Coping with Transitions

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Why this presentation?

Introduction
Presentation Outline

- Explore the four “S’s” of Schlossberg’s Transition Theory: Situation, Self, Support, and Strategies
- Helping Cope with Transitions – Personal and Departmental Perspectives
- Personal Activity
How would you define “transition”?

Transition – Events or nonevents resulting in changed relationships, routines, assumptions, and/or roles (Schlossberg)
Schlossberg’ Transition Theory

– Three types of transitions:
  – Anticipated
  – Unanticipated
  – Nonevents
– The time needed for a transition varies depending on the individual
Three Stages

• Approaching change
• Taking stock
• Taking charge
Schlossberg’ Transition Theory

– Taking stock - the four S’s
  – Situation
  – Self
  – Support
  – Strategies
Situation

- **Trigger**: What caused the transition?
- **Timing**: "On time" or "off time" in terms of one's social clock; it is the transition views as happening at a "good" or "bad" time?
- **Control**: What does the individual perceive as being within their control?
- **Role Change**: Is a role change involved, and if so, it is viewed as a gain or a loss?
- **Duration**: Is it seen as permanent, temporary, or uncertain?
- **Previous Experience with a similar transition**: How effectively did one cope, and what are implication for the current transition?
- **Assessment**: What or who is seen as responsible for the transition? How is the individual's behavior affected by the cause?
Situation
Self
Self

**Personal & demographic**
- How an individual views life
- Intersection of identities
  - Socioeconomic
  - Age
  - Gender
  - Race & ethnicity
  - Family unit

**Psychological resources**
- How do I cope?
- Ego development
- Outlook: optimistic? self-efficacy?
- Values
- Spirituality
- Grit
# Support

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<th>Types of Social Support</th>
<th>Functions</th>
<th>Measurement</th>
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<td>1. Intimate relationships</td>
<td>1. Affect</td>
<td>1. Stable</td>
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<td>2. Family units</td>
<td>2. Affirmation</td>
<td>2. Role dependent</td>
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<td>3. Networks of friends</td>
<td>3. Aid</td>
<td>3. Likely to change</td>
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<td>4. Institutions and communities</td>
<td>4. Honest Feedback</td>
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Support
Strategies

**Three Categories**
- Modify the situation
- Control meaning
- Manage stress

**Four Coping Methods**
- Information seeking
- Direct action
- Inhibition of action
- Intrapsychic behavior
Strategies
Diagram a theoretical transition

- Situation
- Self
- Support
- Strategies
Diagram a real transition: Moving to a new city

**Situation**
- Anticipated: knew months in advance
- On Time: expected after graduation
- Positive: progress and moving up
- Desired: I accepted this position and transition

**Self**
- Economic resources: comfortable to move
  - Family: stable but far away
  - Optimistic: excited, used to moving
  - Spirituality: relying on God

**Support**
- Types: family and partner far away
- Function: coworkers for aid, feedback, and affirmation
  - Measurement: stable v. role dependent

**Strategies**
- Category: control meaning & managing stress
  - Coping Mechanisms: information seeking & direct action
### Departmental Support for New Professionals

#### Situation
- Anticipated: knew months in advance
- On Time: established start date
- Positive: excited about the hire
- Desired: ...we offered the position!

#### Support
- Types: peer group, supervisor, welcoming committee
- Function: affirmation, aid, feedback

#### Self
- Identities: gender and family unit
- Psychological resources: RHD “buddy”, prayer, consistency in care
- Economic: assisting with expenses

#### Strategies
- Manage stress: move-in crew, RHD “buddy”, social opportunities
- Coping Mechanisms: new apartment and local information, assuring stress is normal and we’re here to help
Personal Activity
Personal Activity

**Situation**
- What kind of situation is it?
- What caused this transition?
- Was it Positive/ Negative?
- Timing - Expected/ Unexpected?
- Desired/ Dreaded?
- Did you experience a role change?
- Where are you in the transition – beginning/ middle/ end?

**Self**
- What strengths/ weaknesses do you bring to this situation?
- What are your previous experiences of transition?
- What options do you believe you have?
- How do you deal with uncertainty?
- What personal demographics/ characteristics/ identities may contribute to how you are experiencing this transition?
Personal Activity

Support
– Who will help or hinder you? (Family, friends, coworkers, minister, colleagues, etc.)
– In what ways can they support you?
– How can you communicate the need and appreciation for support from these people?

Strategies
– What coping strategies do you have?
– How creative are you?
– How do you manage stress?
Questions?

References