



## Change is a constant: Life transitions and you

Change is essential to our personal growth and development, helping us transition from child to adolescent to adult to senior citizen. Typically, these changes are so gradual that we hardly notice them, but sometimes an event can completely transform our lives. It can be exciting and joyful (graduation, marriage, birth), traumatic (the death of a loved one, a divorce or accident), or something in between (moving, starting a new job or retirement). But whether these transitional events are chosen by us or thrust upon us, they involve an unknown future, and the unknown can be frightening.

There are, however, ways to help cope with a major life event. For example:

- **Prepare, prepare, prepare.** Many life transitions involve financial stress. Taking the time to prepare for planned life transitions such as retirement or a home purchase, or unforeseen events such as job loss or disability, can help ease a great deal of anxiety if or when the event materializes.
- **Try to maintain a positive attitude.** A transition may be challenging, even disruptive, but trying to focus on positives where/when possible can make all the difference.
- **Expect to feel a range of emotions.** Everyone reacts to change differently and some transitions are more challenging than others, but feeling sad, anxious or fearful can be normal responses. If the change is unexpected and unwanted – a sudden job loss or breakup – shock, anger and depressed mood may also occur. Knowing what to expect emotionally can help you better manage your reactions.
- **Rely on your support network.** Trusted family members and friends have your best interests at heart and can offer perspective, guidance and sound advice. An online community of people going through similar experiences can also offer support.

Let us help. Access your Employee Assistance Program (EAP) 24/7 by phone, web or mobile app. Visit [workhealthlife.com/global](http://workhealthlife.com/global) for worldwide access numbers or call your local operator and request to place a collect call to Canada at 905.886.3605.

- **Find healthy ways to manage stress.** Do whatever works for you -- a long run, yoga, meditation, massage, or just taking a few minutes to read a book or listen to music. The common feature in these activities is to create a 'safe' space to renew your energy.
- **Take care of yourself.** You're better able to deal with stressful situations when you're eating a healthy diet, exercising regularly, getting enough sleep and limiting your alcohol consumption.

Finally, if you're feeling overwhelmed by a major life transition, don't be afraid to ask for professional help. [Contact us](#) for support.

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