

# Transition Is a Family Affair (Moving)

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 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.

Based on the other parts of this game that were compiled & designed by:  
*Jim & Ruth Lauer*

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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 move 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 which 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 (Moving)

Something that surprised me after we had moved is ...

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Something that has helped me during this process of moving is...

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Tell about an experience you've had while traveling...

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What is one of your favorite memories from \_\_\_\_\_.  
(where you are moving from or where you used to live)

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What is a food/dish that you miss? When was the last time you had it?

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

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What has been hard about moving? What has been a good part of moving?

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What is a strange food you have eaten? What would other people think about eating that food?

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When someone asks you what is it like to live where you live, what would you say?

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One of the feelings I have the hardest time talking about is...

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One of the best things that a friend can do to show they care is....

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What do you miss the most about where you used to live?

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What was one of the best things we did as a family when we lived in \_\_\_\_\_?

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What advice would you give to other kids who have to move to a different place?

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What is something you like about where you live now?

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Describe a memory of celebrating a holiday together as a family.

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What would you do to encourage someone who is sad?

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What was something that made you uncomfortable at first about being here but doesn't anymore?

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Who do you miss the most from where you used to live?

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Where is “home”? Where do you feel like you belong?

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What are the things that contribute to your feeling happy? Sad? Afraid? Angry?

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If you had all the time and money you wanted, what would you do with it?

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What are some of the things that are different about where you used to live and where you live now?

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Did you feel more at home where you used to live or where you live now?

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I hope we never stop doing \_\_\_\_\_ because ...

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What do you do with your friends here?

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What is a good thing that happened to you today?

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Tell about an embarrassing experience you’ve had since you moved to this country.

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How do you figure out what you should do when you don’t know how to act?

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Describe the differences between the house where you used to live and where you live now.

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What did your parents do to help you when you moved?

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What do you wish you had known about before you moved?

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What have you learned or discovered since you moved?

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What was school like where you used to live? What is it like where you live now?

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(\*\*This is a before-move question.)

What is something that you want to take with you when you move?

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What is scary about moving? What is exciting about moving?

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