

## **Transition stories**

This book provides you with stories from a number of transition experiences that may have themes similar to your own. In total, I heard 75 transition stories from men and women born between 1946 and 1964. Approximately two-thirds (47) talked about planned life and work transitions. The other third (28) told stories of their unplanned transitions. To preserve the confidentiality of the story-tellers, names and circumstances have been altered.

Hopefully, you will find some gems among this treasure trove of insights and personal understanding that reflect and illuminate your transition experience. Beyond learning from what others have been through, you may discover that your situation is less stressful and traumatic than some described here.

## **Why I wrote this book**

I have often used the planned-transition process offered here over the course of my career and life. But the process for unplanned transitions I developed only recently, and is based on my life experience over the past five years.

I had a dramatic health-crisis transition in the fall of 2000. It was unlike any transition I had ever planned or faced unexpectedly because I did not know how or when it would end. My transition lasted three years, and my work and life situations have changed as a result. Finding new ways of living and working was key to my new understanding of unplanned transitions.

I decided to research stories of others who had experienced work or life transitions so I might test out some of the ideas and approaches I had developed for myself.

It was after I had completed about 40 interviews that I knew I could make the idea for this book a reality. I had written and published articles in the popular media for years, but the prospect of moving from this to the serious effort of researching and writing a book was the start of a new work transition for me. It was planned, but I encountered many u-turns and unexpected

obstacles that slowed my progress. Looking back over these past two years, I feel grateful for having had the time and opportunity to write a book, but consider this kind of time and mental commitment unrepeatable.

I want to share my experiences along the road with you. In this book, I have combined my perspective and experience with excerpts from the transition stories I heard. As you go through your own transition, I hope you will be able to benefit from the lessons of my experience and the experiences of the people I interviewed.