of the group either divide the group into small groups or work together as one large group. You might divide the group and do a rotation for variety as well. Be creative.

### Doing the Activity (instructions):

1. Ask the group to identify changes they have experienced, or may experience in the future. Record all of their responses on the flipchart and display them for reference.
2. Ask the group to describe the types of feelings they may have or expect to experience as a result of these changes. Record responses on the flipchart and display them for reference.
3. Using the three flipchart pages with headings: Ending, Neutral Zone, and Beginning, ask participants to match the feelings they brainstormed with the heading that might be associated with the feeling. Record feelings under their assigned headings and display them for reference. Overlap is fine, expect some feelings to show up under more than one phase because the phases don't just begin and end—feelings may carry over into another phase.
4. Using the second set of flipchart pages with headings, ask participants to identify strategies for coping with the feelings they identified for each phase.
5. Once this is completed share the following list of suggested strategies with the group to see if there are any additional strategies not mentioned by the group.

---

## Strategies for Dealing with Endings

---

- Get specific information over and over again. What is actually going to happen?
- Identify some of the pitfalls or secondary changes that might happen
- Identify and talk about the feelings that are associated with the change.
- Acknowledge the importance of your feelings.
- “Expect that you might overreact. Sometimes we have not fully accepted or adequately dealt with past losses, so when a new loss arises it triggers the old one as well. Essentially you are dealing with more than one loss as a result. This same kind of overreaction occurs when an ending/loss is viewed as symbolic of some larger loss. It is important to learn to look for the loss behind the loss and deal with the underlying issue.
- Acknowledge how hard this change may be for you.
- Treat the past with respect—create memory books with pictures, poetry, etc.
- Create life packs, portfolios, journals that help you to document your progress.
- Take a piece of the past with you.
- Mark endings by creating rituals and/or celebrations.
- Expect and accept the signs of grieving.

---

## Strategies for dealing with the Neutral Zone

---

- Take stock of your strengths, talents and abilities to discover what you really want.
- Create goals or plans.
- Set short-term goals or plan short-term projects. Establish “check points” along the way toward long-term goals— “chunking the work” and celebrating the little successes along the way. This can help create stability.
- Communicate frequently with people who support you.
- Take stock of the people and places that you feel connected to. Create support networks and continue to build and enhance existing networks.
- Journal as a way to log your neutral zone experiences. Write your autobiography—reflection on past transitions is important. From the perspective of a new present, the past is likely to look different.

---

## Strategies for dealing with New Beginnings

---

- Remember that a new beginning may reactivate some old anxieties originally triggered by the ending.
- Pay attention to the process as being more important than the goal.
- Find ways to identify with the final result.
- Create success rituals and incentives along the way.
- See the transition process as a loop in your life journey—a circle that keeps coming around.
- Remember that every phase is temporary and that the new beginning involves the reintegration of the new identity with the old.

### Reflecting the Experience:

- Are there any strategies that you have questions about?
- Are any of these strategies similar to ones you brainstormed?
- Are there any strategies that you brainstormed that are not on this list?

### Applying the Learning:

- All endings deal with loss or letting go. What kinds of loss can you identify in your own ending experiences?
- How might transition impact your relationships?
- What do you know about your own needs during transition?
- What do you do to bring a situation to a close? Is it abrupt and designed to deny the impact of the change, or is it slow and gradual?
- Do you tend to be active or passive when faced with change?
- Does change happen by your own initiative or do events just seem to happen to you?

## Transition Bags Activity

(Source: Community Mentoring Orientation Manual)

**Purpose:** A closing activity to reinforce what people learned in the training—and to take something home as a reminder.

**Time:** 15 minutes

### Materials:

- A small colorful cloth or paper bag for each participant
- Trinkets such as stress balls, power bracelets, candles, key chains, address books, affirmation cards (or any other objects that seem applicable to the concepts talked about in the training).

**Preparation:** Each bag should be filled with items that connect to the concepts of transition discussed in the training such as stress balls, power bracelets, candles, key chains, address books, affirmation cards, etc.

### Doing the Activity (instructions)

1. Tell participants this is a way to celebrate the completion of the time spent together during this training.
2. Give each person a bag, filled with items connected with transition.
3. Tell participants these transition bags can be anchors for them to remember the concepts discussed during this training.
4. Ask participants to work in pairs and develop a list of what each item might represent as a strategy for navigating transition in their lives.
5. Tell them they have 5 minutes to develop their lists.
6. Ask participants to pick their top two choices to share with the group.

## Reflecting the Experience:

**Facilitator:** Today we talked about the transition framework and how it might apply to our lives. Some possible questions:

- How was it to work with a partner and try to agree on what the item represents?
- How did you make the decision?
- Did you have to let go of any item you really wanted to share?
- Thinking back to the first activity of this training, how might your ideas be different at this point in the training?

## Applying the Learning:

- When thinking about your own “real life” how could these reminders of transition help as you go through the process?
- What do you think might be most helpful as you move through transitions?



## REFERENCES

Belanger, Ahmen; Connolly, Nancy; Markowitz, Nancy; Morse, Joan; and Wertheimer, Rebecca. (2004). Guidebook: Mentoring Youth in Transition. Muskie School of Public Service.

Bridges, William. (2004). Transitions: Making Sense of Life's Changes. Cambridge, MA: Perseus Books Group.

Bridges, William. (2003). Managing Transitions: Making the Most of Change. Cambridge, MA: Perseus Books Group.

Bridges, William. (2001). The Way of Transition: Embracing Life's Most Difficult Moments. DA CAPO Press, Perseus Books Group.

Butler, Steve and Rohnke, Karl. (1995). QuickSilver: Adventure Games, Initiative Problems, Trust Activities and a Guide to Effective Leadership. Kendall/ Hunt Publishing Company.

Schoel, Jim and Maizell, Richard. (1989). Exploring Islands of Healing: New Perspectives on Adventure Based Counseling. Project Adventure, Inc. Beverly, MA: J. Weston Walch.



# NOTES



## The University of Southern Maine

The University of Southern Maine, with a rich history reaching back to 1878, is a comprehensive metropolitan university offering associate, baccalaureate, graduate, and professional degrees within the University of Maine System. The University of Southern Maine's fundamental mission is teaching, research, and public service for the benefit of the citizens of Maine and society in general. In achieving its mission and fulfilling its responsibilities as a university, the University of Southern Maine addresses the aspirations and needs of southern Maine and serves as a vehicle for linking southern Maine and the state to the nation and the world. The University actively encourages faculty, staff, and students to contribute to and participate in state, national, and international academic and professional communities.

## The Muskie School of Public Service

The Muskie School of Public Service educates leaders, informs public policy, and strengthens civic life through its graduate degree programs, research institutes and public outreach activities. By making the essential connection between research, practice, and informed public policy, the School is dedicated to improving the lives of people of all ages, in every county in Maine and every state in the nation.

## The Youth Development Unit

The Youth Development Unit partners with youth, communities, organizations, universities and policy makers at the local, state and national level to enhance their capacity to create services, opportunities, policies and supports for children and youth.



In complying with the letter and spirit of applicable laws and in pursuing its own goals of pluralism, the University of Southern Maine does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, national origin or citizenship status, age, disability, or veteran's status in employment, education, and all other areas of the university. The University provides reasonable accommodations to qualified individuals with disabilities upon request. Discrimination inquiries can be directed to Kathleen Roberts, (207)780-5094, TTY (207)780-5646, or to the Office of Civil Rights (617) 223-9692



## COMMUNITY MENTORING



Muskie School of Public Service  
PO Box 9300, 29 Baxter Boulevard  
Portland, Maine 04104-9300  
phone: (207) 780-5860

<http://www.communitymentoring.org>