

Navigating Life Transitions

Moving through change with clarity and self-compassion

Every transition has three phases: an ending, a neutral zone, and a new beginning. The hardest part is rarely the change itself — it's the unnamed space between who you were and who you're becoming.

CHANGE VS. TRANSITION

Change is external — a new role, a relationship ending, a move, a loss. Transition is internal — the psychological and emotional process of navigating that change. You can make a change very quickly. Transition takes as long as it takes.

PHASE 1 — THE ENDING

Every transition begins with letting go. This is often the most painful phase — it requires grieving what is being left behind, even when you chose the change, even when what you're leaving was painful.

What to expect: disorientation, grief, resistance, looking back.

Questions to sit with:

- What am I letting go of?
- What identity or role is ending?
- What do I need to grieve here?
- How can I honour what is ending, even as I release it?

PHASE 2 — THE NEUTRAL ZONE

The liminal space between endings and beginnings — where the old is gone and the new hasn't fully arrived. It can feel chaotic, empty, and disorienting. It can also be profoundly creative if approached with intention.

What to expect: confusion, questioning, anxiety, unexpected insights.

The neutral zone is not a problem to be solved. It is a necessary gestation period. Rushing through it produces premature closure.

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— PHASE 3 — THE NEW BEGINNING

New beginnings happen gradually — they rarely arrive with fanfare. Characterised by a growing sense of direction, new energy, and early evidence of who you're becoming.

You cannot skip phases 1 and 2 to reach phase 3. Every attempt to do so sends you back to the beginning. Trust the process.

— SELF-COMPASSION THROUGH TRANSITION

- Lower the bar — transitions are energetically expensive. You need to be present, not productive.
- Reduce novelty — when everything is changing, keep some things constant.
- Stay connected — isolation amplifies disorientation. Name what you're going through.
- Keep a transition journal — write to the version of yourself who will look back with understanding.

The neutral zone is doing its work even when it doesn't feel like it.