

# *How to Deal With Being In Transition*

You have been terminated or asked to resign. If this was a disease there would be a pamphlet describing it in your physician's office. The pamphlet might say, "Symptoms include strong emotional reactions including fear, anger, hate, anxiousness, insecurity, doubt, or resentment. Severity of the symptoms will vary depending upon the individual, situation, and support from family and community. Condition is not terminal."

The last statement is the most important. Being in transition is something that can be managed and cured. This article provides some suggestions to help you should you ever be in this situation. By no means is this an exclusive list of how to manage your situation, but it provides a solid start.

Try to keep things in perspective. You have suffered a loss, but it is not permanent. You will find other employment and the pieces will come back together. Far worse things could happen to you.

This may also be a time to re-evaluate your career. Ask yourself if you are satisfied working in local government, working in this region or state, working in this country. This could be an opportunity to find a profession or position that is more enjoyable and satisfying. You may decide to further your education. See the termination as an opportunity.

Your unemployment does not exist in a vacuum. Every one in your house will be effected. Be honest and upfront with your children. Assure them, and then reassure them that everything will be all right. Your significant other will most likely surprise you with how supportive and strong they are in a time of uncertainty.

Send thank you letters to former employees. Just the act of writing will help relieve some hurt feelings. This might even help you remember projects and the positive things you worked on together. Your peers will be just as supportive, and will also

point out job opportunities. A diary could be beneficial.

Your last employer will be on your resume. Keep your separation on good terms. Scolding the Council in a public meeting may not be wise. It may be beneficial from an emotional standpoint to get negative feelings about the situation off your chest. Tell a confidant, a spouse, a pet, a clergy member, or a city manager you know well. Security of this discussion must be made certain however.

Stay active. One of the best ways to relieve emotional stress is through physical activity. If you are not active, now is the time to start. Take the family pet for a stroll, go to the gym, lift weights, run, do Pilates, or split wood. Find an activity and stick with it.

Keep to a schedule. This will assist in filling your day, as well as, not disrupting the schedules of your family. Certainly you'll time to complete

*(Continued on page 2)*

# Dealing with Transition

*(Continued from page 1)*

tasks around the house, but do career related activities as well. Check for open positions, complete applications, read trade journals, speak with colleagues. Organize the activities so that you are doing some everyday. This will help keep your mind focused on getting out of transition rather than being in it.

Remember the positives of your former employment. It is good to know why you were terminated, or asked to resign. There should be at least one Council member that you trust to give a straight answer. However, if those answers do not come easy, learn to let go and do not become obsessed. Negative emotions come from negative thoughts. Do not waste energy focusing on these thoughts or obsessions, as they can be destructive.

Having negative thoughts and emotions are a natural experience of being emotionally distraught.

Being in transition can lead to depression. Learn to recognize the symptoms. Depression is a "whole-body" illness, involving your body, mood, and thoughts. Symptoms of depression include: lowered mood, loss of energy and interest, a feeling of physical illness or of being run-down, poor concentration, altered appetite and sleep, and a slowing down of physical and mental function. Depression can also manifest physical problems, such as heartburn, indigestion, constipation, and headaches. Depression is commonly associated with the feelings of hopelessness, helplessness, guilt and anxiety.

If you seem to experience some of the symptoms and associations with depression, please seek professional help. There is no shame in seeking professional assistance. One of the hardest things for a person to do is admit when help is needed. Prescription medication can be of assistance to get

out of the rut depression has created.

Lastly, be honest. Be honest with yourself. Be honest with your family. Be honest with your friends and peers. These are the people that will help and support you in this beginning stage of being a manager in transition.

*Article contributed by John Lloyd,  
Communications Committee Member*

1.JERI S. MILLER, Keeping the Family Calm After a Job Loss, <http://www.careerjournal.com/jobhunting/jobloss/19980311-miller.html>

2.Ibid.

3.***Psychology Information Online***  
<http://www.psychologyinfo.com/depression/description.html>

4.N.V. Organon, Oss, the Netherlands  
<http://www.jovinsorrow.com/viewMedical.asp?id=1>