WORKSHEET 52 · FOR THE PSYCHOLOGIST

My rituals for leaving and arriving

Marking transitions to get through them better

AIM

Help the person create personal rituals to mark a departure, an arrival or a migration anniversary, to make room for emotions and give meaning to the transition.

WHO IT IS FOR

Before leaving, after arriving, returning home, repeated departures, grieving a loved one who stayed behind.

DURATION

15-20 min in session; the ritual itself, outside the session

HOW TO RUN IT

1. Explain that transitions without a ritual often leave a feeling of something unfinished, and that migrations often lack them.
2. Explore the rituals there were (a farewell party, last places visited) and those that were missing.
3. Help the person imagine a simple, personal ritual: a letter, an object, a place, a meal, a photo, music, with or without other people.
4. For arriving: a gesture to “inhabit” the new place (planting something, hanging a photo, inviting someone).
5. Review after the ritual: what has changed?

POINTS TO WATCH

> The ritual must make sense to the person and respect their cultural and spiritual references. In grief experienced from a distance (death of a loved one back home), watch out for complications of grief.

REFERENCES

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Stroebe, M. & Schut, H. (1999). The dual process model of coping with bereavement: Rationale and description. Death Studies, 23(3), 197-224.

PSYCHOLOGIST’S NOTES

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WORKSHEET 52 · WORKSHEET TO HAND OUT

My rituals for leaving and arriving

The big stages of life often have their rituals. Migrations, much less so. Yet marking a departure or an arrival helps you say goodbye, keep a bond and start to inhabit a new place.

1. The transition I want to mark: _____
2. What I would like to say, leave or take with me: _____
3. My ritual (where, when, with whom, with what): _____
4. Afterwards: what I felt.

Ritual	Date	With whom	What changed

What helps me feel at home here?

These exercises do not replace therapy. If you are in distress or having suicidal thoughts: 112 (European Union), 3114 (France) or the emergency number of the country where you live.

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