

Transitions- Navigating Challenging Times



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***It isn't the changes that do
you in – it's the transitions***

William Bridges
***Managing Transitions:
Making the
Most of Change, 4th Edition,***
2017

Change

Goals

Situational

External

Transition

Process

Psychological

Internal

A point to ponder.....

The transition process is a loop in the journey of life, going out and away from the main flow for a time, then coming back.

William Bridges- Making Sense of Life's Changes

These loops in the journey may include:

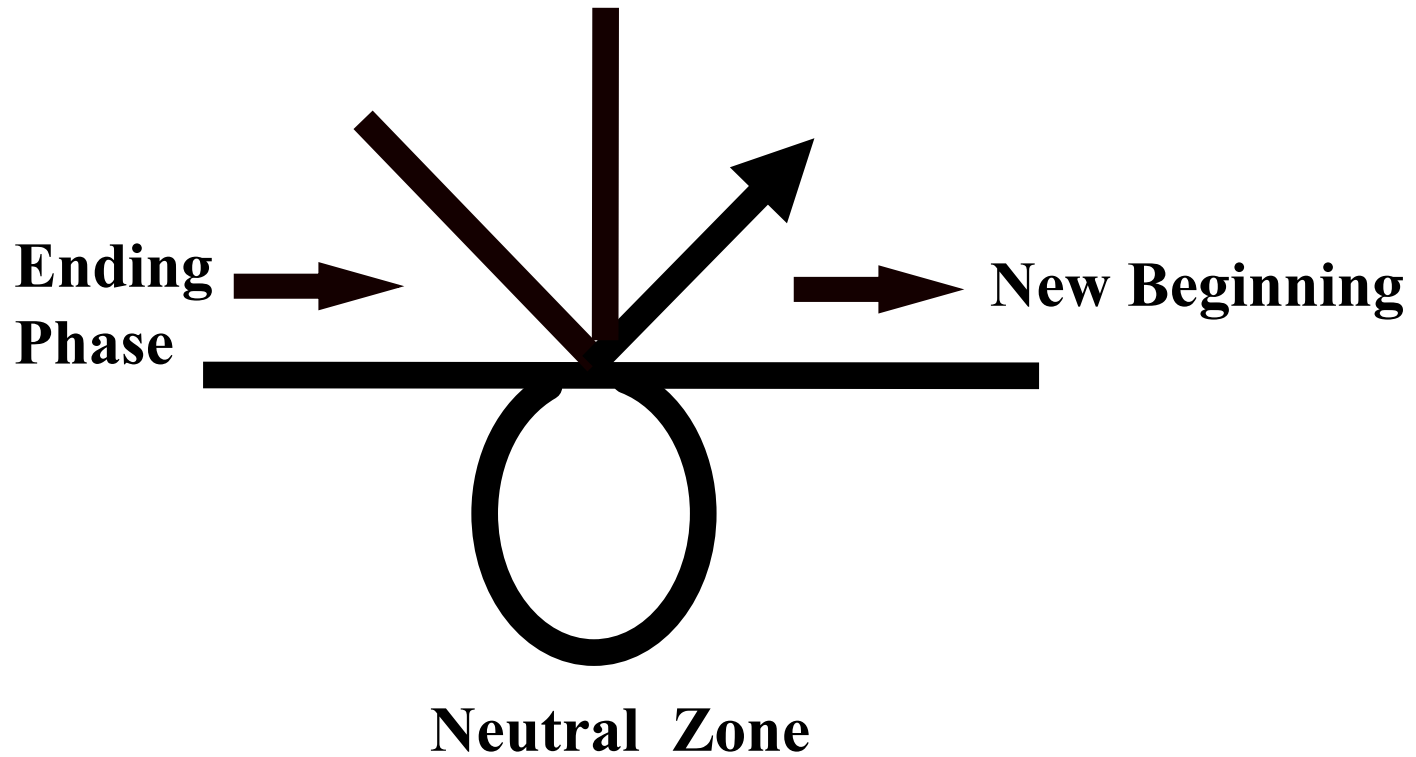
Loss of relationships- empty nest,
deaths, moves

Changes in home life-marriage,
childbirth, remodeling

Personal changes-illness,
success/failure, menopause

Work and financial changes-
changing jobs, retiring

Understanding Transitions



About Endings

- Disengagement
- Dismantling
- Disidentification
- Disenchantment
- Disillusionment
- Disorientation

Remember

Without an Ending
there

Is no beginning

Helping the Ending



- Cannot “push the process” – be gentle with yourself
- Use a temporary form of structure for support
- Don’t act for the sake of acting
- Take care of yourself in little ways
- Explore the other side of the change
- Reach out for support
- Make time for things that inspire you
- Be with friends who give you energy and support

Helping others in the ending

- Understand the stages in a grieving process
- Offer information on several different ways
- Treat the past with respect
- Self care is essential not selfish
- Use rituals to mark the ending
- Listen- we all need a compassionate witness



In Between Trapezes



About the Neutral Zone

- Normal and necessary part of the process
- Unfolding...taking its own sweet time
- Not about recharging batteries- involves trusting the process and deep listening
- Often involves imperceptible shifts



The Neutral Zone – “In between trapezes”

- **Downside**

- ✓ **anxiety rises and motivation falls**
- ✓ **feel disoriented and self doubting**
- ✓ **productivity drops- energy spent in coping**
- ✓ **old resentments, old issues re-emerge**
- ✓ **runs counter to our high need for control**
- ✓ **feels scattered and overwhelming**

The Neutral Zone – “In between trapezes”

- **Upside**

- ✓ **good time for innovation and creativity/ opportunity for transformation**
- ✓ **pay attention to “silly questions”**
- ✓ **time for reorientation and redefinition**
- ✓ **be intentional about “reframing”**
-- language is key

Neutral Zone Tip

Control – of their situation to the extent possible

Understand – what is happening and the process

Support – practical support, empathy, listening

Priorities – clarify and reinforce a “vital few”

About New Beginnings

- May begin with a silly question
- Beginnings are always messy
- Involves new understandings, new identity- not just starting something new
- May engender ambivalence
- Can activate old anxieties, feel like a gamble
- Genuine new beginnings come from an inner sense of alignment



Helping the New Beginning

- Notice the first hint of a new idea or impression, or image
- Notice a comment that resonates
- Identify with the new beginning
- Celebrate small victories, early successes
- Develop a game plan and support system



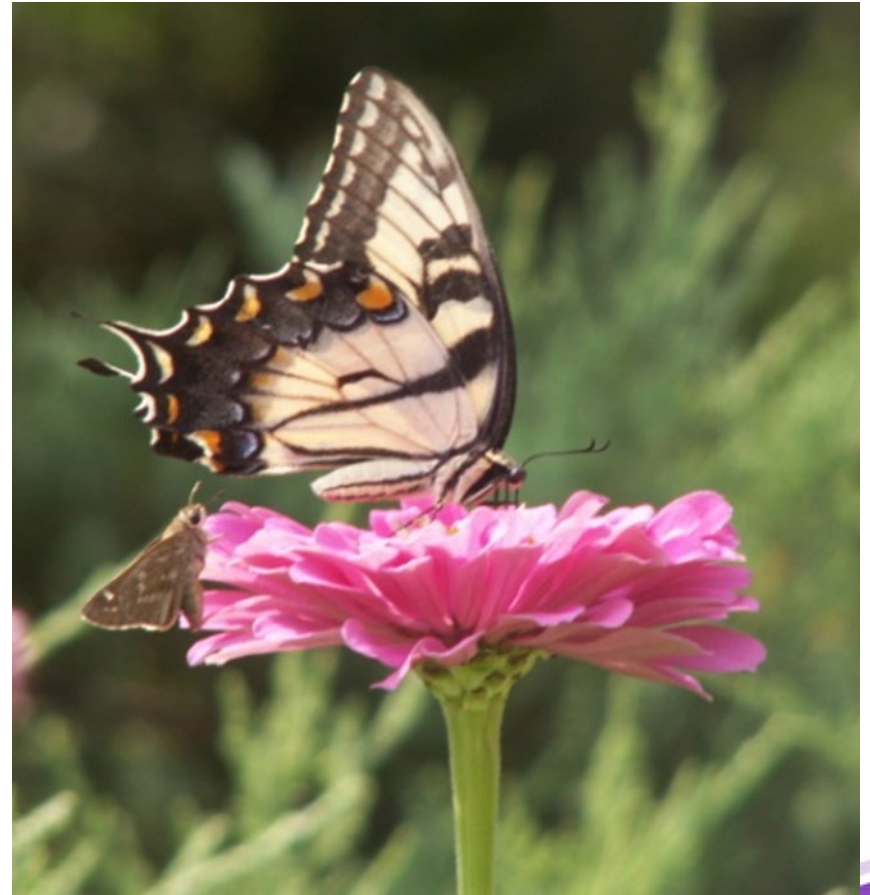
Point to ponder....

Confusion is a word we
have invented for an order
that is yet to be understood

Henry Miller

Point to ponder....

- The important thing is this: To be able at any moment to sacrifice what we are for what we would become
- Charles DuBose



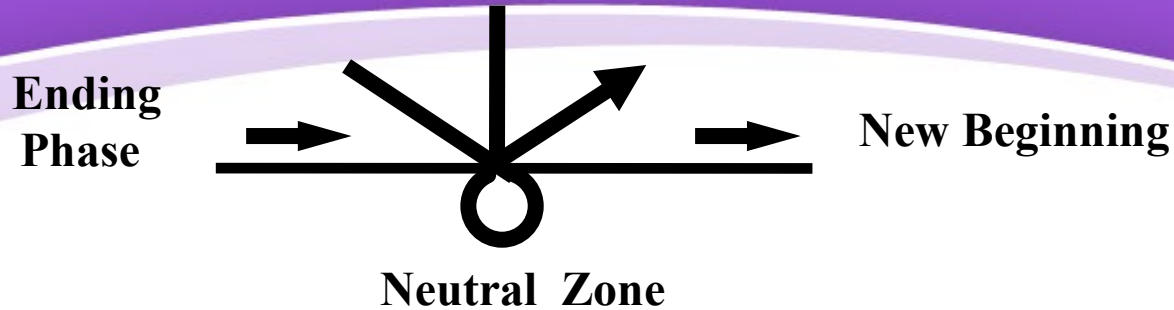
Lessons Learned

- **It's not the change itself . . . it's the meaning of the change for the person involved**
- **Go slow to go fast – commitment over compliance**
- **Visual trumps the verbal**
- **Time away- time out to process and reflect.**
- **Negativity drains energy- practice reframing**
- **“Don't push the river..it flows by itself”**
- **Practicing mindfulness to reduce anxiety**
- **Revisit the stories we tell ourselves-(anxious to anticipation)**

Lessons Learned

- **Introverts and extroverts process differently**
- **Take time to adjust your own energy and ability to be present (Pause Breathe Smile)**
- **Listen deeply (content...feeling/emotion...need)**
- **Can I listen with the “ears of my heart?”**
- **Encourage time for whatever nourishes or inspires to help with endings and neutral zone**

Work Related Transitions



Ending

Neutral

New Beginning

Recognize grieving process

Normal part of process

Be consistent

Give information over &
over again

Look at "half full"

Ensure early success

Treat past with respect

Short range goals

Symbolize new identity

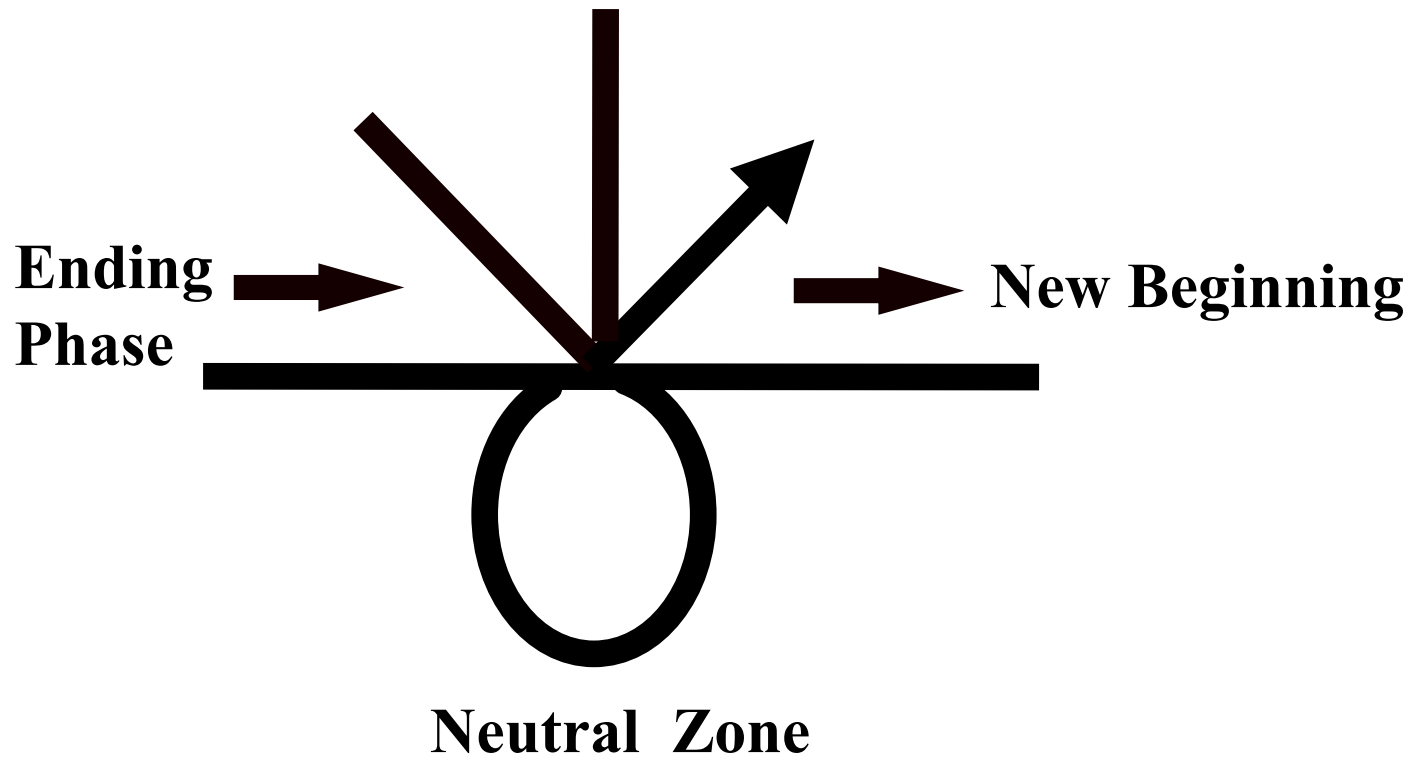
Mark the ending -- rituals

Check points

Celebrate small victories

Strengthen group
connection

Understanding Transitions



*Without a transition, change is just
rearranging the furniture.*

**William Bridges, Transitions:
Making Sense of Life's Changes**



**We are all like butterflies and earth is
our chrysalis....**

Ann Taylor -novelist

Thanks for your time

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