



THE ART OF TRANSITIONS

The Art of Convening includes the skill set of the **Art of Transitions** to

- **Refocus** from one activity or phase to the next
- **Reset** intention or context
- **Remember** “what is at the heart of the matter,” no matter the setting.

Notice how building transitional time into your meetings and gatherings can **set a tone** that is calmer, quieter, removed from the hurriedness of normal conversation.

The key is this:

Neuroscience tells us it only takes 60 seconds to course-correct or refocus;
having a plan for those 60 seconds is key.

Three “tools” to consider using:

breathing, poetry or a brief body-centered (somatic) practice.

This article contains a selection of the many transitions that we design into our day, practice, and each training, learning or consulting session.



TRANSITION EXERCISE

1. Find a comfortable place to sit with your feet on the ground and hands in your lap.
2. If you're comfortable to do so, close your eyes and notice your breathing.
3. Shift your focus away from your mind to the area around your heart.
4. Imagine yourself breathing through your heart. It may help to put your hand on your heart.
5. Keep your focus there for 10 seconds or more.
6. Now, recall a positive, fun feeling or time in which you've felt appreciation for someone or something and attempt to re-experience it.
7. Notice the feeling.
8. When you're ready, open your eyes.

This is one of our favorites because it's simple, brief and effective. Anytime you can move your or a group's thought to appreciation, perceptions can shift.

A great Stringing the Beads question is: "Speak 1 or 2 words about someone or something that you appreciate."

*Adapted from HeartMath, LLC: www.heartmath.com



GROUNDING TRANSITION EXERCISE

Find a comfortable place to sit with your feet on the ground and hands in your lap.

If you're comfortable to do so, close your eyes and notice your breathing.

Now shift your focus away from your mind to the area around your heart. And imagine yourself breathing through your heart & just breath easily through your heart.

Now feel your feet firmly planted on the ground and notice that roots have begun to grow from your legs into the earth and that these are strong roots.

Now imagine the energy of the earth being drawn from these roots up through your feet, then your legs into your pelvis, through your organs into and resting in your heart. Hold that energy in your heart.

Now imagine a beam of light emanating from your heart reaching up through your head into the sky, into the stars, notice the expansiveness and clarity in the energy of the universe

Now draw that energy slowly back down through the stars, to the earth, to the USA, to wherever you are sitting now, into your head and now into your heart.

Join that energy of the universe with the energy of the earth and hold it in your heart.

Now breathe normally holding the two energies.

Notice the feeling.

When you are ready open your eyes.

(Source: Arica, Marko Pocagnik)



AN INTEGRATION TRANSITION EXERCISE

Find a comfortable place to sit with your feet on the ground and hands in your lap. If you are comfortable to do so, close your eyes and notice your breathing.

(Pause)

Now shift your focus away from your mind to the area around your heart and imagine yourself breathing through your heart. Slow easy natural breathing.

breathe in
expand and receive life

breathe out
let that which no longer serves you fall away

breathe in
allow grace to enter your heart

breathe out
usher out all that would sully your holy space

breathe in
be inspired by miracles all around you

breathe out
gently exhale mundane concerns

breathe in
invite the gift of life's creative force into each cell

breathe out
release spent energy and in exchange

breathe in
the refreshing newness and possibility of just this moment

breathe out
fears, fatigue, frustrations that would weigh you down

breathe in
and let life fill you with joy

breathe out
offer the precious gift of yourself to the world

from *Healing Is a Journey* by Minx Boren
published by Blue Mountain Arts



A SOMATIC TRANSITION EXERCISE

Physical thinking allows us to use direct body feedback to find out what it's saying. Our body is a verb – not a noun – we are the result of movement.

Find a comfortable spot you can stand or sit for this exercise.

Place both feet flat on the ground. – Arms by your side

We will begin with breathing. Pay attention to your breath as it comes in and flows out of your body.

If your mind wanders to what you have to do – stop and remind your mind that for now...you are paying attention to your breathing

Relax your shoulders and neck
Relax your back, chest and pelvic area
Relax your legs

Feel the burdens of life – the discomforts you feel, flow into the ground. Through your feet. Feet that are firmly planted.

And just let those burdens that discomfort flow down into the ground.

PAUSE

Now... for just a moment concentrate on the values and principles you hold dear. Concentrate for a moment on the ground and exchange those burdens/those discomforts for the values you hold – the principles you hold dear.

PAUSE

Feel those values, those principles come up through the ground into your feet and up through your legs.

Let them flow through your pelvis, back and chest –
Bring them through your shoulders and neck

And now...to your head
Pause ...feel the strength in your feet

Check in with your breathing.

We are complete.

(Source: Physical Thinking by Wendy Morris)



HEARTMATH'S QUICK COHERENCE® Technique

Step 1: Heart Focus. Focus your attention on the area around your heart, the area in the center of your chest. If you prefer, the first couple of times you try it, place your hand over the center of your chest to help keep your attention in the heart area.

Step 2: Heart Breathing. Breathe deeply but normally and feel as if your breath is coming in and going out through your heart area. As you inhale, feel as if your breath is flowing in through the heart, and as you exhale, feel it leaving through this area. Breathe slowly and casually, a little deeper than normal. Continue breathing with ease until you find a natural inner rhythm that feels good to you.

Step 3: Heart Feeling. As you maintain your heart focus and heart breathing, activate a positive feeling. Recall a positive feeling, a time when you felt good inside, and try to re-experience the feeling. One of the easiest ways to generate a positive, heart-based feeling is to remember a special place you've been to or the love you feel for a close friend or family member or treasured pet. This is the most important step.

Quick Coherence® is especially useful when you start to feel a draining emotion such as frustration, irritation, anxiety or stress. Using Quick Coherence at the onset of less intense negative emotions can keep them from escalating into something worse. This technique is especially useful after you've had an emotional blowup to bring yourself back into balance quickly.

HeartMath, LLC: www.heartmath.com