



## Adjusting to Transitions

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*Updated by Jill Adaman, PhD*

“The only thing you can count on is change.” Does that sound familiar to you? Life is full of changes and transitions. Some are happy ones (getting your dream job, finding your life partner) and some are difficult (illness or loss). Whether a transition is happy or sad, it can cause stress as you learn to adjust to new life circumstances. Fortunately, there are strategies you can use to help you manage the stress as you settle into your new lifestyle.

- **Take care of your body:** It’s easy to put your own needs on the back burner when you’re dealing with life changes, but caring for yourself at these times can make the difference between thriving and barely surviving. Getting enough sleep and exercise, as well as eating nutritious foods, can drastically boost your ability to manage stress.
- **Take care of your mind:** Let yourself feel your feelings about the changes, even when they seem confusing or contradictory (this is normal and will ease over time). Find a few moments every day to take some deep breaths, spend time outdoors, journal, or meditate. Look for opportunities to just relax and have fun.
- **Find your new normal:** Creating stability in your daily life can help you adjust during periods of transition. People often feel things are “out of control” during times of change, and developing daily routines can help restore a sense of structure and predictability. Experiment with your new routines until you find what works best for you.
- **Look for the positives:** Many transitions bring with them opportunities to try out new activities, meet new people, or develop new skills. Identifying potential benefits from the transition may help you see it in a different light and cope better with the stresses involved.
- **Seek support:** It’s important to stay connected with loved ones during times of change. Friends and family can provide emotional support, help with the logistics of moving or other stressors, and help you take time off to relax. You may also find support online from others who are experiencing the same transition.

*Talk to someone who can help! To find a licensed psychologist near you, use PPA’s Psychologist Locator at <https://www.papsy.org/locator>. For information on other mental health topics, go to <https://www.papsy.org>, then “Resources” and then “Public Resources”. PPA offers these articles for informational purposes only; they are not a substitute for professional diagnosis and treatment.*