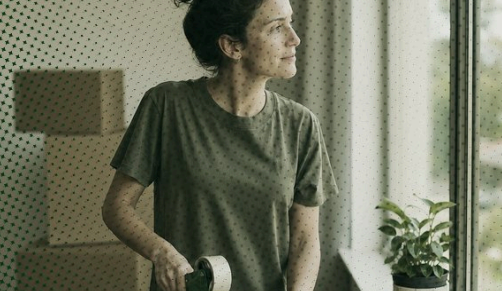
mindhealth FACT SHEET

LIFE TRANSITIONS · ADJUSTING TO CHANGE

Adjusting to change

Even good change asks something of us, and feeling unsettled is a normal way to be.



Feeling adrift
Not quite yourself yet

A kind of grief
For how things used to be

Finding footing
A new normal slowly forms

01 Change and the "neutral zone"

Moving, a new job, becoming a parent, a relationship ending, retirement: transitions ask us to let go of one way of living before the next has taken shape. That in-between "neutral zone" can feel disorienting and flat, even when the change is one we chose. Feeling unsettled isn't a sign it's going wrong; it's a normal part of adjusting.

02 What helps you land

Adjustment takes time, and it helps to name what you've lost as well as what you've gained: both can be true at once. Keeping a few anchors steady (routines, people, small rituals) while the rest shifts gives the nervous system something to hold. Most adjustment reactions ease over weeks to months; if they don't, or tip into lasting low mood or anxiety, it's worth reaching out.

03 What genuinely helps

- Naming both the losses and the gains
- Keeping a few routines and anchors steady
- Lowering the bar you set yourself for a while
- Staying connected rather than withdrawing
- Giving it time, and help if it doesn't ease

A PRACTICAL STORY

From all-at-once to what can stay the same



THE STAGES

The neutral zone



Change runs through an ending, a disorienting in-between, then a new beginning. The middle is normal.

PRACTICAL TOOLKIT

Steady yourself

1. Hold a few routines constant
2. Name one loss and one gain
3. Expect the in-between to feel odd

You don't have to have it figured out yet.

WHEN TO SEEK HELP

If a change has left you stuck in low mood, anxiety or grief for more than a few weeks, a psychologist can help. Ask your GP about a Mental Health Treatment Plan.

DID YOU KNOW?

In 1967 Thomas Holmes and Richard Rahe listed 43 life events that ask us to adjust. Good changes made the list too: marriage and retirement both scored as stressful.

Holmes & Rahe, Journal of Psychosomatic Research, 1967

THE KEY TAKEAWAY

Feeling unsettled doesn't mean you made the wrong choice: it means you're in the middle of a real change.

Need support right now? Lifeline **13 11 14** · Emergency **000** — available 24/7. More options: **mindhealth.com.au/urgent-help**

TALK TO US WHEN YOU'RE READY

Parramatta and online, Australia-wide · **Book at mindhealth.com.au**

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