

**Re-entry**

Marion Knell  
Family Cross-Cultural Consultant

EuroTCK

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**Transitions**

“Transition is a process not an event. Transitions begin with endings, go through a period of confusion and distress and then lead to a new beginning. We tend to want to start with the beginnings but the way we deal with the endings will determine how good a beginning we make.”

Bill Taylor

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**Transition and Change**

- ♦ Transition is a process not an event
- ♦ Change is external. It can be immediate and ‘clean’
- ♦ Transition is internal – it always takes time

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### Stages of Transition

- ♦ Arrival
  - Mourning what is left behind
  - Idealised view of the new
- ♦ Honeymoon
  - Challenge
  - Intensity
- ♦ Grieving
  - Frustration
  - Anger
  - Withdrawal
- ♦ Resolution
  - Hold the tensions
  - Point of acceptance

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### Typical Expatriate Morale Curve

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### William Bridges

- Surrender and give in to the emptiness and allow ourselves to return to chaos. Chaos is not a mess – it is life itself, as yet unshaped by purpose and identification
- Recognise the reason for the gap between the old life and the new. The process of disintegration and reintegration is a source of renewal.
- The emptiness between stages of the life journey is the perspective it provides on the stages themselves – an angle of vision you can get nowhere else.

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### Liminal Space

When you have left the 'tried and true' but have not yet been able to replace it with anything else. It is when you are in between your old comfort zone and any possible new answer ... if you are not trained in how to hold anxiety, how to live with ambiguity, how to entrust and wait – you will run ... anything to flee from this cloud of unknowing.

Richard Rohr

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### Re-entry

(Reverse)Culture Shock  
"Primarily an emotional reaction that follows from not being able to understand, control and predict another's behaviour"

John Cox

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### Re-entry – a big issue?

- ◆ Expectations
  - Things have changed
  - You have changed
  - Others have changed
- ◆ Emotions
  - Unanticipated
  - Powerful
  - Incomprehensible

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### Problems of resettlement

- Communicating the overseas experience 58%
- Fitting in again 53%
- Finding work 41%
- Lack of money 32%
- Finding accommodation 12%

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### Re-entry

Factors affecting re-entry:

- Timing
- Reasons
- Identity
- Economic Standards
- Preparation and Support Systems
- Personality Traits
- Family needs

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### Questions to ask

- Why is this person coming back *now*?
- *Why* is this person coming back?
- *Who* is this person?
- *What lifestyle* has he/she been used to?
- *How much* has been planned in advance?
- *What temperament* has he/she?
- *How* is the family doing?

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### Change

- Complete the sentence: Change is ....
- The best thing about change is ....
- Of all the changes you have been through, which one do you think you handled best?
- Why?
- What has been the toughest change in your life so far?

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### Re-entry

- Emotions:
  - Loss
  - Grief
  - Anger
  - Alienation
  - Frustration
  - Exhaustion
  - Depression
  - Confusion
  - Spiritual Crisis

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**Re-entry**

Re-entry is a process involving stress, loss, grief, identity issues and loneliness together with feelings of isolation, anxiety and rejection

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**Disenfranchised grief**

“There are circumstances in which a person experiences a sense of loss but does not have a socially recognised right, role, or capacity to grieve. In these cases, the grief is disenfranchised.”

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Figure 1. The Dual Process Model of Coping with Bereavement (Stroebe & Schulz, 1998).

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### Why Debrief?

- ◆ Reassurance
- ◆ Normalisation
- ◆ Reduce isolation
- ◆ Provide Closure
- ◆ Reflection
- ◆ Moving on

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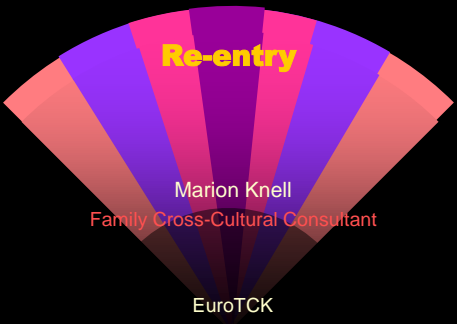
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