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## **Aging Well? Healthy Life Transitions for Seniors**

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### **HOW TO RECEIVE COURSE CREDIT**

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View the entire course including any applicable handouts/resources. Complete a post-test assessment. You must score 80% or better on the post-test and complete the course evaluation to earn a certificate of completion for this activity. If required, Select Rehabilitation will report attendance to CE Broker.

### **ABOUT THE COURSE AUTHOR**

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Ingrid M. Provident Ed.D, OTR/L, FAOTA, is a highly engaging speaker who holds clinical degrees in Occupational Therapy and Educational Leadership. She has worked in multiple practice settings with the adult and geriatric populations. Ingrid has been an educator in formal academic settings and is trained and certified in Koru Mindfulness. Dr. Provident currently provides educational support to 13,000+ therapists nationwide as Education Specialist for Select Rehabilitation. She has presented internationally, nationally and locally on various clinical and professional wellness topics. Ingrid has authored many publications focusing on professional topics of Mindfulness, Fieldwork and Professional Development. She is a fellow member of the AOTA.

### **POST-TEST**

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1. Which of the Following is NOT a stage of Ending?
  - a) Disillusion
  - b) Disengagement
  - c) Disorientation
  - d) Disidentification
  
2. Marriage, New Home, Retirement are considered which type of transition?
  - a) Positive
  - b) Neutral
  - c) Negative
  - d) All of the Above

3. Sleep to Wake is considered which type of transition?
  - a) Positive
  - b) Neutral
  - c) Negative
  - d) All of the Above
4. An intense feeling of unease that people have when they experience a profound change in their life which creates fear, tension, and procrastination, among other negative emotions is called?
  - a) Mindfulness
  - b) Paranoia
  - c) Transition Anxiety
  - d) Disengagement
5. Healthy or unhealthy automated behaviors that are learned from experience are:
  - a) Rituals
  - b) Roles
  - c) Routines
  - d) Habits

The post-test and corresponding course evaluation can be accessed at:  
[https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Transition\\_On\\_Demand](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Transition_On_Demand)

Or by using the following QR Code:



If all course requirements have been met, a certificate will be emailed from Select Rehabilitation to the email address reported in the course follow-up survey.

Any questions or issues related to this course should be directed to Dr. Kathleen Weissberg, National Director of Education for Select Rehabilitation at [kweissberg@selectrehab.com](mailto:kweissberg@selectrehab.com)

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# Healthy Life Transitions for Seniors

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## Learning Objectives

By the End of the Presentation, the learner will be able to:

- 1) Differentiate various life transitions as positive, neutral and negative.
- 2) Compare/contrast strategies for dealing with life transitions
- 3) Distinguish how healthcare practitioners can assist persons who have difficulty with transitions



## Change vs. Transitions Q1

- Change is always happening and is situational
- Transitions are a psychological process offering a chance for growth.
- CHANGE is NOT the same as TRANSITION
- Transitions are a process with 3 distinct phases

## Why are Transitions important?

- Everyone experiences them
- Everyone's experience is Unique
- Transitions can have a profound impact on a person's well-being and development
- Provide an opportunity for examination and purposeful choice
- Can provide growth and shift in mindset
- Reduces errors

## Transitions of Care

- Suboptimal transitions of care increase the risk of readmissions and adverse drug events after discharge
- healthcare professionals and patients use different wording to describe health-related terms
- lack of engagement, poor continuity of care, and complex treatment regimens can effect transitions
- non-adherent reasons (health literacy, anxiety)

## Life Transitions

- Planned or unexpected
- Bring about Emotion
  - Learning to manage emotions
  - Emotional Regulation
- Require coping strategies
  - Pay attention to thoughts / emotions
  - Reframe Thoughts
- Support from friends, professionals



## Coping Skills

- Difficult but have a positive aspect
- Accept Change / May not Understand Event
- Identify Values and Goals
- Identify and Express Feelings- Uncomfortable
- Focus on the Payoffs
- Acknowledge left behind / Don't be in a Rush
- Stay Sober
- Good Self Care / Consistent Routines
- One step at a Time

## Three Phases of Transitions

- Ending / Goodbye
- Neutral Zone / Messy Middle
- New Beginning

# Endings

- “Endings,” are about **letting go of the old situation or way of doing things**
- **Can be difficult as it often** involves feelings of loss, fear, and uncertainty
- Clearing of old to get ready for new
- Endings can be like experiences of dying

## Four Stages of Endings

Q2

- Disengagement
  - Break from roles, activities, settings and ways of seeing the world
  - Gain perspective
- Disidentification
  - Give up former self definitions
- Disenchantment
  - Question Assumptions
- Disorientation
  - Confusion

## Neutral Zone

- Transitional period between the old and the new
- People may feel disoriented, confused, and impatient as they navigate the unknown
- Ungearred, untethered, drifting
- Time of exploration and experimentation
- Asking self “What do I really want”
- Lots of Inner Work

## New Beginnings

- Embrace the new situation and build a new identity
- Feelings of excitement, optimism, and energy are common during this phase.
- Develop new routines:  
Establish habits supporting your unique goals and identity  
create a sense of stability and familiarity in your new environment.



# Common Life Transitions

**Educational**  
**Career**  
**Relational**  
**Geographical**  
**Health**  
**Aging and Development**  
**Cultural and Identity**  
**Personal Development**

# Positive Life Transitions Q3

- Marriage
- Milestone Birthdays
- Birth of new family members
- New Home
- Retirement

## Strategies for Positive Transitions

- Special place in Memory
- Stress is NOT a Threat
- Appreciate Change
- Remember successes
- Turn to a Support Network
- Prepare and Plan
- Opportunity for looking back and forward
- Role Models
- Don't fight Change

## Difficult / Negative Life Transitions

- The loss of :
  - a role, person, place, job
  - your sense of where you fit in the world
- Accidents
- Divorce
- Illness

## Stages of Negative Transitions

1. Experience range of feelings (anger, anxiety, confusion, numbness, and self-doubt)
2. Feel a loss of self-esteem
3. Begin to accept the change
4. Acknowledge that you need to let go of the past
5. Begin to feel hopeful about the future
6. Feel increased self-esteem
7. Develop an optimistic view of the future

## Neutral Transitions

Q4

- Sleep to Wake or Wake to Sleep
  - Sleep hygiene
- Shifting from one activity to another
  - Task Switching
  - Task Paralysis
- Addition of Responsibilities ( Work, home)
- Change of Seasons / Rhythm of Nature

## Strategies for Neutral Transitions Q5

- Prioritizing
- Structured Work / Break Schedule
- Using Timers
- Minimizing Distractions
- Routines
- Breaking tasks into smaller ones
- Mindfulness
- Just take a step

## Transition Anxiety

Q6

- Transition anxiety is the feeling of unease that people have when they experience a profound change in their life. The anxiety creates fear, tension, and procrastination, among other negative emotions.
- Unease due to Change
- High Prevalence in ADHD, Highly Sensitive, ASD
- Positive vs Negative Coping Behaviors
- Recognizing and Practicing Responses vs Reactions
- Mindfulness
- Emotional Intelligence



## Habits, Routines, Roles, Rituals Q7

- **Habits** are automated behaviors that are learned from experience; be healthy or unhealthy, efficient or inefficient, and supportive or harmful
- **Behaviors** repeated enough to become automatic
- **Routines** result from predictable activity or regular procedures
- **Roles** define a person's identity
- **Rituals** symbolic actions
  - *Your habits shape your identity*

## Process of Habits

Q8

- Cue
- Trigger
- Craving
- Response
- Reward



## Positive Habit Change

### 4 Laws Supporting Change

- 1. Make Cues as Obvious as Possible
  - Use Habit Stacking
- 2. Make it Attractive
- 3. Make it Easy
  - Reduce Friction
- 4. Make it Immediately Satisfying
  - Two Minute Rule

## Breaking Negative Habits Q9

- 1. Make Cues Invisible
- 2. Make bad habits unappealing
- 3. Make the bad habit as difficult as possible
  - FOCUS ON INCREASING FRICTION
- 4. Use a Commitment Device
- 5. Attach Immediate Satisfaction to Avoiding Bad habit

# Person Environment Occupation Model

- Environment Matters
  - Visual Cues
  - Arranging Environment
- Support System
  - Family and Friends
  - Culture
  - Habit Tracker / Contract
    - *Atomic Habits- James Clear*

# Shared Decision Making

- Specific to the aging population shared decision making related to transitions such as a shift in residence to LTC can optimize transitions
- Degree of cognition / fluctuating capacity
- Pro-active planning
- Cultural Traditions

## Loneliness / Social Isolation

- Social Isolation does not always equate to loneliness
- Relationships are important
- Degree to which a person needs support to adhere to medication and intervention regime

## Lifestyle Redesign

- Evidence based
- Activity Centric
- Suitable for Community Dwelling Elders
- Healthcare professionals review participant's strengths weaknesses and environmental supports
- Attempts made to reduce barriers
- Increase facilitation of activity performance
- Decrease depressive symptoms

# Social Determinants of Health (SDOH) Q10

- Safe housing, transportation, and neighborhoods
- Racism, discrimination, and violence
- Education, job opportunities, and income
- Access to nutritious foods and physical activity opportunities
- Polluted air and water
- Language and literacy skills

## It takes Planning

- Patient Education
- Connect to Community Resources
- Engagement Plan – how to stay in touch
- Customized Discharge checklists
- Appropriate Screening
  - SDOH
  - Transportation



## Case Example

- An elderly person of low socioeconomic status with s/p CVA and chronic health conditions is being discharged from an inpatient setting to assisted living facility.
- Care transition experience can vary due to SDOH
- Effects Likelihood of Compliance with Intervention Plan
- Examples include:
  - Cost of medication
  - Access to transportation
  - Help at Home

## Thank You!

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