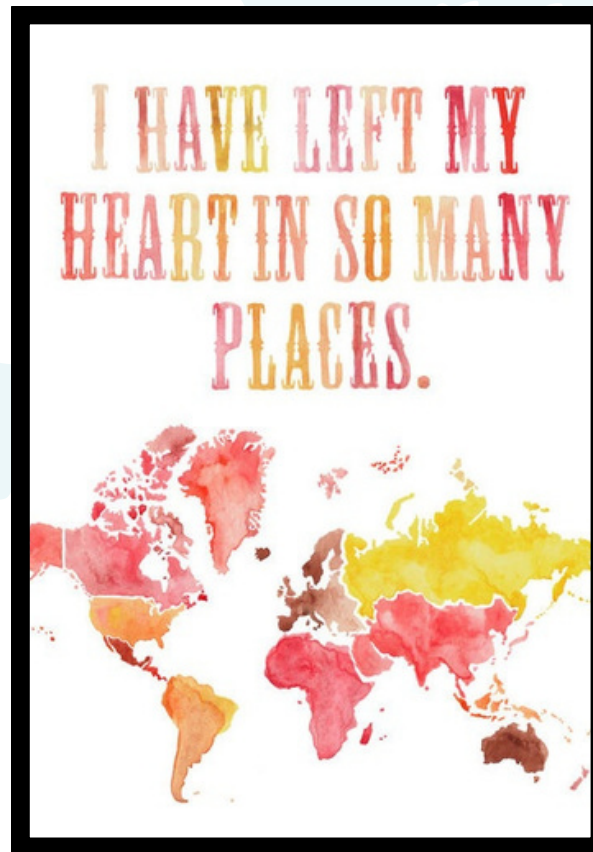


# Navigating Change and Transitions



# Introduction



**My name is Edele Nolan, the Founder of Young Minds Therapy and a psychologist with over 21 years of experience working with children, teens, and families all over the world. As psychologist, play therapist, teen mental health expert, and parent coach, I'm passionate about helping families navigate the challenges of modern parenting with empathy and practical strategies. Having moved internationally eight times, I deeply understand the complexities of expat life and the impact of transitions on families. I work both in person and online, offering flexible support to children, teens, and parents to help them build resilience, strengthen connections, and create a foundation for well-being, no matter where life takes them.**

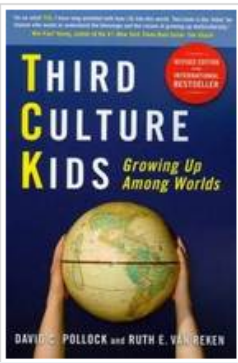
**Website- [www.youngmindstherapy.com](http://www.youngmindstherapy.com)  
Email- [youngmindstherapy1@gmail.com](mailto:youngmindstherapy1@gmail.com)  
Phone- **±351910535315****



**My name is Catarina Faria e Maya, Co-Founder of Global Minds - Development and Healthcare and an educational psychologist specialised in the assessment and intervention in the areas of neurodevelopment and special educational needs.**

**For the past 10 years, I have focused on working with international families and Portuguese families within the international circuit, collaborating closely with international schools. I draw on my background as a student and psychologist within these institutions, and on my knowledge of the different curricula and examination boards, to support the educational success and well-being of students.**

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# Third Culture Kids

## What is a Third Culture Kid (TCK)?

- A person who grows up in a culture different from their parents' culture or the culture of their country/countries of nationality.
- Develops a unique 'third culture' blending elements of their upbringing.
- Highly adaptable/resilient
- Multilingual and multicultural
- Strong observational skills
- Can struggle with identity and belonging



# Leaving Process

## R.A.F.T.ING



**R – Reconciliation- Forgive and be forgiven**

**A – Affirmation- Closure to respect and acknowledge relationships**

**F – Farewells & 4 P's- People, Places, Pets, Possessions**

**I – Think destination**

**Where are we going? Benefits? Challenges?**



# During Transitions

**Sometimes we START problems before we go:**

**By pushing people away**

**By arguing**

**By fighting**

**It is better when we:**

**Talk to our friends about being apart**

**Say good-bye in our own way**



# Reconciliation

**Ensure that relationships are in healthy place before you leave.**

**This will help prevent festering negative feelings and guilt to be carried**



# Affirmation

**Saying thank you**

**Who will you always remember?**

**Who holds a special place in your story?**

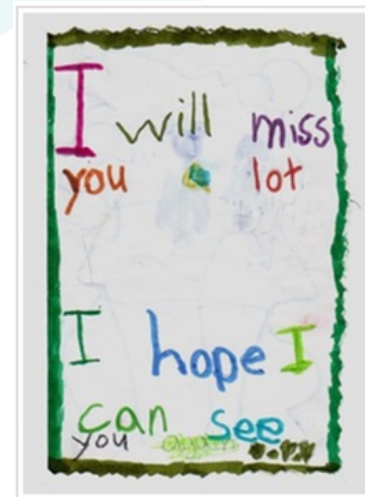
**Who are your 'global' roots in the world?**



# Farewell

How might you say good-bye to the people, places, possessions (and sometimes pets)?

How and when will you do it?



# Think Destination

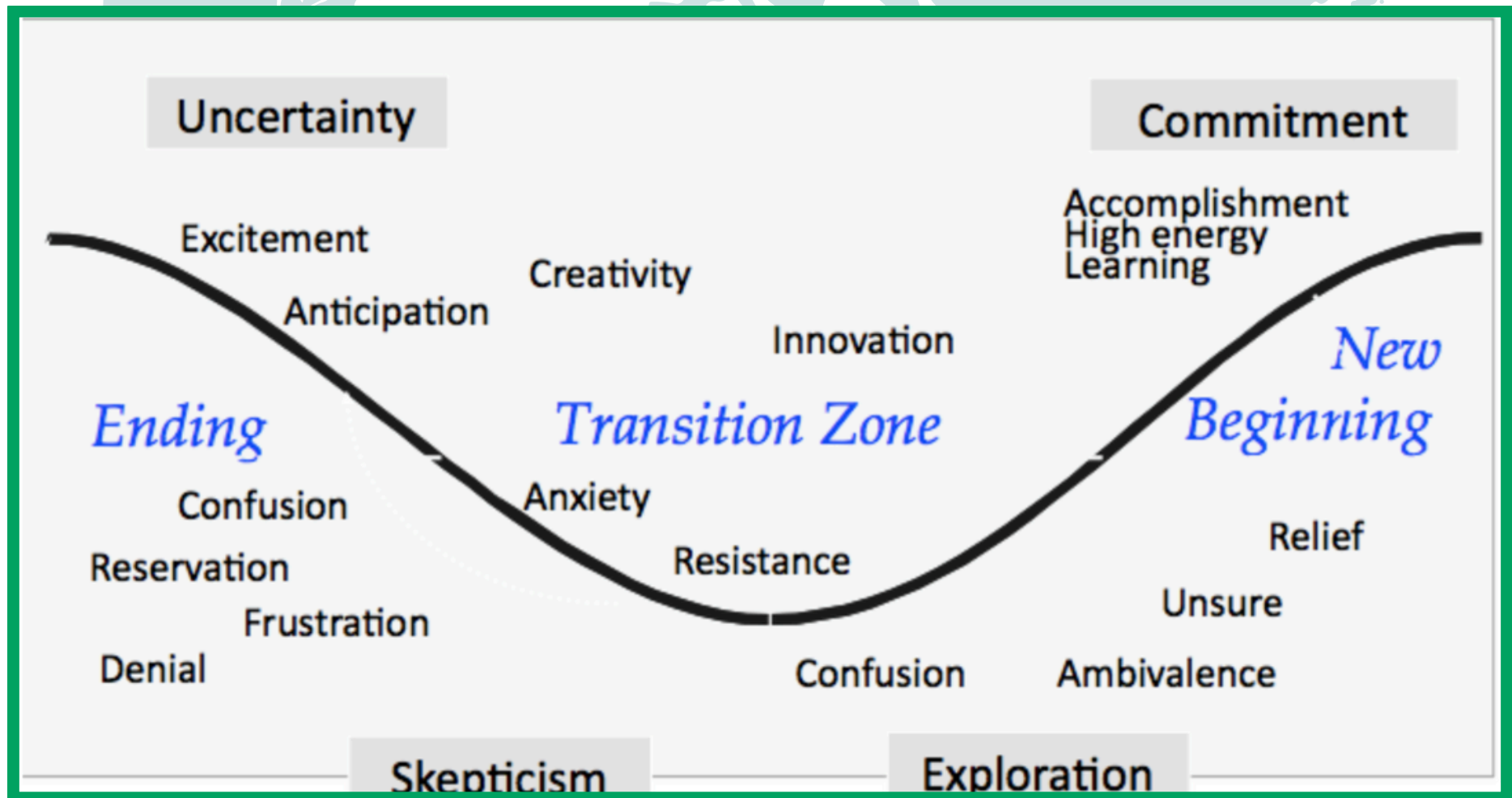
**Collate information on your new destination**

**Home, school, activities, sports etc.  
Involve the entire family**





# Navigating Transitions



# ***Stages of Transitions***

## ***Stage 1-Ending.***

Initial reaction to the change will likely be shock, denial and anger. Refusal to accept that change is happening



FEAR



DENIAL



ANGER



GUILT



SADNESS



DISORIENTATION



FRUSTRATION



UNCERTAINTY



A SENSE OF LOSS

# *Stages of Transitions*

## **Stage 2-The Transition Zone**

This phase is like a bridge between old and new- in some ways people are still attached to the old while trying to adapt to the new



DISCOMFORT



IMPATIENCE



RESENTMENT TOWARDS  
THE CHANGE



LOW MORALE



ANXIETY



SKEPTICISM ABOUT  
THE CHANGE

# ***Stages of Transitions***

## **Stage 3-New Beginnings**

This stage is a time of acceptance, energy, hope and nervousness



HIGH ENERGY



ANXIOUSNESS



OPENNESS

# Needs of Children in Transitions

## 1.To feel empowered

- Acknowledge their questions as being important.
- Include them in as many decisions as you can.
- Allow them to say no to some things. This allows the child to feel empowered in the midst of family change.





# Needs of Children in Transitions

## 2. To feel Heard

- Allow the child to express their feelings about the changes (listen to the emotion behind the words)
- Don't try to fix or talk them out of feeling what they feel. Do let them feel it.
- Don't tell the child how you think they "should" feel during this time. Do listen, acknowledge and name their emotions.



# Needs of Children in Transitions

## 3. To feel Safe/ Supported

- Make every effort to have the child spend time with people who can support them through this process
- Spend time together, meeting them where they are
- Express affection, especially in conflict (“I love you even when we disagree”)



# Needs of Children in Transitions

## 4. To help build Resilience

- Offer encouragement and give specific praise
- Promote a growth mindset (using the word yet)
- Model Resilience - Imitation is powerful (how do you cope? Let them see -show it, talk about it)
- Discuss all the previous challenges that they have overcome
- Encourage them to participate in school & community activities.



# ***Practical Tips - Young Children***

- **Talk about the move/read stories**
- **What will be the same/different**
- **Make a countdown calendar**
- **Research new home**
- **Make a memory box (pictures from friends etc)**
- **Make a moving book (photos of new city/ school )**
- **Allow them some control ( pack their toys)**
- **Create a resilience book with photos**
- **Keep your routine consistent**
- **Validate emotions**
- **Set up their room first**
- **Plan a fun activity when you arrive**



# ***Practical Tips - Teens***

- **Communicate openly about the move**
- **Involve Them Early in discussions**
- **Give them choice and control when possible**
- **Help maintain old friendships & build new ones**
- **Give them time to adjust**
- **Validate their emotions/Listen to them**
- **Model adaptability/resiliency**
- **Maintain Routines**
- **Celebrate Their Wins**
- **Monitor Mental Health**
- **Take care of yourself**





# Books on Moving

## For Young Children

- Goodbye old house by Margaret Wild
- House Finds a home by Katy Duffield
- Florette by Anna Walker
- Shine a light my world- Moving by Carron Brown
- The Invisible String by Patrice Karst
- Evelyn Del Rey is moving away by Mandi Carroll



## For Tweens/Teens

- The Best Worst Summer by Elizabeth Eulberg
- Not All Heroes by Josephine Cameron
- Far from Fair by Elana Arnold
- The Essential Moving Guided Journal for Teens: My Life and My Thoughts Before and After Moving by Sara Elizabeth Boehm

## For Parents

- Third Culture Kids by David C. Pollock and Ruth Van Reken
- The Essential moving guide for Parents by Sara Elizabeth Boehm



# *Preparing For the Move*

*with*

## *Children with Special Educational Needs (SEN)*



1

### Practical Logistics

Researching Schools; School  
Applications; Securing Services



2

### Strategies

To emotionally and behaviorally  
support the child



# Preparing For the Move



with  
**SEN KIDS**



## Checklist

- 1 **Research the Destination Country**
  - Legislation
  - Schools
  - Grade Equivalencies
- 2 **Identify & Contact Support Services**
  - Therapeutic centers
  - Local parent networks or SEN advocacy groups
- 3 **Update Assessments and Documentation**
  - Assessment Reports (psychological, educational, medical)
  - Individualized Education Plan (IEP), therapy plans, progress reports, examples of successful intervention.



DEPARTURES →





# Preparing For the Move

## Equivalencies:

### Ano de Escolaridade / Grade / Year



Age	Ano de Escolaridade		Grade	British Years	International Programs		
					Cambridge	International Baccalaureate	
3-4	Creche		Pre-Kindergarten	Nursery	Early Years Foundation Stage	PYP Early Years	Primary Years Program
4-5	Educação Pré-Escolar		Pre-Kindergarten	Reception	Early Years Foundation Stage	PYP Early Years	
5-6	Educação Pré-Escolar		Kindergarten	Year 1	Key Stage 1	PYP Early Years	
6-7	1º Ciclo	1º Ano	Grade 1	Year 2	Key Stage 1	PYP 1	
7-8		2º Ano	Grade 2	Year 3	Key Stage 2	PYP 2	
8-9		3º Ano	Grade 3	Year 4	Key Stage 2	PYP 3	
9-10		4º Ano	Grade 4	Year 5	Key Stage 2	PYP 4	
10-11	2º Ciclo	5º Ano	Grade 5	Year 6	Key Stage 2	PYP 5	Middle Years Program
11-12		6º Ano	Grade 6	Year 7	Key Stage 3	MYP 1	
12-13	3º Ciclo	7º Ano	Grade 7	Year 8	Key Stage 3	MYP 2	
13-14		8º Ano	Grade 8	Year 9	Key Stage 3	MYP 3	
14-15		9º Ano	Grade 9	Year 10	Key Stage 4 / IGCSE (1 <sup>st</sup> Year)	MYP 4	
15-16	Secundário	10º Ano	Grade 10	Year 11	Key Stage 4 / IGCSE (2 <sup>nd</sup> Year)	MYP 5	Diploma Program
16-17		11º Ano	Grade 11	Year 12	Key Stage 5 / A-Levels (1 <sup>st</sup> Year)	DP 1	
17-18		12º Ano	Grade 12	Year 13	Key Stage 5 / A-Levels (2 <sup>nd</sup> Year)	DP 2	





# Preparing For the Move



with  
**SEN KIDS**



## Checklist

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- 3 **Update Assessments and Documentation**
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DEPARTURES →







# *Preparing For the Move*



## *Finding the Right Fit: Applying to International Schools*

### Identify Inclusive Schools

- Learning Support Departments / SEN specialists;
- Small class sizes;
- Sensory-friendly environments;
- Curriculum flexibility



### Inquire About Support

- SEN staffing;
- Resources;
- Policies on assessment arrangements;
- Individual planning;
- Additional costs



### Provide Relevant Information

- Transparency;
- Focus on facts and solutions;
- Highlight strengths and successful support strategies.





# *Preparing For the Move*

## *Characteristics / Challenges to Consider*



- **Challenges with Transitions**
- **Need for Predictability**
- **Anxiety in Unfamiliar Situations**
- **Difficulty Adapting to New Environments**
- **Need for Control**
- **Emotional Regulation Challenges**
- **Social Skills Difficulties**
- **Sensory Processing Difficulties**



# *Preparing For the Move*

## *Addressing Specific Characteristics and Challenges*



### *Challenge*

#### **Challenges with Transitions**



### *Strategies*

- Gradually introduce changes to routines.
- Use social stories to explain the process step-by-step.

### *Tools*

- Visual schedules
- Transition timers
- Personalized social stories



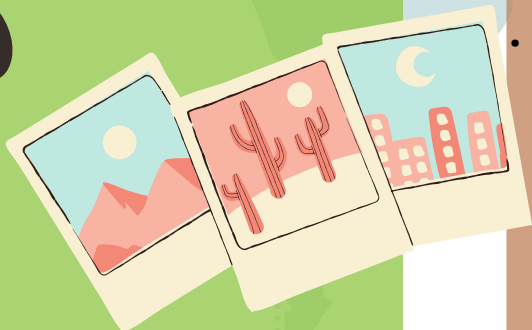
# Preparing For the Move



## Addressing Specific Characteristics and Challenges

### Challenge

**Anxiety in  
Unfamiliar  
Situations**



### Strategies

- Familiarize the child with new settings in advance.
- Practice scenarios they may encounter.

### Tools

- Videos, photos of the new environment
- Role-playing activities



# *Preparing For the Move*

## *Addressing Specific Characteristics and Challenges*



### *Challenge*

#### **Difficulty Adapting to New Environments**



### *Strategies*

- Introduce new elements (e.g.: foods, activities, people) gradually.
- Offer reassurance and consistency (routines, etc).

### *Tools*

- Visual aids
- Cultural guides
- Sensory-friendly objects.



# Preparing For the Move



## Addressing Specific Characteristics and Challenges

### Challenge

**Need for Predictability**



### Strategies

- Create structured routines and clearly outline expectations.
- Use visual aids to explain timelines.



### Tools

- Countdown calendars
- Visual schedules
- Daily planners







# Preparing For the Move

Visual Countdown Calendar (example)



<div>Countdown</div> <div></div>							
July							
18	19	20	21	23	27	28	29
							





# Preparing For the Move

## Addressing Specific Characteristics and Challenges



### Challenge

#### Need for Control



### Strategies

- Give Context.
- Empower child with small decision-making opportunities (e.g.: choosing items to pack).

### Tools

- Choice boards
- Decision-making cards.





# Preparing For the Move

## Addressing Specific Characteristics and Challenges



### Challenge

#### Emotional Regulation Challenges



### Strategies

- Validate emotions.
- Teach coping skills like deep breathing or sensory breaks.
- Ensure continuity of therapeutic support.



### Tools

- Emotion charts
- Calming tools (e.g.: fidget toys, weighted blankets).



# *Preparing For the Move*

## *Addressing Specific Characteristics and Challenges*



### *Challenge*

**Social Skills Difficulties**

### *Strategies*

- Role-play social interactions.
- Use scripts or templates for initiating conversations.

### *Tools*

- Social skills flashcards
- Communication apps
- Storybooks about friendship.



# *Preparing For the Move*

## *Addressing Specific Characteristics and Challenges*



### *Challenge*

**Sensory  
Processing  
Difficulties**

### *Strategies*

- Provide sensory-friendly spaces.
- Equip child with tools to self-regulate during transitions.

### *Tools*

- Noise-canceling headphones
- Fidget tools
- Sensory kits.



# *Settling In*

## *Meeting the School*





# Settling In

## Meeting the School



### MEET SCHOOL

- ✓ Meet SEN Coordinator, teachers, relevant staff
- ✓ Confirm reception and understanding of documentation (IEPs, assessments, therapy plans)
- ✓ Discuss immediate accommodations or adjustments for first weeks)



### FAMILIARIZE CHILD WITH SCHOOL

*to reduce anxiety*

- ✓ Classrooms;  
Lunch and recess areas;  
WC;  
Areas of personal interest (e.g.: library);  
Support areas;  
Key staff members;  
Schedule;  
Routines.



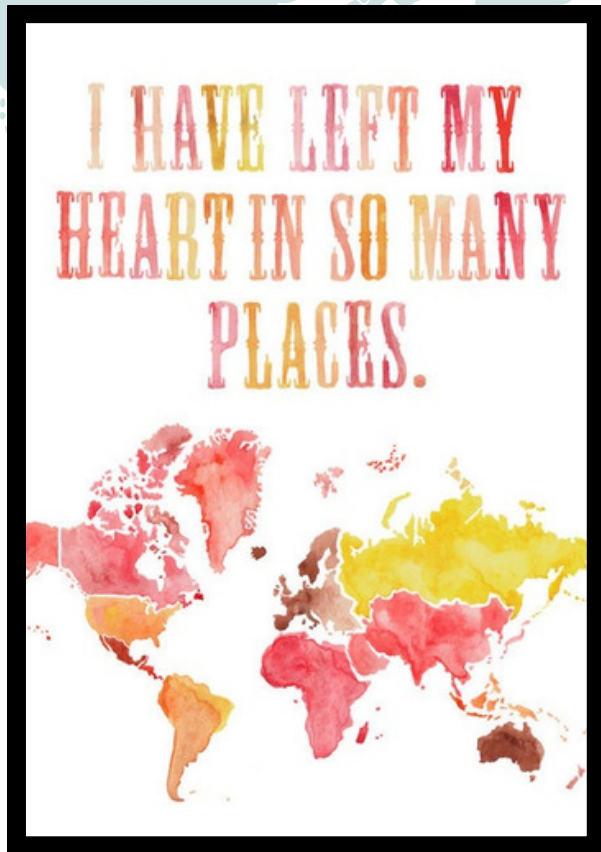
### PEER INTEGRATION

- ✓ Buddy system
- ✓ Small group activities





# *Navigating Change and Transitions*



*Thank you.*

*Obrigada.*