

Creating  
Achieving  
Inspiring  
Serving  
Leading

**CAISL**

**CARLUCCI AMERICAN  
INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL  
OF LISBON**

---

[WWW.CAISLISBON.ORG](http://WWW.CAISLISBON.ORG)

*CAISL is a student-centered educational  
community in which we challenge ourselves  
and each other  
to do our best and to make positive contributions  
to our diverse and ever-changing world.*

*CAISL is  
a student-centered  
educational community  
in which we challenge  
ourselves  
and each other  
to do our best and to  
make positive  
contributions  
to our diverse and  
ever-changing world.*

# THIRD CULTURE KIDS

---

MARCH 2023



# THIRD CULTURE KIDS

- DEFINITION
- POSITIVES
- CHALLENGES
- COPING SKILLS





[NEITHER HERE NOR THERE Teaser - YouTube](#)

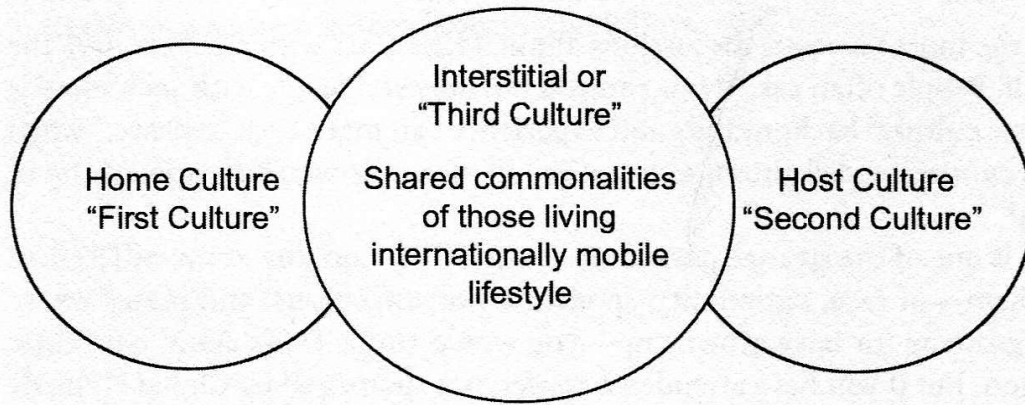
# THIRD CULTURE KIDS: DEFINITION

In 1950's, Ruth Hill Useem, an American sociologist, created the term Third Culture Kids (TCKs), as the children who spend their developmental years in places that are not their parents' homeland.

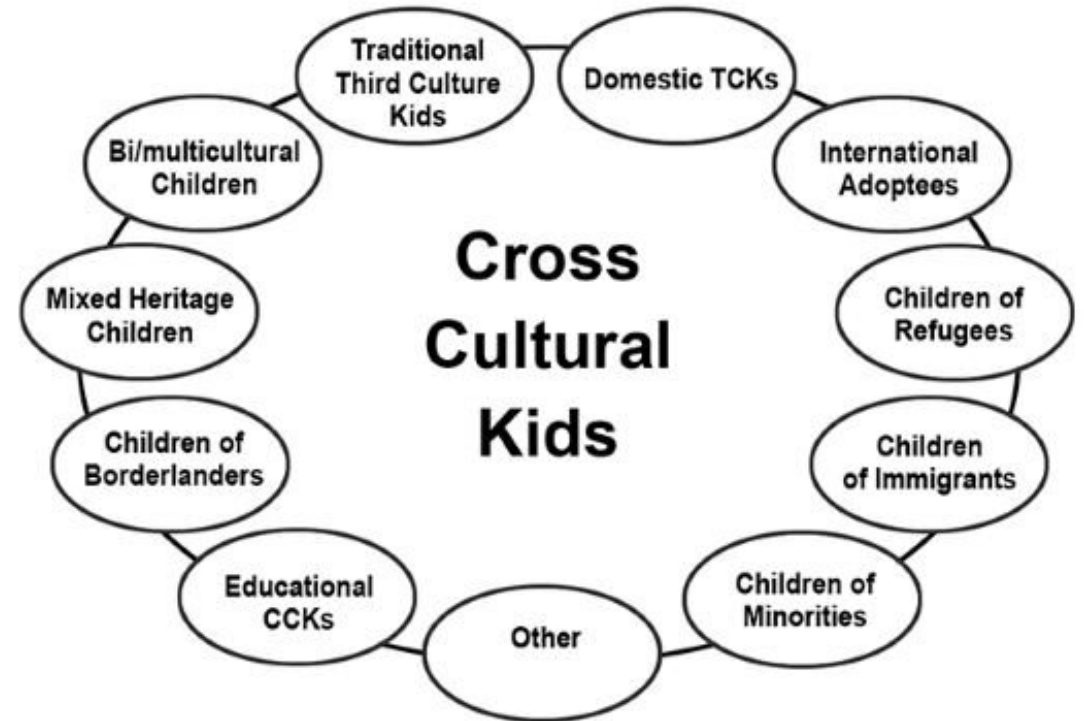
In 1999, two American sociologists, David Pollock and Ruth Van Reken published the book "Third Culture Kids: Growing Up Among Worlds" and define TCK's:

*"A third culture kid is a person who has spent a significant part of his or her developmental years outside their parents' culture. The third culture kid builds relationships to all the cultures, while not having full ownership in any. Although elements from each culture are assimilated into the third culture kid's life experience, the sense of belonging is in relationship to others of the same background, other TCKs."*

## The Third Culture Model



**Figure 2-1** The Third Culture model  
(© 1996 Ruth E. Van Reken)



A Cross Cultural Kid (or CCK) is anyone who has meaningful interaction with more than one culture before age 18. Ruth Van Reken's Cross-Cultural Kid (CCK) Model, from *Third Culture Kids: Growing Up Among Worlds* (2017), p44

# THIRD CULTURE KIDS: POSITIVES

- Learn to be adaptable
- See and experience different cultures and geographical regions
- Can relate to a diverse group of people
- Make connections across the world
- Open-minded
- Bilingual
- Empathetic
- Understanding of diversity
- Global career choices



**TRANSITIONS MAY NOT GO AS PLANNED...**

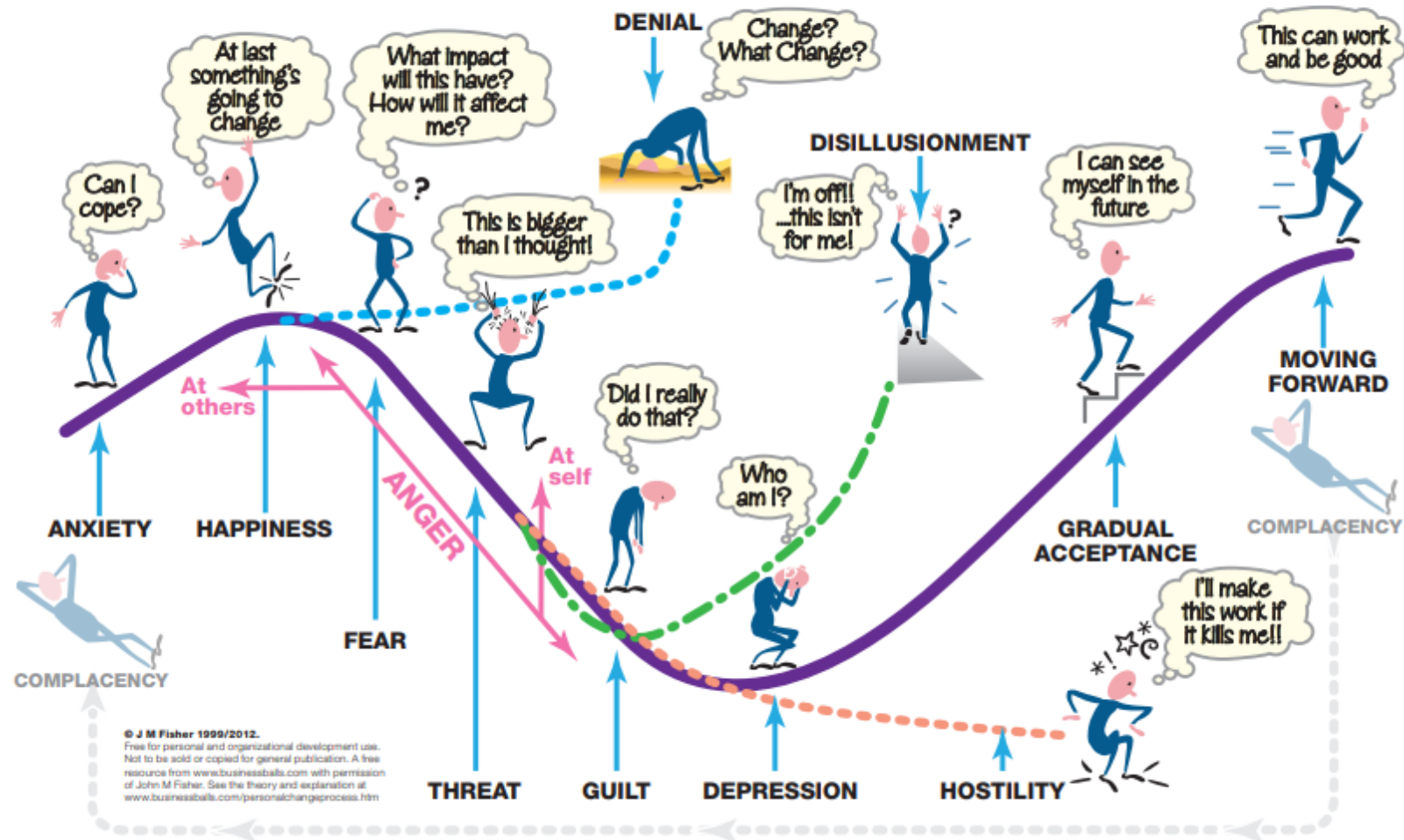




# THE STAGES OF TRANSITION

## The Process of Transition - John Fisher, 2012

(Fisher's Personal Transition Curve)



# THIRD CULTURE KIDS: CHALLENGES

- Isolation
- Separation
- Loss & Grief
- Uncertainty
- Lack of stability
- Transitions/Goodbyes
- Identity & belonging
- Lack of understanding from others
- Emotions: anxiety, worry, fear, sadness, etc.



# IDENTITY AND BELONGING

Rootlessness: where is home?

Restlessness: can become bored if in one place too long

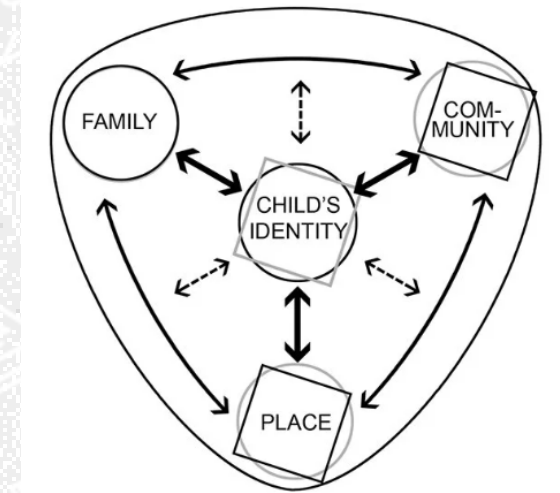
Reticence: to build new connections can be exhausting

Reconnect: find others with similar experiences than the people from their home country

Recognize: need to be accepted and understood

Re-adjust: fitting in to a new culture can take a lot of energy and time

Confused Loyalties: politics, patriotism, values



# GRIEF AND LOSS

*Third Culture Kids' lose their entire world with a plane ride, their mementos stuck away in their suitcases, letters, phones, and memories.*

Unresolved grief – can come to the surface later in unexpected ways

Anticipatory grief (grieving in advance of a loss)

Rarely time to look back and moving can be with little notice

Constant hellos and goodbyes – lack of attachment to others – keeping people at an emotional distance

Often leave a place/friends/things they may never return to



# THIRD CULTURE KIDS: COPING



1. Develop a growth mindset
2. Embrace Failure
3. Focus on Strengths
4. Connect and build relationships
5. Practice self care

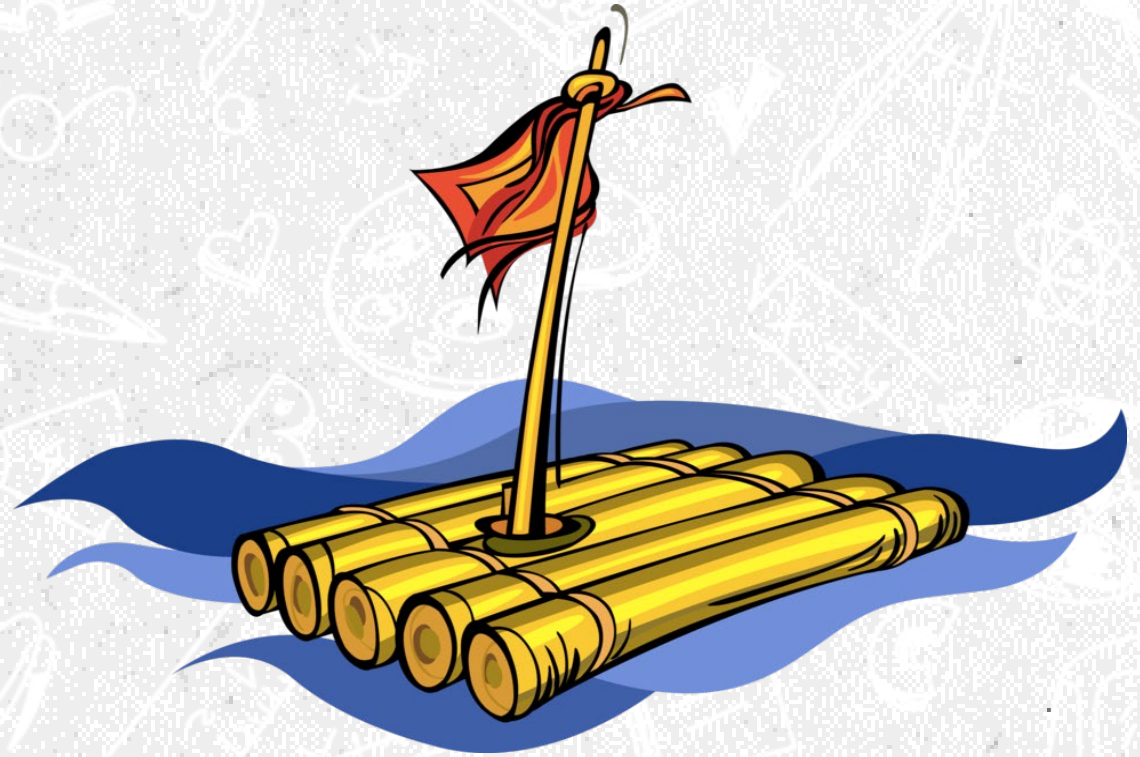
# COPING SKILLS – BUILD A RAFT

**R**econciliation

**A**ffirmation

**F**arewell

**T**hink destination



# Reconciliation



- Resolving unfinished issues
- Making relationships 'right'

# Affirmation

- Show gratitude, appreciation
- Acknowledge each person you connected with



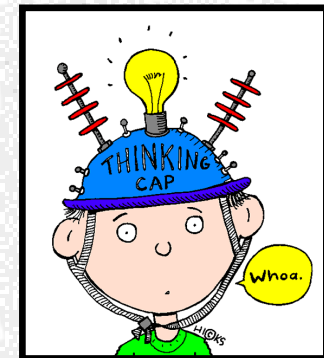
# Farewell

- Maintain a routine and sense of normalcy as you get closer to the move
- Don't rush the process and plan in advance
- Say goodbye to people/places/pets/possessions
- Plan times for farewells during the last few days/weeks (party/sleepover/cake at school, take pictures)
- Goodbyes help to create closure and avoid regret



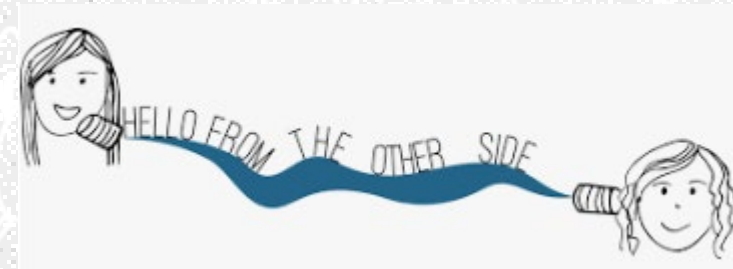
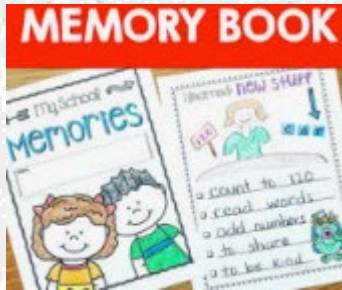
# Think destination

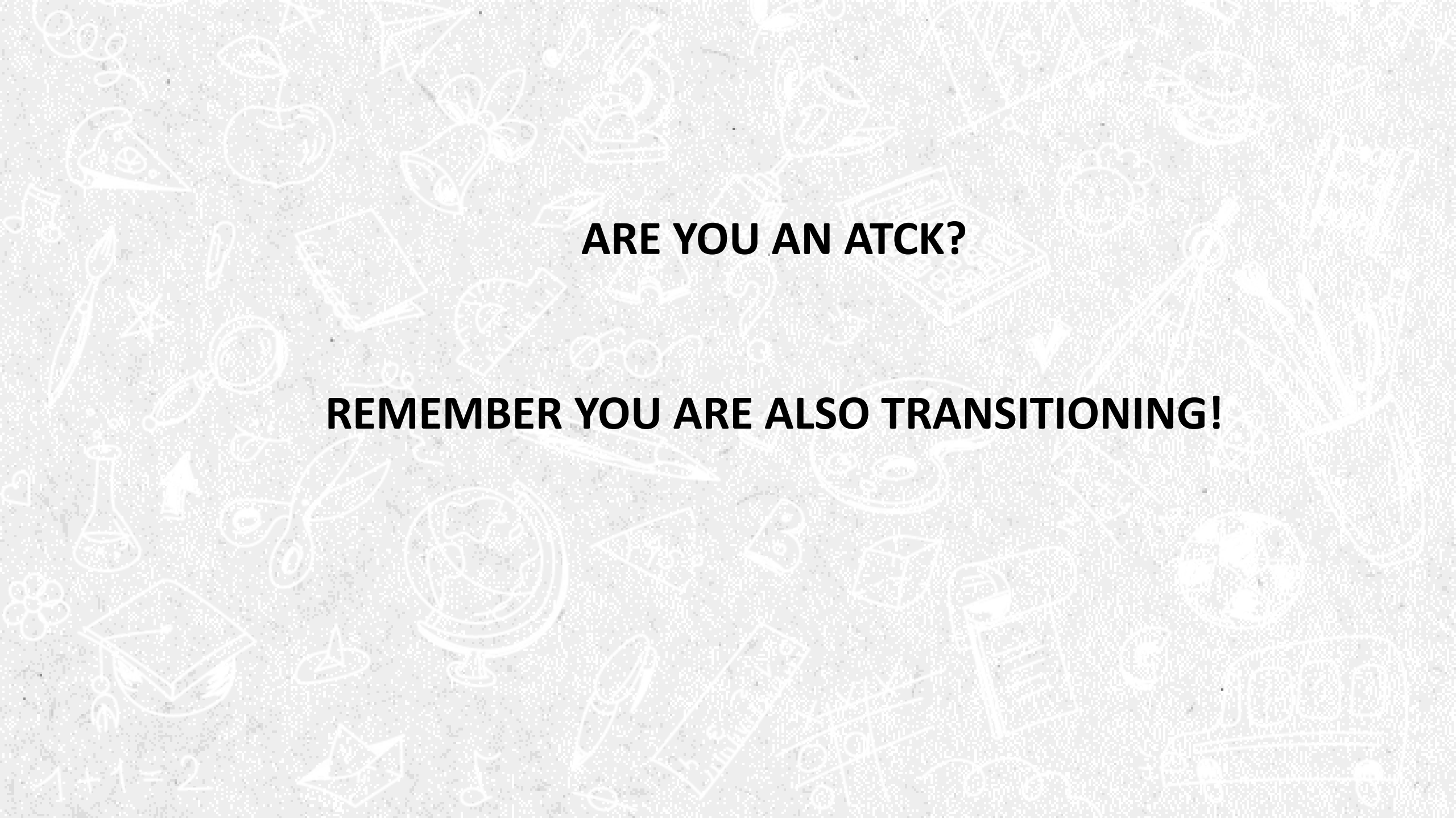
- Mixed feelings: excited about the new destination vs say farewell to your current home
- Accept and express your feelings
- Celebrate what you have and what you will find
- Keep routines no matter where you are
- Think about your next destination: research, ask/answer questions; look for local teams/clubs
- Reach out to other families in the new destination (PSG)
- Stay in touch with old friends and make new ones
- Don't try to do too much too soon





# WHAT CAN PARENTS DO?





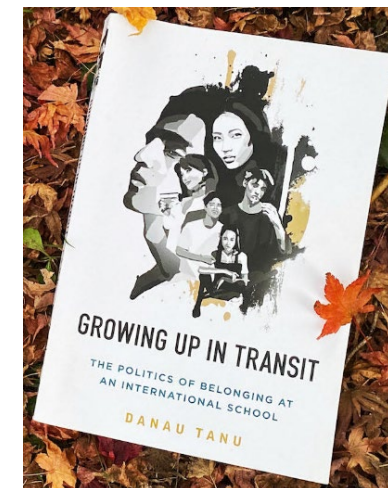
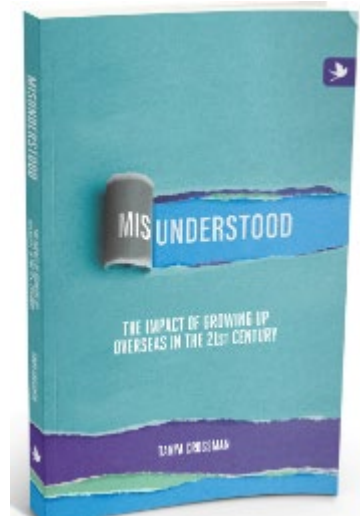
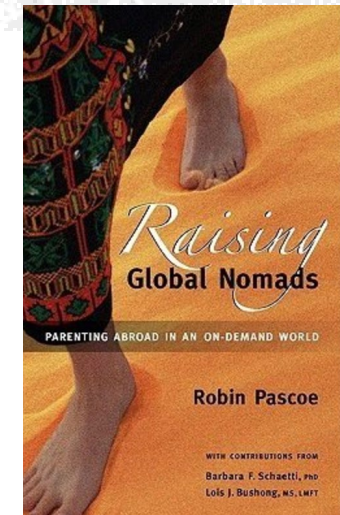
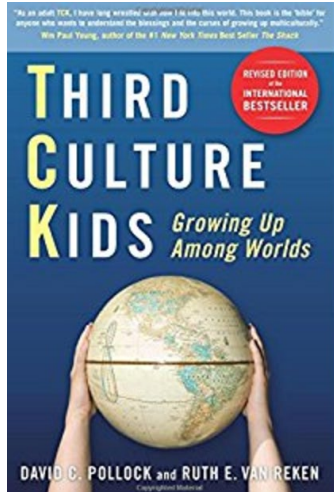
**ARE YOU AN ATCK?**

**REMEMBER YOU ARE ALSO TRANSITIONING!**

**ARE YOU AN ATCK?**

**REMEMBER YOU ARE ALSO TRANSITIONING!**

# THIRD CULTURE KIDS: RESOURCES



# THIRD CULTURE KIDS: MORE RESOURCES

- [TCKid: A Home for Third Culture Kids](#)
- [Denizen: An Online Magazine Dedicated to TCKs](#)
- [Foreign Service Youth Foundation - Third Culture Kids \(TCKs\) \(fsyf.org\)](#)
- <http://tckresources.com/resources/>
- [The problem with being a long-term expat - BBC Worklife](#)
- [Third Culture Kids: The Return Home \(Cue Foreboding Music\) – Sherry Yuan Hunter \(sandwichparenting.com\)](#)
- [Finding a Place for Third-Culture Kids in the Culture - The New York Times \(nytimes.com\)](#)
- [Who Are Cross Cultural Kids? | Cross Cultural Kids](#)
- [Danau Tanu - Growing Up in Transit - International Education & TCKs](#)
- [Third Culture Kids: the impact of growing up in a globalized world | Ruth Van Reken | TEDxINSEAD - YouTube](#)
- [What is home? Growing up between cultures | Abeer Yusuf | TEDxTerryTalks – YouTube](#)
- [TCKs Talk Home and Belonging - YouTube](#)





CAISL

# THANK YOU

---

[WWW.CAISLISBON.ORG](http://WWW.CAISLISBON.ORG)

☎ 219 239 800

✉ [info@caislisbon.org](mailto:info@caislisbon.org)