

# SAY IT BRAVE

WE'RE BRINGING AUTHENTICITY TO MENTAL HEALTH CONVERSATIONS

## **Charting Unknown Territory: Tools for Coping with Life's Transitions**

Change is situational. *Transition, on the other hand, is psychological.* It is not those events but rather the *inner reorientation or self-redefinition* that you have to go through in order to incorporate any of those changes into your life. Without a transition, a change is just a rearrangement of the furniture.

- William Bridges

### **1. Observe Your Brain on a Transition**

During transitions and times of stress, we are often more vulnerable to cognitive distortions and errors.

If you are going through or anticipating a transition in your life, ask yourself if you're making **these mental errors**:

- Am I future-tripping?
- Am I over-generalizing?
- Am I catastrophizing?

**Future-tripping:** Future-tripping, also called anticipatory anxiety, is part of the human condition and involves peering into the imagined future and anticipating the outcome.

**Over-generalizing:** Overgeneralizing is a cognitive distortion that results in errors in thinking. When we draw a faulty conclusion about something based on just one example, we are overgeneralizing.

**Catastrophizing:** Catastrophizing is a cognitive distortion that prompts people to jump to the worst possible conclusion after a minor setback. When a situation is upsetting, but not necessarily disastrous, they still feel like they are in the midst of a crisis. Catastrophizing can generally take two different forms: making a catastrophe out of a current situation, and imagining making a catastrophe out of a future situation.

### **2. Reflect on Your Coping Capacity and Resilience**

- Are you minimizing your capacity to cope?
  - Recognize Your Resilience!
    - Have you coped with a life transition before?
    - How did you do it? What was helpful?
    - What strengths did you bring to the situation?
    - Where did you find that you needed support?
- Are you downplaying the aspects you can control?

### **3. Engage Support**

- Seek out support from people who have gone through what you are experiencing before
- [Find professional support](#)
- [Find support groups](#)

