

## Transition Tips

Reentry can be both exciting and frustrating! Our attitude toward release from prison is that it should be a simple matter of getting resettled, resuming routines, and reestablishing your relationships; but reality proves there is much more to it than that. Here is a list of tips to consider that can help you go through the transition process:

1. **Mentally prepare for the adjustment process.** Be prepared for anything!
2. **Give yourself permission to ease into the transition.** Allow yourself time to acclimate to the new environment.
3. **Give yourself time.** You'll need time to relax and reflect upon what is going on around you, how you are reacting to it, and what you might like to change.
4. **Understand that the familiar will seem different.** You have changed; home has changed. You will see familiar people, places, and behaviors from new perspectives.
5. **Expect to do some 'cultural catching up'.** Clothes, trends, language, and more have changed, too!
6. **Reserve judgments.** Reserve all judgments of others, but especially negative judgments; just as you would like to have others reserve judgments of you. Resist the impulse to make snap decisions.
7. **Expect mood swings.** It is entirely possible for you to feel ecstatic one moment and completely defeated a short time later. It's okay; it is a part of the process.
8. **Allow sufficient time for reflection and self-analysis.** Your most valid and valuable analysis of an event is likely to take place after allowing time for reflection.
9. **Respond to inquiries thoughtfully and carefully.** Prepare to greet surprise questions with a calm, thoughtful approach. If you find yourself being overly defensive or aggressive, take a deep breath and relax.
10. **Seek support networks.** Don't isolate yourself!

To prepare yourself for upcoming challenges, it is safe to expect the following:

- You will have to prove yourself (over and over and over).
- People will make many assumptions about who you are now.
- You will be different than when you left; your family and friends will be different, too!
- People will expect things from you, especially a plan for your life.
- The way you'd hoped things would be will be different from the way they are.
- You will feel 'down' or depressed after the initial return 'honeymoon' period. Please refer to our Culture Shock! page for further transition considerations.