



THE R.A.F.T. TRANSITION TOOLKIT

A PRACTICAL GUIDE FOR TRANSITIONS

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WELCOME TO YOUR R.A.F.T. TRANSITION TOOLKIT!

Building a R.A.F.T. is a helpful tool for bringing closure to an event, a job, a season of life, a move to a new home or city, and so much more. Using this tool helps you end well so that you may begin well.

The concept of building a R.A.F.T. was introduced by David Pollock and Ruth Van Reken in their book *Third Culture Kids*. R.A.F.T. is an acronym outlining specific steps to help children and families living overseas bring good closure and process the losses in life as they transition to a new location. Yet building a R.A.F.T. is not just for kids and families, nor does it only apply to people living overseas. Adults can also benefit greatly from using this tool, whether you are moving to a new home, anticipating a new job, starting a new ministry role, or even simply reflecting from one year to the next.

THE R.A.F.T. FRAMEWORK

Building a R.A.F.T. involves attaching four basic “logs” together so that the “R.A.F.T.” stays afloat to carry you safely to the other side of transition. If only one of these logs is solid, the R.A.F.T. will be unstable. The four logs are as follows:

Reconciliation

Any time we are moving on, it can be easy to ignore tensions in relationships. We may reason that we won’t see that person again, so it won’t matter. Yet carrying unresolved relational problems into our next season of life will greatly affect our new relationships and our ability to create meaningful relationships. A healthier approach is to step into reconciliation, choose to forgive, and seek forgiveness. Forgiving others closes the door on bitterness and lightens the load we carry forward.





THE R.A.F.T. FRAMEWORK

Affirmation

This involves showing your appreciation for the meaningful relationships in your life, acknowledging that each person matters. How we affirm others will be expressed differently depending on the culture, the age of the person expressing affirmation, and the person on the receiving end of appreciation. Taking the time to write notes, invite people over for dinner, or give a gift of appreciation will encourage you as well as those you affirm.

THE R.A.F.T. FRAMEWORK

Farewell

It is important to create time and space to say goodbye to people, places, and possessions (including pets). Being intentional to say goodbye to the people in your life is not only beneficial for you, but also for the people you are leaving behind. Be sure to say 'Goodbye.' Our future is not guaranteed and having that closure will be healthier in the long run for all involved.

Thinking Ahead

This part of R.A.F.T. helps us begin to anticipate what lies ahead and what needs to be accomplished to start well. Start talking over with team members what you can expect those first few weeks. Communicate with your family what will be happening when you arrive at your next destination. Providing good communication with those who will be affected by the transition is critical.





HOW TO USE

Begin by taking a blank piece of paper and writing the words Reconciliation, Affirmation, Farewell, and Thinking Ahead along the left side of the sheet, leaving large spaces between each word. Starting at the top, begin thinking through and praying about each step, answering the following questions:

Reconciliation

- Who do I need to forgive?
- Who do I need to ask forgiveness from?

Affirmation

- Who has impacted my life specifically during this season? Write down all the people who come to mind.
- How do I affirm them? Beside the names of those you want to affirm, write down how you will do that.

HOW TO USE

Farewell

- Who do I need to say goodbye to? Write down all the people who come to mind. Beside each name, write down how you will say goodbye.
- What places do I want to visit one last time before I leave?
- What things do I need to say goodbye to?

Thinking Ahead

- What do I need to do to prepare for the next thing? Make a list and prioritize.
- Who can help me, and what can I delegate?
- Who do I need to communicate this information to? Schedule time to do so.



APPLICATION

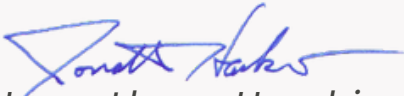
Applying this is the secret sauce! Take your sheet with all the names and information you have written down and begin to do the necessary activities to bring closure. Meet with the people you need to ask forgiveness from. Start writing those notes or emails of affirmation. Begin saying the goodbyes and visiting places one last time. And don't forget to over-communicate what will happen next, whether that's simply to yourself or those going with you.

Bringing good closure is a gift that keeps on giving—both to yourself and to those around you—in the present and in the future.

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