



MAJOR LIFE TRANSITIONS

ART THERAPY EXERCISE

Focus: Processing a Major Life Change (Divorce, Death, or Significant Loss)

Goal: *This exercise helps clients visualize and process their transition from loss toward healing by creating a symbolic "bridge" that represents their journey through change.*

Materials Needed:

- Large sheet of paper or canvas
- Colored pencils, markers, pastels, or paints
- Magazines and newspapers for collage (optional)
- Scissors and glue (optional)

Instructions:

Step 1: Create a Safe Space

Before starting the exercise, engage in a short grounding activity, such as deep breathing or a brief mindfulness meditation, to help the client feel centered and emotionally prepared.

Step 2: Draw Two Lands and a Bridge

Ask the client to divide the page into two sections:

- The left side represents "The Past" (life before the loss).
- The right side represents "The Future" (where they hope to be after healing).
- In the center, have them draw a bridge connecting the two sides. The bridge represents the transition and growth between the past and the future.

Step 3: Illustrate the Past

- In the left section, invite the client to draw, paint, or collage images, words, or symbols that represent the emotions, experiences, and memories associated with their loss.
- Encourage them to explore their grief, fears, or confusion through colors and shapes that express their emotions.

Step 4: Envision the Future

- In the right section, have the client depict what they hope to feel or achieve in the future.
- They can use imagery, words, or abstract colors to represent healing, self-discovery, or new possibilities.

Step 5: Personalizing the Bridge

- The bridge symbolizes the transition. Ask the client to fill it with images or words that represent support systems, coping strategies, and personal strengths that will help them move forward.
- Encourage them to consider what will help them cross the bridge—whether it's self-care, therapy, relationships, or new goals.



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Step 6: Reflection and Discussion

Ask the client to reflect on their artwork and discuss what the process felt like.

Some guiding questions:

- What emotions came up while creating each section?
- What does your bridge symbolize to you?
- What strengths can help you move forward?

How do you feel about the future after completing this exercise?

Step 7: Closing the Session

End with a short grounding exercise, such as deep breathing or positive affirmations, to help the client transition back to the present moment.

This exercise provides a tangible way for clients to process a major life change, offering both validation of their grief and a path toward resilience.