

# Chapter 1

## Lesson 10 Check Me Out!

**Theme: Who Am I?**

### Lesson Objective:

Students will review, re-evaluate, reflect, record and report on each of the previous lessons. Students will report findings in written and oral form. (See matrix for Arizona Academic/Adult Standards).

### Steps to Follow:

**"Only when we know ourselves, will we be truly free." -- Ralph Ellison**

1. Post the quotation(s) and discuss how it relates to this chapter and the question, Who Am I?
2. **Review:** students check to make certain that they've completed all worksheets from Lesson 8.
3. **Re-evaluate:** as students review their work in MRG, they should check to see if they want to add or change any answers.
4. **Reflection:** Complete *You've Transitioned Before S8*.
5. General reflection questions could include:
  - What information and ideas were most surprising?
  - Most useful?
  - What other information do you wish were included?
  - What information, idea or perspective hadn't you considered before?
  - How the topics in this chapter help answer "Where Am I Going?"
6. **Report:** Student presents a 4-5 minute summary of his/her occupational profile and explains interests, values, career options, skills, etc.

### Materials:

*You've Transitioned Before S8*

**Evaluation:**

Rubric

**Enrichment:**

# You've Transitioned Before!

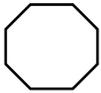
S8

In life one thing for sure is that things change and people change. You have changed as you have matured. It's inevitable.

During life there are times when you must make a transition, or change, to a new situation or stage of life. Some people think of transition as a bridge that connects the old to the new, or familiar to the unfamiliar.

Think of your first day of school. You were transitioning from home to school, from being just a kid, to being a student!

What were you thinking, feeling, doing? Probably you were having "mixed feelings." What does this mean? Probably you were thinking good and bad thoughts, like "What's going to happen to me?" And, "This is a scary adventure." These mixed feelings and thoughts are a part of transition.



### Think About It

1. When change occurs in your life, new ideas and experiences are often gained while others are given up. Use this timeline to mark 5 transition events in your life (the first one, your birth! Is done for you). Then write what you gained and gave up for each event.

Event 1	Event 2	Event 3	Event 4	Event 5
I was born				

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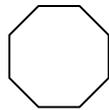
Gained

Gave up

2. Some transition events are planned, marriage, for example. Some we look forward to, like school graduation. Some just happen whether we like it or not, ageing. Some transitions happen quickly, "I'm 21!" Some take more time, "But it's taken me 21 years to get here!"

Have changes gone smoothly for you in the past? List 3 difficulties.

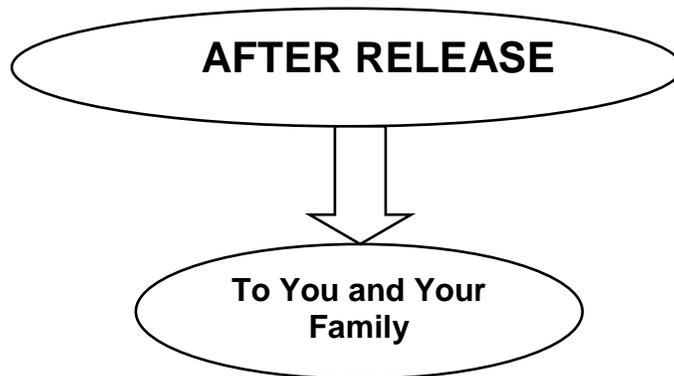
3. **Brainstorm** with your class the skills or activities that are needed to make change a positive thing. (Hints: self-awareness, resiliency skills)



List the next 5 major transition events that you think will happen in your life.

Look at your past difficulties. Write what you will do to make future changes go well for you.

Transition Event	What I'll do



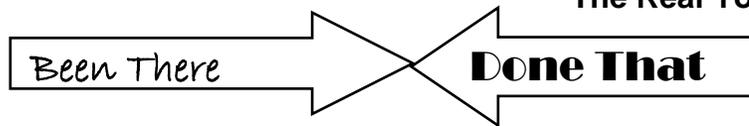
1. **Expect to be unsteady, confused, anxious and possibly depressed at first.**
2. **Always share your feelings and thoughts. Communicate!**
3. **You have always heard “Patience is a virtue.” Practice this and be kind to yourself.**
4. **Build new relationships but base them on friendship and respect. You have changed while you were away and so has your family.**
5. **Remember the time you took to set new goals? Now it is the time you begin working toward those goals. Keep it simple for the first couple of months. Never give up!!!**
6. **Measure your growth daily. Take time to be proud of your successes and your family’s successes, no matter how large or small.**
7. **If you run into problems you can't solve, get help. Do not be afraid to reach out.**
8. **Always be open and listen to advice and supervision. If you remain open, you'll grow. If you close up, you'll go back.**
9. **Do not try to play catch up on all the times you have lost. It cannot be done.**
10. **No matter how hard it gets, you are still free and not behind razor wire.**

<b>Especially For You – The Ex-Offender</b>
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- 1. Leave hate, anger and self-pity behind you in prison. You have done your time and now you need to be full of energy and joy at life.**
- 2. Do not allow fear to rule your life. Get out there and become a part of the world.**
- 3. Always treat others as you would want to be treated.**
- 4. Change, Change, Change!! You have changed and so has the world; time did not stand still while you were away. Be prepared for it.**
- 5. You will experience rejection and disappointments. Do not expect any favors; the world doesn't work that way and life is never going to be fair.**
- 6. If you are assigned to a halfway house or a pre-release center, you are not free yet. There are still many roadblocks ahead; be careful and use the mind you were given.**
- 7. Always report to your parole agent on time and follow his/her instruction. Parole doesn't have to be hard and you can be successful. Once again, Keep It Simple.**

Begin looking for employment immediately. The sooner you gain employment, the greater your chance of success. If all you can get when first leaving prison is minimum wage, be thankful. You can always go back to prison and work for free (or 95 cents a day).



This is advice from a former prisoner incarcerated in State and Federal prison 3 times for a total of 7 years, 3 months. He'd been out 1 year when he wrote this, he's been out for over 5 years now (2002)



If you want to stay out of prison once you get out, you have to have a strategy. Advanced planning, so your impressive achievement of getting out of prison will be staying out.

Six things you can do *before you leave* prison. If you can't do it here and now you won't be able to do it there and later.

1. First, practice accomplishing something you didn't think you could or would: get your GED. Why? Because...
  - It'll force you to confront Delayed Gratification
  - GED guys are no smarter than you are, they just stuck with it even when they didn't want to
  - Getting a GED can double your income – that could be a good \$50,000 over the first 4 years. That means a nicer place to live, car to drive, better vacations, Christmases, even what's called an investment portfolio.
  - Get the feeling: nobody gave it to me, and nobody can take it from me.
  - It does help you get a better job because it opens doors for you. No GED, no key to the door.
2. Second, learn conflict resolution skills. Why? Because...
  - To live is to be in conflict, and if I loose it, I'll loose everything.

*Remember how stuff happens?*

- You arrive home after work and find another car in your designated parking space.
- You wake up in the morning after a bad night's sleep. You're late. You are putting on your shoes and break your shoe lace. Your wife says, "good morning" and you want to slap her into next Tuesday.
- John is 13, your brother's eldest child. He is a real clown; as a little boy he could get everyone in the family laughing when he wanted to. But lately you've seen what you think are tell-tale signs that he's using and maybe selling drugs.
- You've been at home for 3 weeks. You and your lady have started to argue a lot. It's almost always over little stuff, but the arguments are getting more and more frequent. You're afraid it's turning into the bad old times all over again.
- Your 13-year-old daughter Alice brings up at dinner a problem she's been having with her best friend Pamela. Nearly every day at lunch time, Pamela asks for part of Alice's lunch. Sometimes Pamela wants half of Alice's sandwich. Other times, she reaches over and takes one of Alice's cookies. Alice knows that some conflicts are not important enough to fight over or even bring up. But conflicts can grow if you just ignore them, and she doesn't want that to happen.

### ***You need conflict resolution skills***

3. Third, practice "Stop and Think." Use the brain God gave you.
4. Fourth, join AA or NA - only a fool convinces himself he's so tough that he doesn't need help. Guys who would laugh at you for joining are like turkeys, not eagles. There's more of them. They have wings but don't know flying. They eat what they're fed not what they hunt. Are you a turkey or an eagle?
5. Work your way into a leadership position. Leaders are people who do what's needed - it's no big deal. There are people out there who need your help. A law you can't break: what I give away, comes back to me. So help people.
6. Get a reference, or at least a phone number from your supervisor. Mail the phone number and/or letter to yourself at home - it's precious.

Things you can do *after you leave prison*.

1. First, work your Parole Officer smart.
  - Ask: "What can I do to stay out?" Then give him your resume.

## **Been There, Done That: The Real You (Page 3)**

**EN3**

- You need him on your side - he can do with a few phone calls what you'd take weeks to even know about.
  - You'll be different from all the other parolees - nobody asks that question!
  - Thank him a lot. Be sincere and give away the credit. Win the war, not the battle.
  - Be sincere. Even a little kid can spot a phony. So can a PO.
2. Know what your PO can do.
- He's crucial to your job/career strategy.
  - He has access to housing, food stamps, travel vouchers, even clothes to wear for job interviews.
  - Get him to help you join NA or AA again. Hey, you need all the help you can get!
  - Have him get you into volunteering. Community service isn't so bad. Give back to society. It's the right thing to do. There are people out there who need what you have to offer. Two hours at a soup kitchen - what'd you give for someone to help you when you were down.