Renewal Seminar:  
The Cycle of Change in Everyday Life

Montgomery College Student Development Unit

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A CHAPTER OF YOUR LIFE
An External Fulfillment and Entrapment of Internal Purpose

The Heroic Self

Phase I
"GO FOR IT"
The Heroic Self: Outer Work

Purposive, active, busy, committed, optimistic, energized, a team player, outer work, goal oriented, focused on achievement.

Phase II
"THE DOLDRUMS"
The Disenchanted Self: Out of Synch

Bored, restless or feeling stuck, reactive, in denial, cynical, angry, sad, pessimistic, low in energy, loner, resistant to change, marking time, feeling the pain of the best days being passed.

MINI-TRANSITION: Restructuring the Same Chapter

Phase IV
"GETTING READY"
The Passionate Self: Preparing for the Next Chapter

Sensing new purpose, searching, networking, creative, free and uncommitted, naively optimistic, inner child at work, learning, having fun, experimentation.

Phase III
"COCOONING"
The Inner Self: Transformation

Turned inward, meditative, exploring, disoriented, healing, quiet, deconstructing and reconstructing the self, tapping core values and emotions, spiritual, inner work.

The Passionate Self

A LIFE TRANSITION
An Internal Deconstruction of the Self and Its Future Options

The Inner Self
Phase 2 — THE DOLDRUMS
A Period of Disenchantment and Restlessness

Necessary Life Skills

1. How will I "manage" the doldrums to keep my chapter alive?

2. How will I sort things out?
   -- My strengths:
   -- My weaknesses:
   -- My opportunities
   -- The negative forces I must overcome:

Feelings I am experiencing in this phase:
- Sense of decline
- Stuck
- Resistance
- Pain and suffering
- Mad
- Sad
- Trapped
- Defeated
- Other:

Results I want to accomplish in this phase:
- Successful departure for a Mini-transition
- Successful departure for a Life Transition
- Other:

Activities that might be helpful for being effective in this phase:
- Create an exit plan
- Look for a new job
- Spend time with friends
- Take up hobbies
- Take evening courses
- Seek therapy
- Marital counseling
- Get a physical
- Prepare for a divorce, separation
- Join professional organizations
- Take a sabbatical or leave of absence
- Other:

If this is the phase you are now in, indicate here some planning steps you might take during the next year or two:

1. ________________________________
2. ________________________________
3. ________________________________
4. ________________________________
5. ________________________________
6. ________________________________
7. ________________________________

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Phase 4 — GETTING READY FOR THE NEXT CHAPTER
A Time for Experimenting

Results I want to accomplish in this phase:
- Clarify my personal identity
- Increase my self confidence
- Redefine my sense of purpose
- Get a fix on what's important
- Renew my intimate relationships
- Redefine my inner sense of 'work'
- Become more creative
- Improve my humor
- Take new risks

Activities that might be helpful for being effective in this phase:
- Career search and/or change
- Explore options
- Find friends
- Get advanced degree
- Fall in love...again
- Read with abandon
- Enjoy being lazy
- Indulge in music, art and drama
- Travel
- Take adult education classes
- Take up a sport
- Simplify lifestyle
- Other:

Feelings I am experiencing in this phase:
- Joy
- Trust
- Love
- Lightness of being
- Creativity
- Yearning to learn more
- Fire in my belly
- New love for having fun
- Other:

Necessary Life Skills:

1. Ways to explore my creativity:

2. Options that I can experiment with:

3. Intensive training that I can engage in:

4. Ways to find new friends:

If this is the phase you are now in, indicate here some planning steps you might take during the next year or two:
1. __________________________________________
2. __________________________________________
3. __________________________________________
4. __________________________________________
5. __________________________________________
6. __________________________________________
7. __________________________________________
THE 10 NECESSARY LIFE SKILLS

LIFE SKILL #1: Dream Again, New Beginning
LIFE SKILL #2: Plan, Work, Pursue Goals, Achieve
LIFE SKILL #3: Plateau, Evaluate
LIFE SKILL #4: Manage the Doldrums; Keep the Chapter Alive
LIFE SKILL #5: Sort Things Out
LIFE SKILL #6: An Ending, A Little “Death”, Letting Go
LIFE SKILL #7: Restructuring, Improving Your Current Chapter
LIFE SKILL #8: Heal, Invest in Yourself, Search for New Identity
LIFE SKILL #9: Sustain Your Own Renewal
LIFE SKILL #10: Experiment, Network, Learn and Train

Exercises

1. Where are you, today, in your various roles, on the cycle in change? In several places at once?

2. Where are you, as a person, in the change cycle? Most people are in one place.

3. Which "life skills" are most important to you at this time in your life? In which skills do you need training?