

Name: _____

Unfamiliar Worlds

Navigating New Worlds and
Adjusting to New Environments

*(Work, School, Military,
Unemployment, New Cultures, and Beyond)*



Figure 1: Inside a Cornfield

<http://www.dreams-goals.com/resources/workshops/wkshp-unfamiliar-worlds/>

For Clients of:

Orange County One-Stop Center

<http://www.oconestop.com/>



PRESENTED BY

Kathleen E. High, M.Ed. CCSP. FCD-I

Education & Career Consultant

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<https://www.linkedin.com/in/kathleenhigh1/>

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OVERVIEW

Entering new environments brings unexpected and potentially uncomfortable challenges. People need to learn how to recognize and respond to those challenges. Participants will learn recognize what are new worlds, the challenges they bring, and how to identify potential available tools, resources, and support that will help them navigate their new worlds, and learn about the consequences of failure to effectively navigate.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Participants Will Be Able To:

- Be Able to Define What is an Unfamiliar World
- Identify Why Unfamiliar Worlds are Difficult to Navigate
- Register That Entering New Environments Brings Unexpected and Potentially Uncomfortable Challenges
- Receive Tools to Help Them Navigate Their New Worlds
- Receive Tips to Help Them Fit into Their New Life
- Understand the Power of Hidden Rules
- Receive Tips for Dealing with Hidden Rules
- Understand How “Jumping Through Hoops” Will Impact Their Journey
- Recognize the Consequences of Failing to Effectively Navigate Unfamiliar Worlds

WORKSHOP PRESENTER

Kathleen E. High, M.Ed., CCSP, FCD-Instructor

Ms. High is an independent consultant, “Your Dreams & Goals,” she offers a variety of services to help clients to find and achieve their dreams and goals. She is also an adjunct professor who has worked at three different community colleges. Through these roles, she teaches college success, job search skills and career research classes. Also, as she also started a support group for the unemployed in the faith-based community.

In addition to her professional experience working with adults in pursuing education, she also has personal experience dealing with the challenges presented through her education and career journey. After being laid off from a long-term clerical position in the business world, she went to back to school full-time to finish her degree. Her career transition from corporate “office jobs” to professor/ counselor in higher education required much more education, experience, knowledge, time, effort, change and sacrifice than she originally expected. Through that journey, she found her life’s calling and has used her educational pursuits to find answers to questions people could not provide. Her career transition required her to make multiple job, housing, education, and relationship transitions during a 20-year period. These multiple transitions usually brought the challenges associated with trying to navigate multiple new worlds. She uses her personal and professional experiences and specialized training to identify and address assist adults who need to engage in lifelong learning to maintain their skills marketability.

Through this journey, she has had to learn how to navigate multiple types of colleges and

universities, employer industries, government institutions, differing faith communities, generations, and people from all walks of life. Through her work, she deals with other individuals who are challenged with navigating new worlds a daily basis. In fact, much of what she does in her work is to help her students/clients learn how to navigate those new worlds as well.

She holds a Master's in Education from Azusa Pacific University and additional graduate work in School Counseling from Cal State San Bernardino, and Theology from Fuller Theological Seminary. She received her Bachelor of Science from Cal Poly Pomona and her Associates of Arts from Rio Hondo Community College. She is also an Instructor for the nationally-recognized "Facilitating Career Development" (FCD) program offered by National Career Development Association.

WHAT IS AN 'UNFAMILIAR WORLD?'

An 'unfamiliar world' is an environment that is new to the individual which requires new ways of operating in order to successfully navigate it.

These unfamiliar worlds can be many things, including:

- **New Seasons of Life**, such as entering adulthood, going to college for the first time, becoming unemployed, getting married, becoming a parent, or retiring from career life. It can also include new types relationships if different from what was known (i.e. first serious romantic relationship), and increased exposure to diversity (i.e. people who are different from you).
- **New Institutions** involves becoming a member of a new community, including first time in college, first job in the business world, education, or health care, and getting involved in a faith community for the first time. It can also include joining the military.
- **New Employers or New Schools** can be a challenge when one institution is very different from the familiar one. For example, changing from 'Employer A' to 'Employer B', graduating from high school and going to college, transferring from a public school to a private school, transferring from a community college to a university, or graduating from college and going onto graduate school.
- **New Cultures** can include moving from one country to another, such as the United States to Japan, or from Mexico to Israel, etc. New cultures can include becoming immersed into a culture of people who are of different ethnicities, such as from African American to Asian American, etc. Or it can include being thrust into a world where most of the people you deal with are significantly older or younger than you.
- **New Societal Norms** The world in which we currently live is undergoing significant changes in demographics, technology, rate of change, and historical significance. For example, the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 significantly changed how we travel. The pervasive

use social media affects everything from relationships, to marketing, to employment opportunities. These changes are affecting cultural values, priorities, norms, and laws that normally dictate normal, everyday behavior.

Reflection:

Take a few minutes to reflect on how this topic relates to you personally. Ask yourself, “**What Unfamiliar Worlds Am I Dealing With?**”

WHY IS IT A CHALLENGE TO NAVIGATE UNFAMILIAR WORLDS?

When someone realizes how hard it can be to navigate a new world, the question may arise: Why is it a challenge to navigate new worlds? There are several reasons that can be placed into two primary categories. First are issues related to the individual who is trying to navigate, and second are issues related to the new world itself. To illustrate these challenges, take the time to participate in the following hands-on activity.

Hands-On Activity:

Task:

- Pull Appendix A out of the back of this handout
- Identify “Vila Borba Park”
- Start from the freeway (top of page)
- Using a Highlighter Mark a Route - From the Freeway to the Park

If necessary, give yourself a few minutes to finish this task. Once you have completed this task, pull out Appendix B and compare it to Appendix A.

What Just Happened? _____

What is the Difference Between the Two? _____

How Does This Relate to Your Experience? _____

This activity simulates the frustrations that many people experience when trying to navigate a new world. Now we will discuss what happened through the discussion of a few theories that relate to this.

Issues Relating to the Individual

The following are some common reasons why an individual may have difficulty navigating.

- **Lost and Don’t Know What to Do** When trying to navigate a foreign world, the individual is often lost, does not even know where to begin, or what to do about their situation.

- **Probably in Transition** - Trying to navigate a new world is usually brought on by some transition in the person’s life. Transitions are defined as having three phases: Endings, Neutral Zone, and New Beginnings. Transitions are often accompanied by a lot of psychological and cognitive challenges. The workshop, “Managing Life’s Transitions” explains in depth what the individual experiences while going through a transition.
- **‘Comfort Zone’ Has Been Disrupted** – By being in a new world, the individual has likely left something familiar behind. When our worlds are familiar, they are comfortable – even if we don’t like it – at least we know what to expect and what to do. However, in a new world, the individual is experiencing unexpected things and likely does not know how to handle them. Therefore, they are no longer comfortable. It is like being kicked out of your warm bed when you are still relaxed and just waking up.
- **Differentiation Failures** – The next two situations are examples of ‘differentiation failures’, which is a failure to recognize that two things are different.
 - **Frozen Evaluation** is a theory by Haney (1992) which states that individuals run into problems when they view a current situation based on past experience. They assume ‘non-change’. They make evaluations based on an assumption that nothing has changed over time. Thus, they fail to recognize they are trying to navigate their current world from an ‘old map’. This process was illustrated in the activity you just finished. You were looking for a park that was not built until 2015, and thus it would not show up on a map that was created in 2002. In order to see this park, you would need to operate from the second map that was created in 2016.
 - **Inference Observation** – Another theory described by Haney (1992) states that individuals can also have problems when they fail to distinguish the difference between fact and assumption when observing given circumstances. The person takes in certain facts in a situation and makes assumptions, but does not realize he has made assumptions. Since he fails to recognize assumption, he also fails to calculate the risk involved. Then he proceeds to act on those assumptions as if they were fact. Then there are negative consequences from uncalculated risk. For example, one time I had student contact me via email hoping to get a seat in an already full upcoming class, where I had already had twenty students pleading to be added in the class. I had developed a standard response that explained the situation and told the students to show up on the first day (knowing that most weren’t that serious about taking my class) and that I would add as many as I could based on potential ‘no shows’. This twentieth student begging for a non-existent seat then asked me to tell him some information that he should have taken the time to find out himself. I responded by telling him to look it up he is a college student and it is his responsibility to find out – not mine. Acting on his assumption, he proceeded to insult me by calling me ‘lazy’ for not providing that information to him in this email exchange. The ironic thing is that he was the one being lazy here – not me. By lashing out at me, he missed out on an opportunity to get a seat in a class for which he was supposedly desperate to get in. Perhaps he did not register that it was totally my discretion to decide who I would allow in after the class was full. And no, I would not add a student to a class who thought it was appropriate to talk to me like that.

- **Unaware They are in a New World** – often when individuals enter a new world, they may not realize they are in a new world that is very different from their previous world. For example, when I was laid off from my full-time employment in the business world, I was often surprised to discover how things are done differently. I would get frustrated and think to myself, “These people would never survive in the ‘real world’ with the way they do things. Over time, I eventually discovered that higher education (especially state-supported schools) does things very differently. Not long after saying this, I had another older classmate also make the same observation. The ways in which these worlds are different will be discussed in more detail in the next section.
- **Competence** – When it comes to navigating a new world, there are different levels of competence in skills relating to navigating (adaptability, understanding differences, ability to use new skills, etc.) These different competencies (or lack of) can also contribute to other challenges, such as lack of experience, and performance anxiety.
- **Four Levels** – Based on the Conscious Competence Model, developed by Noel Burch in the 1970s, to explain what happens during the learning process.
 1. **Unconscious Incompetence** – This person does not know what to do, and does not realize that he does not know what to do. Therefore, he will likely just try to forge ahead, as he has always done, not knowing that he will run into problems. They are also likely to express opinions and be quick to criticize someone who is actually doing the task at hand. This person can be described as *Blissfully Ignorant*.
 2. **Consciously Unskilled** – This person is aware that they need to learn new skills. She is aware that others can do things more easily. This person can be described as *Ready to Learn*.
 3. **Consciously Skilled** – This person has developed enough skills and knowledge to know what they are doing. He still needs to concentrate, but is generally able to complete the task at hand. He can be described as *Deliberately Successful*.
 4. **Unconsciously Skilled** – This person is able to use her skills without effort or consciousness. Using the skill is automatic and effortless. She can be described as doing it *Automatically and Habitually*.

To learn more about how to apply this concept, please visit:
https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newISS_96.htm
- **Lack of Experience Creates Additional Challenges.** Navigating new worlds means the individual will lack experience to know what to expect and how to solve problems, which can lead to additional challenges:
 - **Extreme Discomfort and Desire to Retreat** – Being in an unfamiliar world is uncomfortable for most people. Consequently, it is human nature to want to relieve discomfort, so many people will try to get out of their unfamiliar situation if possible. For example, ‘first-generation college students usually the knowledge and support of

parents' experience to help them learn to navigate college, and thus are at higher risk for dropping out when they run into challenges trying to navigate college life.

- **Failure to Recognize a Need for Help** – Many people who are lost and don't know what to do will not realize that they should ask for help. Even if they do realize they should ask for help, they often don't know what to ask, or where to go for help. So instead, they try to solve problems by themselves. Unfortunately, they can often make poor decisions, thereby making the situation worse. For example, the first-generation student who drops out of college may not realize that they need to officially drop their class, and just stop going. So, they wind up failing the class. Unfortunately, those F's are permanently on their record and cannot be removed. Many of these students try to come back to school at a later date, only to discover that they are now on academic probation for a low Grade Point Average.
- **'Delayed Responses' in Decision Making** – A 'delayed response' occurs when an individual is shocked by an unexpected new experience and needs time to process and respond to their potentially-traumatizing experience before they can take effective action. This can be a problem when the situation requires immediate action. The movie, "Sully" demonstrates how this happened in real life. Captain Sullenberger landed a commercial jet plane on the Hudson River in 2009. The plane had just taken off and not yet reached cruising altitude when it was struck by birds and knocked both engines out. Since he had no prior experience or training in this kind of situation, he spent several seconds just taking in information and evaluating his options before he could figure out what to do. That delay of a few seconds prevented him from returning to any airport, and was thus forced to land on the river.
- **Mistakes in Decision Making** – Because the individual lacks experience in how to navigate, she is likely to make mistakes simply due to lack of knowledge, foresight, understanding and/or experience. For example, I recently signed up to participate in an event that would help me to work with new work with a new type of client. Because working with this type of client and this particular event were new experiences for me, I did not understand that I needed to schedule actual appointments to meet with the buyers. Therefore, I wound up attending this event, but was not able to gain access to the people I wanted to meet. Since these events are only held once per year, I will need to wait another year for this opportunity to network in a new world.
- **Performance Anxiety** - These situations are often be rather stressful, which can create additional challenges – especially if this is a high-stakes situation where the outcome is really important.
 - **Stress of Circumstances Affect Performance** – Stress can have either a positive affect (motivate to do the unpleasant) or negative affect (interfere) on the person's performance at a given task. Knowing that the outcome is important can sometimes stress people into inaction or poor performance.

- **Prolonged Stress Can Affect the Brain and Body** – Prolonged, excessive and unhelpful stress can have serious negative consequences on the brain and body, which leads to additional challenges when trying to navigate new worlds. Stress affects different people differently, but can include things like high blood pressure, weight gain or loss, illness, memory loss, slower mental processing, etc.

Reflection:

Take a few minutes to reflect on how this topic relates to you personally. Ask yourself, **“Which of the challenges for the individual can I relate to?”**

Issues Relating to The World Itself

We just reviewed the challenges that an individual will potentially face when trying to navigate a new world. One of those challenges was differentiation failure – not recognizing that the new and old worlds are different. Failure to recognize those differences can lead to frustrations and inability to get things done.

Different Worlds Have Different:

Different institutions, cultures, societal sectors (government, education, business, faith communities, etc.) are different in many not-so-obvious ways. Following are some examples of how worlds can be different from each other. *(More information on this subject can be found at <https://geert-hofstede.com/cultural-dimensions.html>)*

- **Responsiveness to a Changing World** – The world is changing so fast that it is difficult to keep up with those changes. Individuals, cultures and institutions alike respond to change at different rates. Some thrive on change and are quick to change with prevailing winds, whereas others have very slow and methodical ways to change. For example, I once worked for a company whose motto was ‘we thrive on change’ – and change they did. It seemed that every two weeks I would get a message that talked about the latest organizational change. However, higher education has a process for making curriculum changes that usually requires two years before students can see a difference in what they are taught.
- **Levels of “Frozen Evaluation”** – Just as individuals can struggle with frozen evaluation, so can institutions. Consequently, some institutional leaders may not register changes that the world has changed around them and that they are making decisions for the future based on obsolete information from the past.
- **Purposes (Mission)** – different institutions have different purposes for existing. Business is focused on making money. Social service agencies are focused on taking care of people. Faith communities are focused on service to their ‘higher power’. Even similar institutions can vary significantly. For example community colleges were designed to make higher education accessible and open to anyone who wants to pursue it. Yet, many private,

prestigious colleges pride themselves on being ‘highly selective’ regarding who they admit as students.

- **Values and Ethical Standards** – Different institutions and worlds will have different values and ethical standards. For example, for business the question is usually ‘Are making a profit for your shareholders?’ Whereas, for most government institutions, ethical standards usually are designed to make sure the public servants are ‘above reproach’ and good stewards of public resources.
- **Governance Structures** – How different worlds are structured to operate and who is in power can vary from one type of institution to another. They can also vary in to whom they must give an account of their actions. Faith communities will say they answer to God. American government is accountable to the public. Judicial system is loyal to the law. Many ethnic cultures will say their first priority is the family. Corporate world is usually based on a hierarchy, where there is one person on top who makes decisions that must be followed. Whereas, in higher education, most decisions are made by faculty-driven committees, which means that the faculty – not the president have most of the power. Even in family situations, some families can be patriarchal (father as head) or matriarch (mother as head).
- **Leadership Styles** – Different governance styles means that whoever is in charge needs to have a leadership style that is appropriate for the situation. For example, autocratic leadership styles may work in environments that are top-down, such as corporate and dictatorship countries. However, that will not work in democracies where the people can vote unpopular politicians out of office. That will also not work in higher education where faculty have so much power are also considered professional, subject-matter experts.
- **Pace at Which Things Get Done** – Some institutions and worlds move at very fast pace, and others are very slow at getting things done. There is a joke that asks, “How do you define long-range planning in IT?” – “What are you doing after lunch?” The computer and information world evolves so fast, that many hardware and software products are obsolete soon after purchase. Whereas, in government and higher education, there are often committee meetings, negotiations, research and resolutions, and laws that must be adopted before anything can change. As mentioned above, higher education often needs to have two years to make changes in curriculum.
- **Rules of Engagement** – How individuals within different groups interact with each other can vary from group to group as well. In some environments, you will be expected to be polite and courteous at all times, whereas in other environments, it can be ‘to each his own’, or ‘nice guys finish last.’ Some environments can be very casual and informal, and others can be very formal and proper.
- **Roles and Responsibilities** – people in different environments may have different roles and therefore different responsibilities. For example, a medical doctor may feel it is his responsibility to hold his patient accountable for their poor health habits such as smoking and being overweight, and will therefore give instructions for changing those habits. Whereas a

mental health counselor will see their role as helping her client to overcome bad habits, and may therefore take a more supportive role when working with the client.

- **Priorities** – Because of all the differences mentioned above, different worlds will likely have different priorities. For example, if a choice must be made between saving money and doing what is in the public’s best interest, a business owner may choose to save money, whereas government or faith community may choose what is in the public’s best interest.
- **Expectations** – All of the above will lead to differing expectations. For example, I have heard faculty members get very annoyed when a student expects to be treated as a ‘customer’ whose expectations need to be satisfied. Those faculty will tell you that the students are NOT their customer – they are the ‘product’. They are concerned about the students’ development – not pleasing their whims.

Reflection:

Take a few minutes to reflect on how this topic relates to you personally. Ask yourself, **“What Differences Between My New and Old World Have I Noticed?”**

HOW CAN YOU BETTER NAVIGATE NEW WORLDS?

After discussing the challenges associated with trying to navigate unfamiliar worlds, some people could become overwhelmed. However, there is good news. There are things that can be done to make the process less challenging and stressful, such as managing expectations, recognizing the power of “hidden rules”, learning the value of “Jumping Through Hoops”, learning how to effectively ask for help, identifying your support system, seeking appropriate professional help, finding like-minded people, and developing effective coping skills.

Manage Your Expectations

Expectations are powerful, so be aware of your expectations. When entering a new world, people often have expectations of how things are **supposed** to go. When things don’t turn out as expected, people tend to become very upset.

“What screws us up most in life is our expectation of how it is supposed to be.”

Dr. Laura Schlessinger

Differing Expectations

Based on the type of relationship they have with you, different people will have different expectations and attitudes towards you. Those attitudes and expectations will affect how they treat you

- Spouse, parents, siblings, and/or children
- Friends, classmates, and community
- Bosses, co-workers, customers, and vendors
- Teachers, counselors, staff, and administrators
- Job Center Staff

Expect the Unexpected

As mentioned earlier, life **WILL** present the unexpected – particularly when you enter a new world. You will experience many transitions. Your values and priorities will likely change. Your current relationships will change. You will develop new relationships. Expectations will be different. The old way of doing things may not be appropriate anymore.

Reflection:

Take a few minutes to reflect on how this topic relates to you personally. Ask yourself, “**What expectations have I already found out were different from reality?**”

Understand the Power of Hidden Rules

ALL ‘Cultures’ (any group of people) have sets of unspoken ‘Rules’ about what is expected regarding: Appropriate behavior, dress, communication, values and priorities. Therefore, this presents several challenges.

Hidden Rules (Payne, 2005) are very powerful because when those rules are NOT followed, the cultural ‘insiders’ will usually react in one of two ways.

Negative - Most will likely respond very negatively by judging, and/or trying to correct or punish the ‘wrong behavior’ In addition, according to Burgoon (1978), when expectations are not met, they will not hear what violator tries to communicate, and instead will focus on the fact that those expectations were violated.

Positive – Some insiders may respond in positive ways, such as just trying to show you the ‘right way’ to do things (i.e. mentor the outsider). Others may choose to show grace.

Navigating Hidden Rules: How Do You Identify Those Rules?

So after learning about hidden rules, a natural response is, “How does one learn what they are?” There are several ways to find out, including reading available information from websites and printed materials, finding mentors from **inside the culture**.

Observe, Watch, Listen, Stay Silent:

Whatever observations you make, ask why? Remember there is a time and place for everything. Behavior that is acceptable in one world may not be acceptable elsewhere. So when you are unsure, remember to observe, watch, listen, and stay silent. It is best to avoid expressing too many opinions – especially controversial ones, because you never know when those opinions will get you in trouble.

What do people wear? What do they NOT wear? **What do they say?** What do they NOT say? How do they NOT talk? **What kind of behaviors are encouraged?** What kind of behaviors are NOT accepted? **How do they respond to the unexpected?**

Find Mentors

Find a mentor in your new world who can help you learn the hidden rules. ‘Mentor’ is defined by Webster as: “Someone who teaches or gives help and advice to a less-experienced and often younger person.” A mentor can help you understand ‘the rules’ of your new world. They should be well respected in the new world because someone who has earned respect will understand how things are done. Ask yourself? Who do you know in the new world? Who can you find in the new world? Who is genuinely interested in your success?

Reflection:

Take a few minutes to reflect on how this topic relates to you personally. Ask yourself, “**What is one hidden rule I have discovered in my new world?**”

What If You Don’t Like ‘The Rules’?

Upon discovering those rules some people may have reservations about being expected to follow them. There are different reasons why some people may have reservations about the rules, but for now, here are some suggestions for dealing with rules that you may find objectionable.

First, take the time to understand **what is the point behind the rules’**. Remember that without any rules we would see chaos. Second, **ask yourself what do you ultimately want?** Prioritize: **What is More Important to you?** Getting what you want from life, doing things your way, peace from staying out of trouble, or peace from staying true to your values? Third, **pick your battles**. Which rules are worth tolerating? Which rules are too important to ignore? Understand What is the point behind the rules? Remember: Without rules, there is chaos.

The ‘Rules’ and Authority

Another reason to tolerate the rules is that not doing so causes problems. Most authority figures (*bosses, teachers, police, parents, etc.*) don’t like it when you become **too** ‘comfortable’ with them. Defying and/or challenging rules or their authority is often seen as ‘insubordination’ Defying rules creates conflict with authority (*bosses, teachers, police, parents, etc.*) Some may see it as a threat, and react accordingly.

What If the Rules Are Truly Unacceptable to You?

Sometimes people don’t have a problem with following rules in general, but may find that certain rules in a particular culture are just ‘not an option’ for them.

So Now What? Consider the possibility that you are just “not a good fit” for this **particular** culture, but you may fit better elsewhere. If so, seek help from a mentor, career counselor, or other appropriate skilled professional as appropriate.

Before Rejecting “The Rules”...

If your first response is to just reject rules that don’t make sense, take the time to consider the consequences before defying or ignoring rules. The consequences can be many, including legal problems, damaged career, personal, financial, relationship problems, damaged reputation, and

will affect your loved ones as well. So ask yourself, “Is It Worth It?” Only you can make that decision.

Did You Know? Differing Attitudes

By virtue of personality alone, different people are likely to respond to the rules differently.

- Some people like to **set, enforce, and follow** the rules. They become very stressed when the rules are NOT followed.
- Some people hate rules and find them suffocating, and **believe that “rules are meant to be broken”**.
- Some people will tolerate the rules if they work, but will **want to restructure the rules if they don’t work**.
- Some people **live by their own rules** and will **stand firm on their own rules – even at great personal cost**. In other words, staying true to personal values is far more important than obeying a rule created by someone else.

What is Your Attitude About Rules?

- Rules are good _____
- Rules are meant to be broken _____
- Rules are ok if they work, but need to be fixed if not _____
- Rules are unacceptable if they violate my values _____

Reflection:

Take a few minutes to reflect on how this topic relates to you personally. Ask yourself, “**What Are Your Thoughts About Following Rules?**”

OK, I Will Tolerate ‘The Rules’....

So, you have decided that it is in your best interest to tolerate rules that may seem stupid or irrelevant. So now what? If you have decided that you are better off tolerating the rules, you may ask, “So how do I do that?” Realize that tolerating rules means “Jumping Through the Hoops”.

Jumping Through Hoops

Jumping Through Hoops is an American expression which refers to people behaving like circus animals, being forced, trained, or expected to do things and/or follow rules that do not appear to make sense. Some hoop jumping is a fact of life. The problem is that too many people ONLY jump through hoops. Excessive hoop jumping will take you where you do NOT want to go.

Many People ONLY Jump Through Hoops

Our modern public-school system tends to teach and encourage hoop jumping. Learning to jump through hoops is a valuable ‘life skill’ that prepares you for the ‘real’ world. However, some people never learn other coping skills. Some continue to only hoop jump throughout life. Some people learn to think for themselves. No one likes to be forced to do something that does not appear to make sense at the time.

As mentioned before life, societies, cultures, and institutions have rules. If nothing else rules are designed to maintain order, keep people and the world safe, make processes more efficient, avoid negative consequences, treat the people fairly and equally, make good use of resources, serve more people or the public good, and/or to comply with existing laws or mandates from ‘above’.

Reflection:

Take a few minutes to reflect on how this topic relates to you personally. Ask yourself, “**What is one area of my life where I have learned to jump through hoops as a coping skill?**”

Develop Effective Coping Skills

Navigating a new environment is often very stressful. Your challenge is to develop good ‘coping skills’. Coping skills include stress management, adaptability, resourcefulness, problem-solving skills, resource utilization, and having a strong support system.

Identify Your Support System

Who Wants You to Succeed?

To identify your support system, ask yourself what people who want to see you succeed? This is your support system!

- Mentors
- Family
- Friends
- Work
- Skilled Professional Helpers (*Onestop staff, career counselors, mental health counselors, etc.*)
- School (*Classmates, teachers, counselors, etc.*)
- Other

Don't Feel Like You Fit In?

If you find that you don't feel like you fit in to your new world, then find a community of like-minded people. This can include others who also struggle with adapting to this new world.

- Find a Support Group
- Can't Find One? Then Start One!
- Community (Faith, etc.)
- Professional Associations
- Networking Activities
- Social Media Groups

Identify Three Ways to Find Like-Minded People

Take a few minutes to identify your support system through the suggestions listed above.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Why Worry About Adapting?

We have spent a lot of time talking about tolerating someone else’s rules, and adapting to other people’s expectations. Why should you learn to adapt? Some people may think, “Who cares? I Am Who I Am. This is not my problem. I can’t change me, so let them adapt to me.” However, when people fail to effectively navigate a new world, many consequences can occur.

POTENTIAL CONSEQUENCES OF FAILURE TO NAVIGATE

What happens when people don’t learn to navigate new worlds? Criticism, judgment and/or ridicule from observers, loss of reputation and/or respect, loss of relationships, potential legal challenges, potential mental health challenges including a sense of personal failure and loss of self-esteem, grief over losses experienced and traumatization. The consequences can also affect your loved ones as well.

Case Study of Failure to Learn to Navigate:

Anthony Scaramucci, was appointed to be the director of communications for President Trump. He was let go just ten days later – before he officially started his job – due to inappropriate public behavior. Gave up a job, sold his business, paid taxes on the sale of his business, his wife filed for divorce because he missed the birth of their child, and he became a national object of public ridicule.

REVIEW

Successfully navigating new worlds requires new ways of operating, which can present unanticipated challenges. However, identifying those new worlds, the challenges they present and knowing how to improve your navigation skills will help you adjust to your new environment. Take a few minutes to recall the following information you discovered:

What Are Your New Worlds? _____

What Challenges Do You Need to Watch Out for? _____

What Can You Do to Improve Your Navigation Skills? _____

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APPENDIX A

APPENDIX B