

# Transition Is a Family Affair (Dallas)

Some Ideas for Prompting Discussion Around the Dinner Table

**Transition:** moving from one state or condition to another.

**Moving:** to go away from where one is.

REALITY shows us: Furlough or moving can be a very unsettling time for all the members of a family.

OBJECTIVE: To help the family talk about their feelings & experiences. While going through transition, it often helps to reminisce about past experiences as well as to be open to talking about feelings such as . . . insecurity, loneliness, various fears, loss of identity, or being displaced.

INSTRUCTIONS: Reproduce these sheets of conversation starters on colored card stock, or use them as they are. Cut them apart and place them face down in a box or bowl. For one month, use them during the main family meal of the day. After or during the meal, have one family member draw a "question of the day" to use for discussion. Each person will take his turn in responding as requested.

*Note to parents:* Please reword questions, as needed, to relate to younger children.

Originally compiled & designed by:  
*Jim & Ruth Lauer*

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& *SIL International*

Dear Parents,

Your family has recently relocated here in Dallas, either for a furlough or for a change of assignment. That transition experience is sometimes a "mixed-bag" of feelings for various members of the family.

The attached communication game—"Transition Is a Family Affair"—has been designed to help you and your children talk about these feelings in a non-threatening manner. It allows questions to be asked or topics to be discussed at the suggestion of an external source (the game), rather than through the initiative of any single family member. Everyone is on common ground . . . each one giving his/her response (parents and children alike).

As you use this game, there are some things worth remembering:

1. It's best if questions are asked in a spontaneous, relaxed setting.
2. Allow children to freely express how they feel without telling them why they shouldn't feel what they're feeling—don't try to "fix it."
3. Be willing to admit your own loneliness, fears, worries, etc.
4. See your time in the U.S. as a great time to experience and learn new things—be positive.
5. In some situations, your children may need your guidance to help them express their real inner thoughts. [For example: One question reads: "What was the best thing that happened today?" If a child is really feeling bad, maybe he/she will say nothing good happened. That's OK. But of all the bad things that happened, which was the least bad?]
6. Help your kids think (and talk) about the people and things that influence them—talk about clothes, lunch hour, recess, P.E., study hall, lockers or locker room, peers, teachers, other adults, their likes and dislikes.
7. Remember that during times of transition it is especially important to find something to praise/celebrate with each child each day.

We'd love to hear your response to the effectiveness of this "game" as a communication tool for your family.

Praying for a smooth transition,

The staff of . . .  
Barnabas International &  
International CHED (SIL)

# Transition Is a Family Affair (Furlough)

Some Ideas for Prompting Discussion Around the Dinner Table

**Transition:** moving from one state or condition to another.

**Moving:** to go away from where one is.

REALITY shows us: Furlough or moving can be a very unsettling time for all the members of a family.

OBJECTIVE: To help the family talk about their feelings & experiences. While going through transition, it often helps to reminisce about past experiences as well as to be open to talking about feelings such as . . . insecurity, loneliness, various fears, loss of identity, or being displaced.

INSTRUCTIONS: Reproduce these sheets of conversation starters on colored card stock, or use them as they are. Cut them apart and place them face down in a box or bowl. For one month, use them during the main family meal of the day. After or during the meal, have one family member draw a "question of the day" to use for discussion. Each person will take his turn in responding.

*Note to parents:* Please reword questions, as needed, to relate to younger children.

Originally compiled & designed by:  
*Jim & Ruth Lauer*

Adapted by:  
*International CHED Staff*

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& *SIL International*

Dear Parents,

When your family relocates, either for a furlough or for a change of assignment, that transition experience is sometimes a "mixed-bag" of feelings for various members of the family.

The attached communication game—"Transition Is a Family Affair"—has been designed to help you and your children talk about these feelings in a non-threatening manner. It allows questions to be asked or topics to be discussed at the suggestion of an external source (the game), rather than through the initiative of any single family member. Everyone is on common ground . . . each one giving his/her response (parents and children alike).

As you use this game, there are some things worth remembering:

1. It's best if questions are asked in a spontaneous, relaxed setting.
2. Allow children to freely express how they feel without telling them why they shouldn't feel what they're feeling—don't try to "fix it."
3. Be willing to admit your own loneliness, fears, worries, etc.
4. See your time in your home country as a great time to experience and learn new things—be positive.
5. In some situations, your children may need your guidance to help them express their real inner thoughts. [For example: One question reads: "What was the best thing that happened today?" If a child is really feeling bad, maybe he/she will say nothing good happened. That's OK. But of all the bad things that happened, which was the least bad?]
6. Help your kids think (and talk) about the people and things that influence them—talk about clothes, lunch hour, recess, P.E., study hall, lockers or locker room, peers, teachers, other adults, their likes and dislikes.
7. Remember that during times of transition it is especially important to find something to praise/celebrate with each child each day.

We'd love to hear your response to the effectiveness of this "game" as a communication tool for your family.

Praying for a smooth transition,

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Barnabas International &  
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The thing that has surprised me most about being here is ...

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The thing that has helped me most during our time of transition to this country has been ...

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Tell about a travel experience you'll never forget.

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Tell about a person who has influenced your relationship with God.

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Tell about one of your favorite memories of something we did as a family where we used to live.

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One of my favorite memories of celebrating a holiday overseas is ...

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Describe your "dream job." What would make it so special for you?

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What do you recall as one of the nicest things someone here did for you or our family when we were in \_\_\_\_\_?  
(country)

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The food/dish I miss most from \_\_\_\_\_ is \_\_\_\_\_.  
(country)

The last time I ate it was in/at \_\_\_\_\_ with \_\_\_\_\_.  
(place) (whom)

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One thing parents should never do is ...

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What helps you when you feel lonely? What could someone else do to help?

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What would you do to help someone who is sad?

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What words of advice would you give to a TCK who is just graduating from high school and coming to this country?

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If I were ever a boarding home parent, one thing I would do to make it fun for the kids is ....

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A difficult part about moving here has been \_\_\_\_\_.  
And the best part has been \_\_\_\_\_.

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What is one of your prized possessions? What makes it valuable to you?

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What is a funny question a national friend has asked you?

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What is the strangest food you have eaten? Would you eat it again?

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Transition Is a Family Affair (furlough)

One of the things I'm looking forward to most this year is ...

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To you, what is one of the nicest things someone has done for our family since we arrived in this country?

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Describe your favorite teacher. What did you like about that class or teacher?

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When someone asks you what it was like in the country where we used to live, what do you usually say?

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If you took a non-TCK friend back to where we lived overseas, where would you be sure to take him/her? Is there someone special you wish you could take?

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What is something for which you'd like to thank your parents?

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One of the feelings I have a hard time expressing is ....

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What is a difficult question for you to answer regarding being a TCK or someone in ministry?

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Something friends can do to show they care is ....

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Complete this statement:  
To me, living overseas was ...

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Today each person may make their own question. [Ask this question to the person on your left.]

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You get to make up your own question. Ask something related to moving between two places/cultures.

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The thing I miss most about being away from \_\_\_\_\_ is ...  
(country)

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