

Lesson 4

Understanding Stress and Managing Transitions

S4L: Skills4Life
Social Emotional Skills
for Career Studies

Secondary



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Mental Health
Ontario

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We are learning

- To normalize stress related to change.
- To increase knowledge needed to care for well-being during times of transition.



Warm up

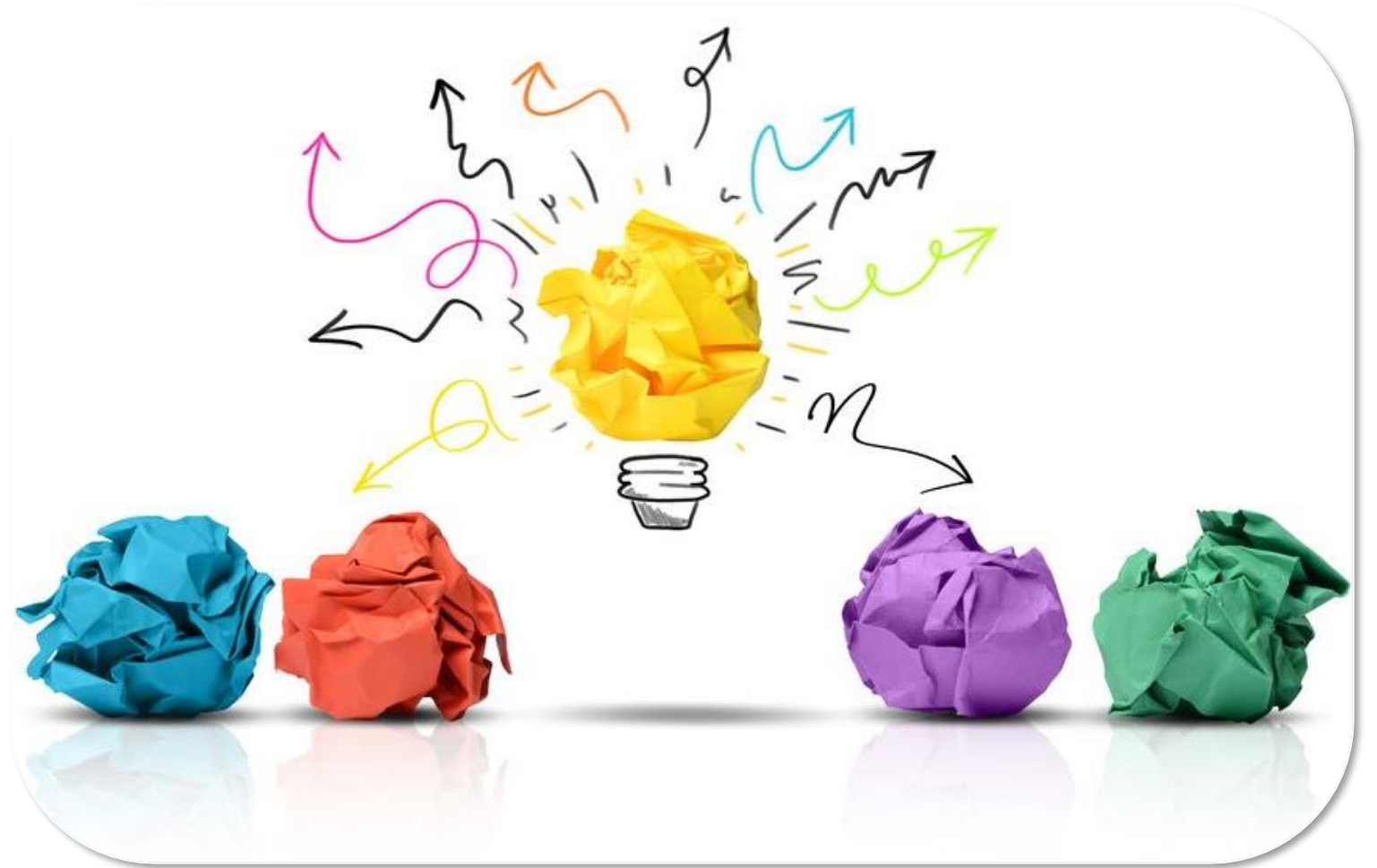
What are three words that come to mind when you think about transitioning from secondary school and moving on to whatever you are pursuing next.



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Why transitions might be stressful?



Why transitions might be stressful?

- Moving on from secondary school is a big life transition.
- Change—even good change we are looking forward to—can cause stress because it requires us to adapt and grow.
- Some students may not feel ready to move on from secondary school and were still hoping for more from the experience.
- Students often see an idealized version of what life ‘should’ look like after secondary school or hear this is the best time of life.
- There are also many life events outside of our control that can add to the amount of change we deal with and the stress we need to manage.



Exciting or challenging?

**Moving on to something
new and different**



Activity

Think about the following elements that come with a transition and share whether you think they are more **CHALLENGING** or **EXCITING**.



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Exciting or challenging?

Having greater independence



Exciting or challenging?

**Having the chance to focus more
on what you like/are interested in**



Exciting or challenging?

**Meeting new people and having
new experiences**



Exciting or challenging?

**Feeling one step closer to the
future you want**



Exciting or challenging?

Having many decisions to make (e.g., choosing a career path, where to apply to school or for a job, where to live, who to live with, etc.)



Exciting or challenging?

**Figuring out your identity and who
you want to be**



Exciting or challenging?

**Exploring new paths and having
big changes ahead**



Pathway stress



Pathway stress

- Managing personal expectations
- Managing pressure from others (e.g., parent/caregiver)
- Being in a competitive environment (e.g., when applying for post-secondary programs or jobs)
- Societal expectations (following a path that makes you feel different or left out)
- Feeling you lost time during the pandemic, or it was a difficult time to make decisions about post-secondary



Balanced self-talk activity

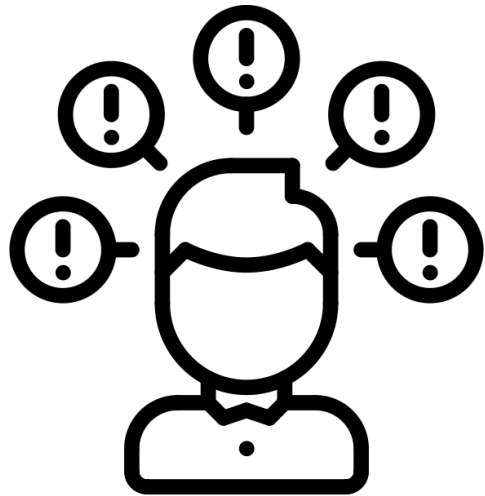
Challenge some self-talk
messages you may give
yourself that aren't helpful



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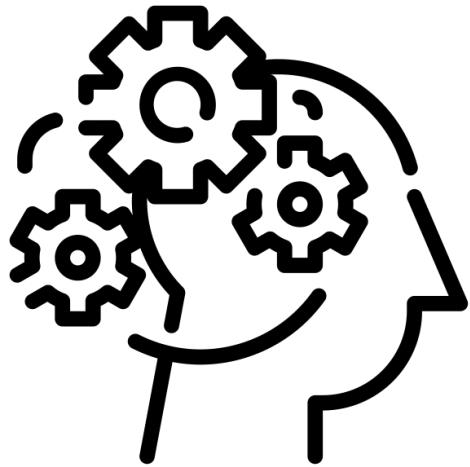
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Quick Tips



- How likely is it?
- Is there another way to think about things?
- Are there other explanations or viewpoints?

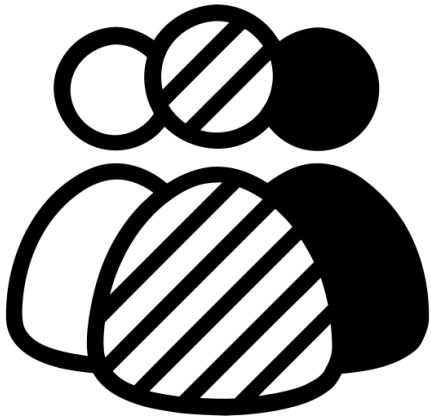
Quick Tips



Catch yourself saying you “**should**” do things (I should do, act, feel better).

“Should” often just makes us feel guilty and judge ourselves.

Quick Tips



What would I say to a friend?

Instead of... (Unbalanced thoughts)	I could try... (Balanced thoughts)
If I don't get the job I want, my life will be ruined.	My happiness in life will come from many things. Work is only one of them.
Grade 11 is when I need to make all the decisions that will impact the rest of my life.	Decisions for post-secondary are not permanent. I'm never stuck. Many people change paths.
My sibling/friend had much better grades and was more successful than I will be.	My sibling/friend and I are different people and have had different experiences. It isn't fair for me to compare us.

Let's Practice!

Instead of...

(Unbalanced thought)

There is one right choice and I need to figure it out. Everything else would be a huge mistake.



Let's Practice!

Instead of... (Unbalanced thought)	I could try... (Balanced thoughts)
<p>There is one right choice and I need to figure it out. Everything else would be a huge mistake.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• There is no one perfect career. People don't have one job their entire lives anymore, either.• Many people shift and change programs and jobs once they try them out. I won't truly know how much I like or don't like a program or job until I try it.



Let's Practice!

Instead of...

(Unbalanced thought)

My sibling/friend had much better grades and was more successful than I'll be.



Let's Practice!

Instead of... (Unbalanced thought)	I could try... (Balanced thoughts)
<p>My sibling/friend had much better grades and was more successful than I'll be.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• My sibling/friend and I are different people and have had different experiences. It isn't fair for me to compare us.• No one else is like me and my version of success could look different from my sibling/friend.



Let's Practice!

Instead of...

(Unbalanced thought)

I should be able to handle the stress.
Everyone else is.



Let's Practice!

Instead of... (Unbalanced thought)	I could try... (Balanced thoughts)
I should be able to handle the stress. Everyone else is.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Many people are stressed. We just don't always talk about it, and social media doesn't help.• I will try my best to handle the stress, but it's okay to ask for help if I need it. Many people ask for help and it can be part of having a successful year.



Debrief



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Notebook self-reflection

What are some of my unbalanced thoughts?

How can I respond to them?



Breathing exercise



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CIRCULAR BREATHING EXERCISE

Breathe in sync with the circle below.

OUT

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Find out more at [jack.org/covid](https://www.jack.org/covid)

Wrap up

- Change, even positive, can be stressful.
- We all have unbalanced thoughts... to avoid having these add to your stress, it's important to challenge them with balanced thinking.

