

Sense of Belonging

Before we begin, we ask you to be thinking about these three questions.

What does the phrase “sense of belonging” mean to you?

Think about a time when you experienced a sense of belonging in a group. How did you know you belonged?

Think about a time when you struggled to feel that you belonged in a group. What happened?



Sense of Belonging New Deac Week Wake Forest University

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Marianne Magjuka, Assistant Vice President for Campus Life,
Executive Director, Office of Civic & Community Engagement
Brad Shugoll, Director of Service and Leadership

Introductions



Betsy Chapman



Marianne Magjuka



Brad Shugoll

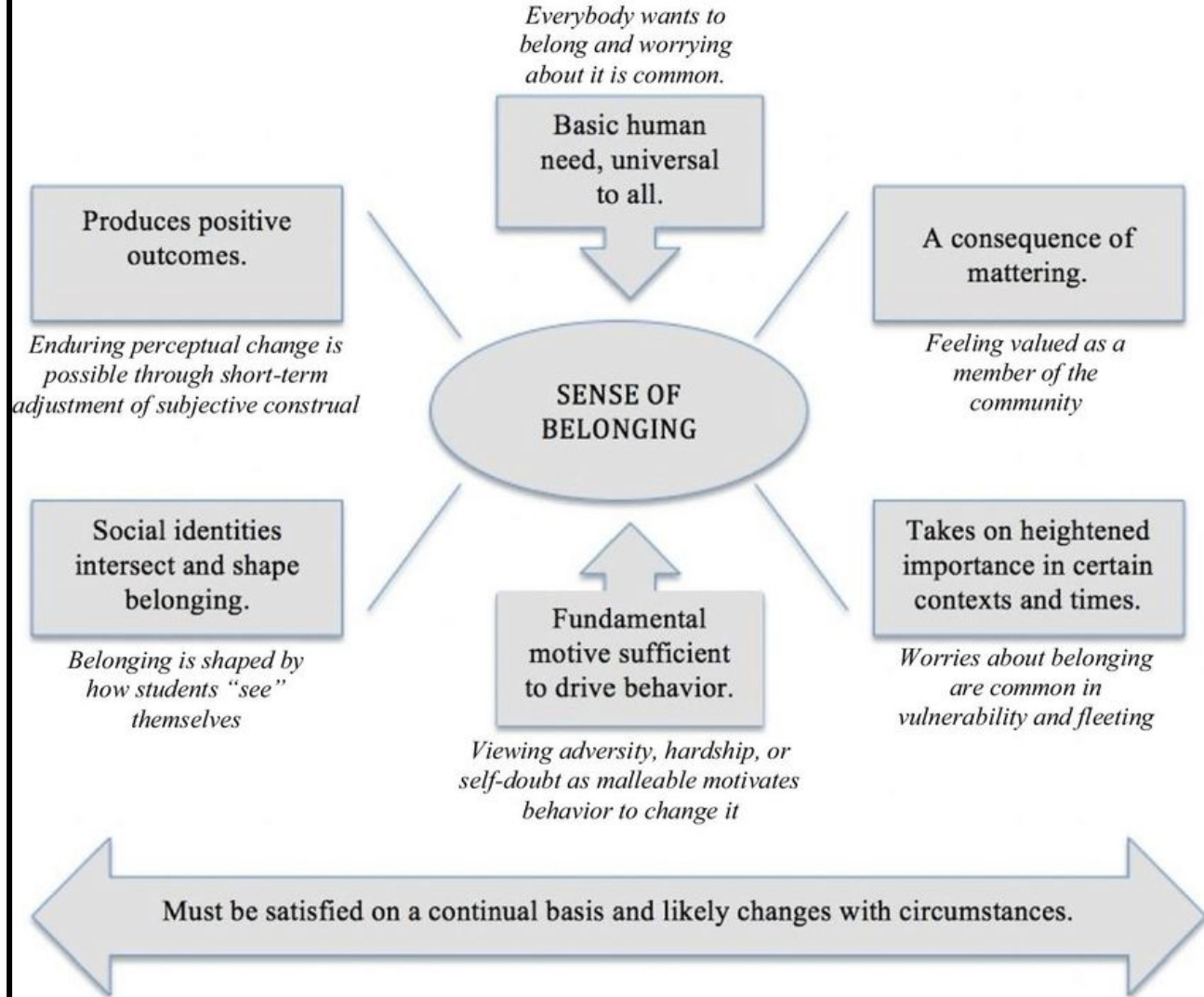


"Don't worry, Mom and Dad. I promise to only make mistakes you never made."

Roadmap for this Session

- Overview of Sense of Belonging
- Belonging at Wake Forest: How this Manifests with Students
- What Can Families Do to Help their New Student?
- Belonging at Wake Forest: What the Data Tells Us
- Resources, Questions and Answers

Belonging at Wake Forest: Part One





Everybody wants to belong

Worries about fitting in are common
(for both students and families!)



Students want to feel valued as a member of the community

Community can be macro or micro



Worries about belonging are common, vulnerable and fleeting



Viewing adversity, hardship, or self-doubt as part of the transition to college can motivate behavioral change



Belonging is shaped by how
students see themselves

Students will search for belonging
again, and again, and again



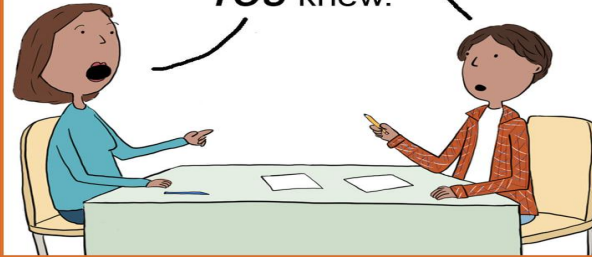
OK, so how do
we prepare you
to leave for college?



Art by Hedger Humor

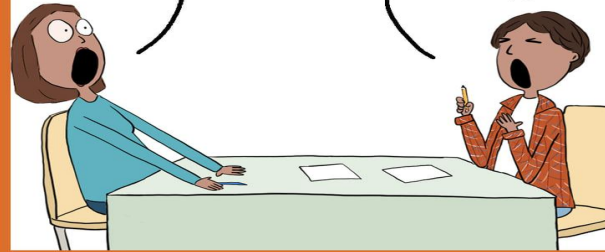
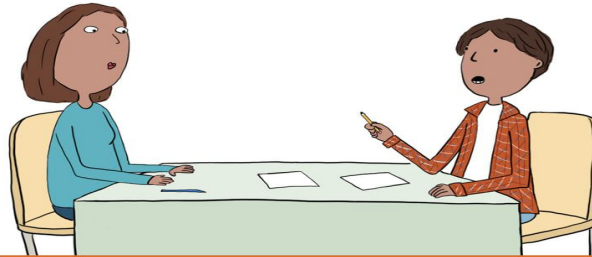
Uh... I thought **you** knew.

I thought
YOU knew.



AHHHHH!!

We know nothing!



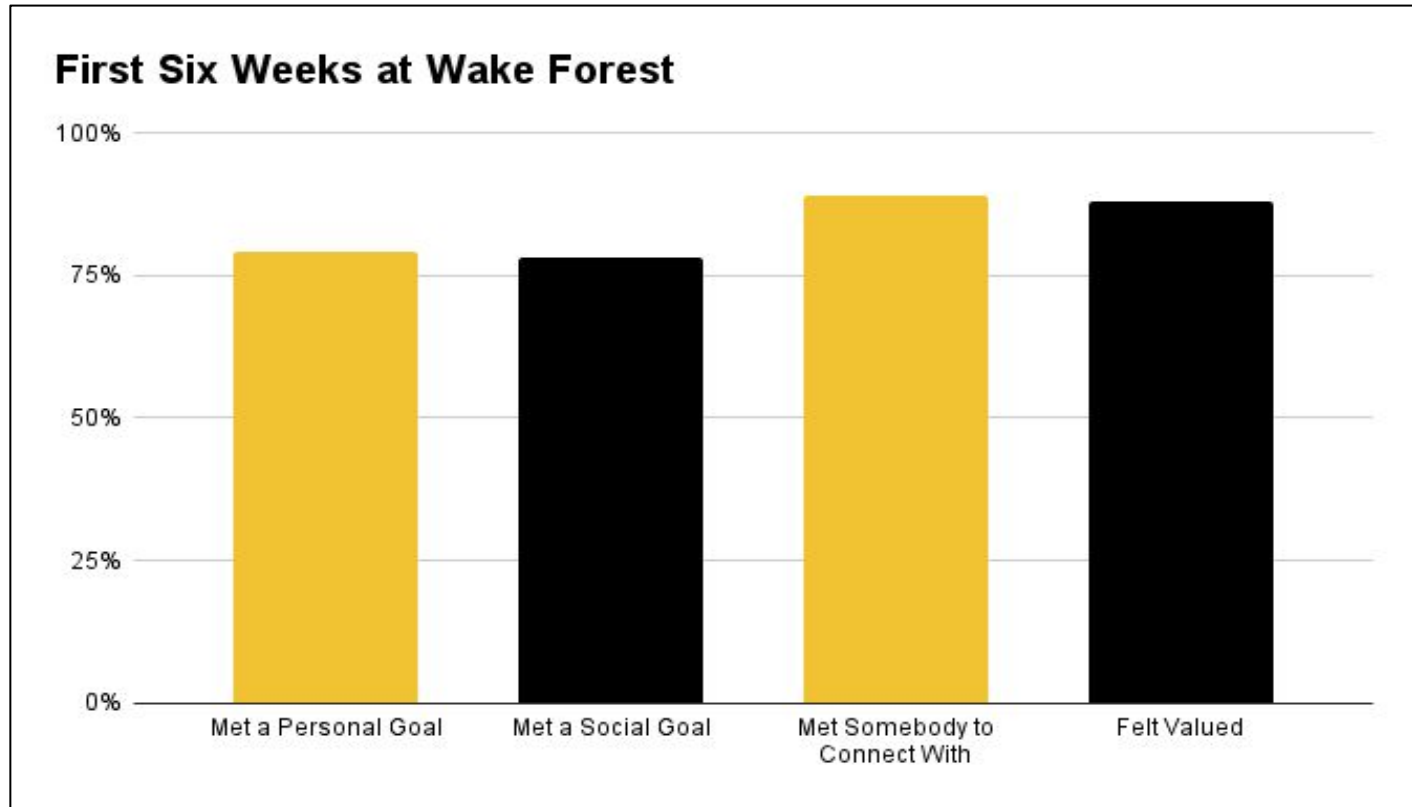
What Can Families Do to Help?

- **Have realistic expectations:** sense of belonging TAKES TIME. It could be 6 weeks, a semester, or **more likely a full year**
- Meet your student where they are; *their* experience does not have to look like *your* experience. If your student isn't unhappy, *it is not a problem!*
- Get comfortable with your student's discomfort (frantic phone call).

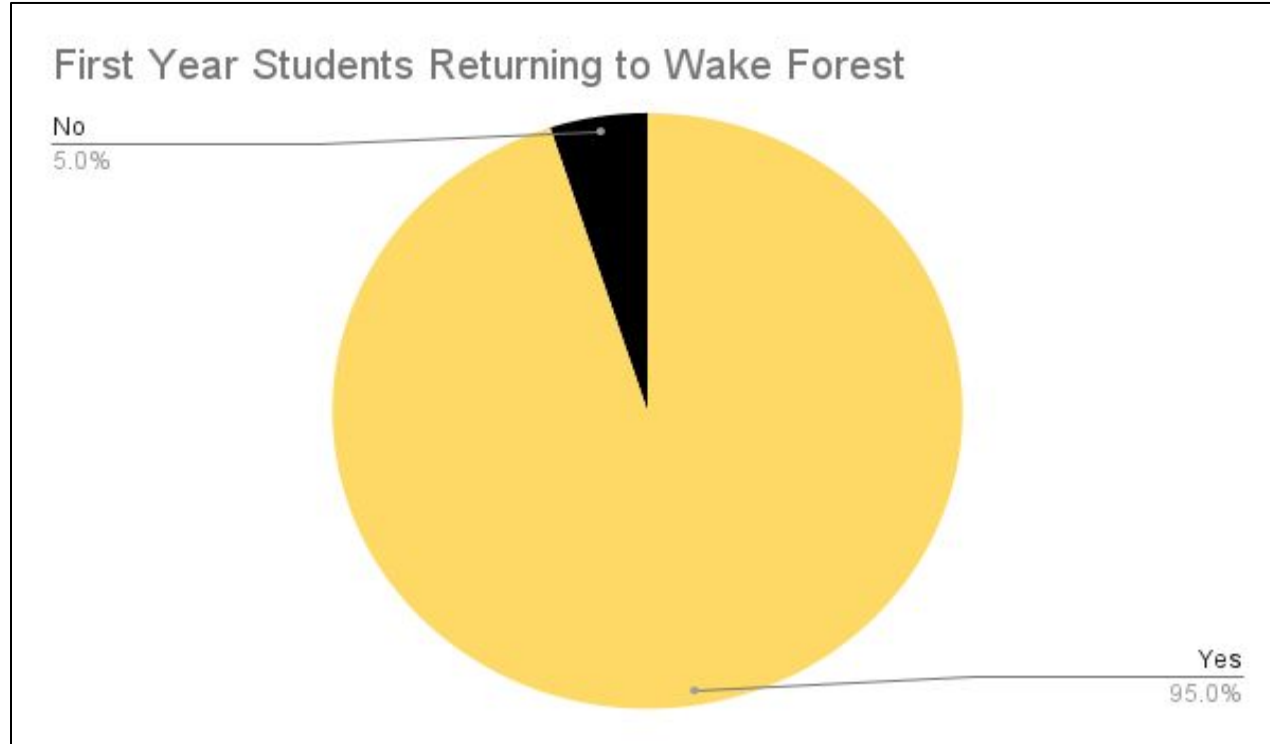
What Can Families Do To Help?

- Push them (gently, in whatever ways work best for your student) to go to events, activities, club meetings, etc.
[Encourage your extroverted students to pull us introverts along 😊]
- Stress kindness and empathy with your students: a sense of mattering to people can come from tiny micro moments - a *please*, a *thank you*, a holding the door, a “*you got this!*” Those things can build on each other.

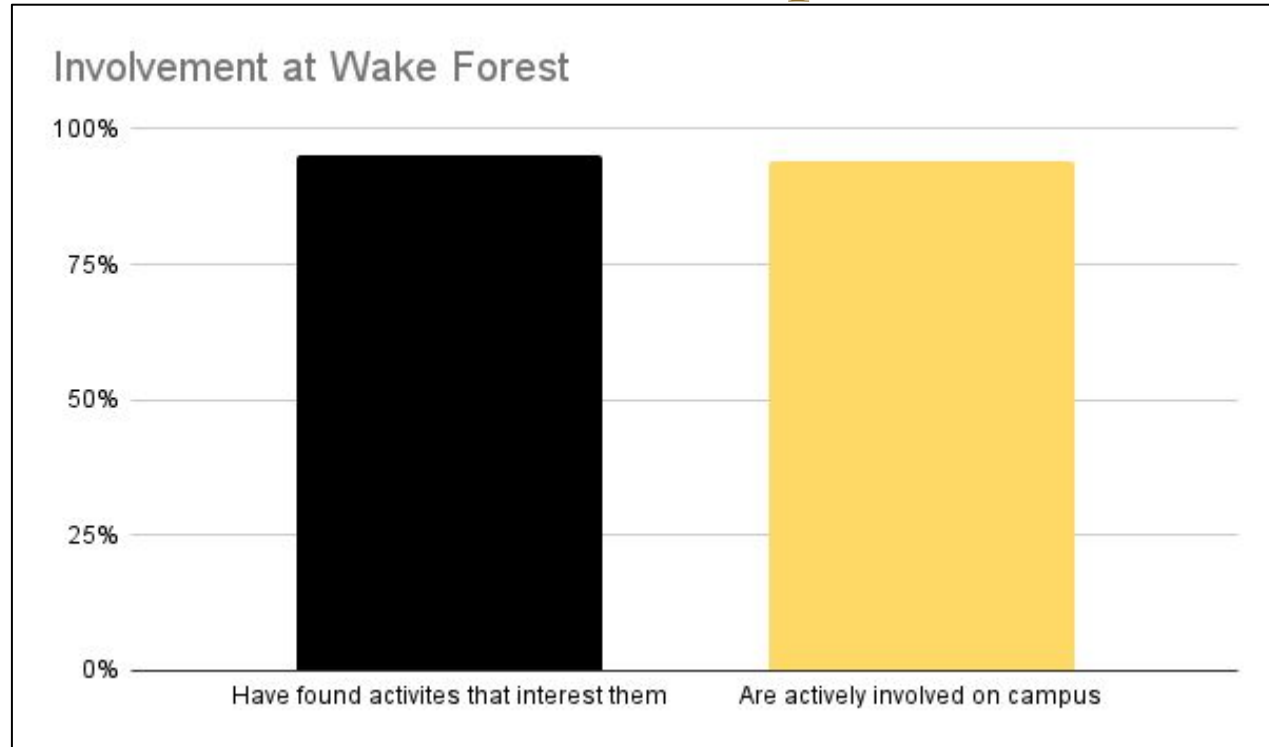
First Six Weeks at Wake



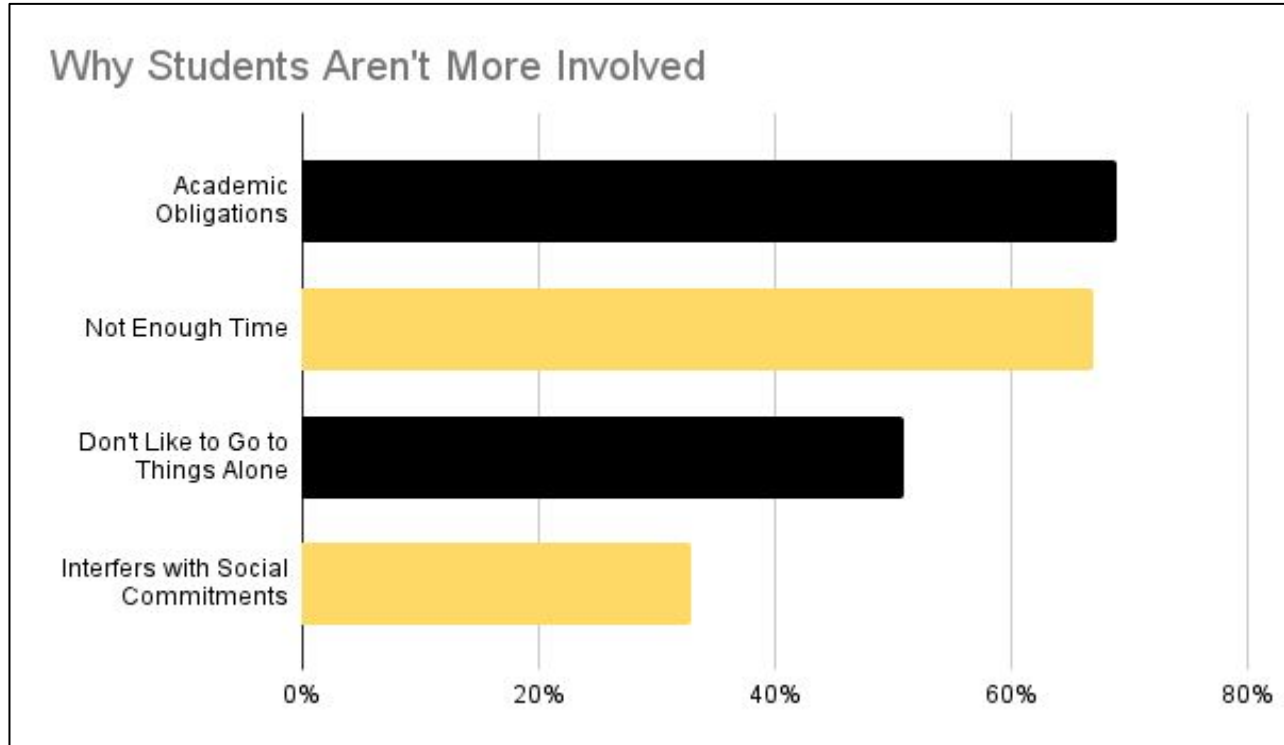
First Year Students Returning to Wake



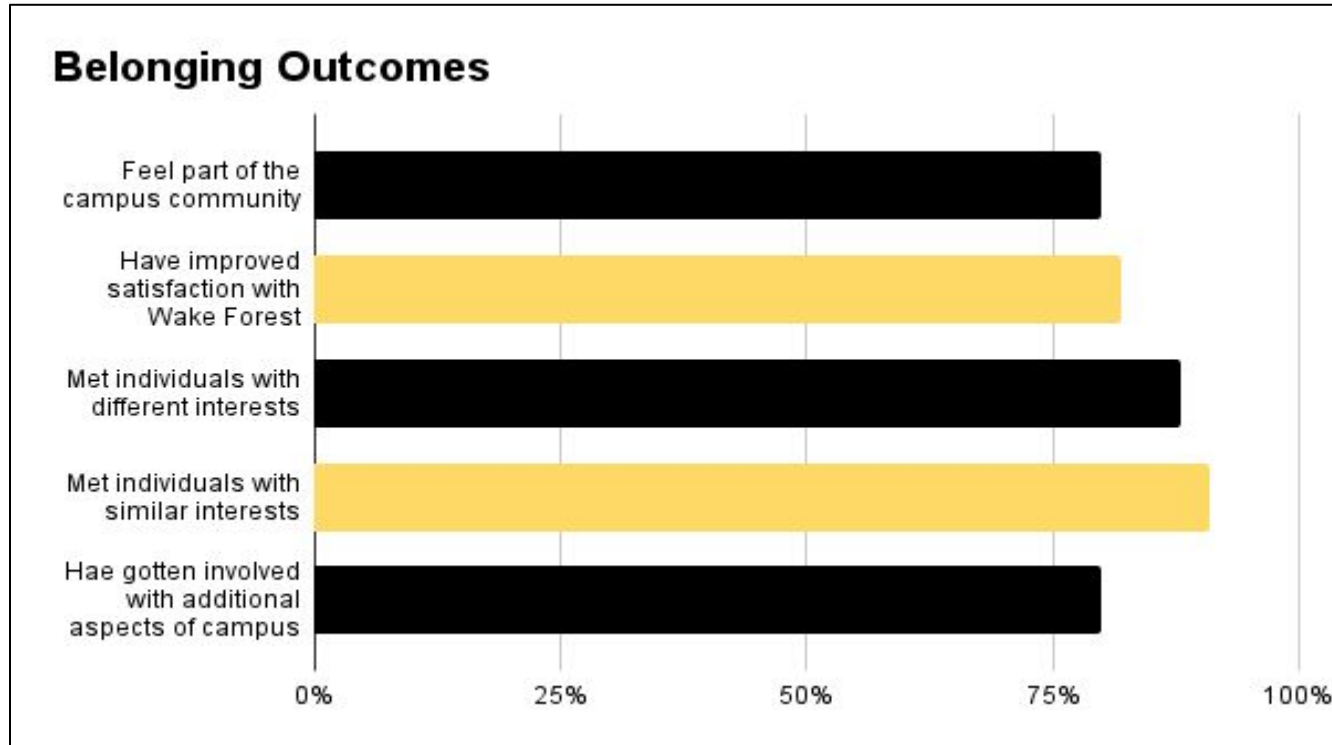
Involvement at Wake (Sophomores-Seniors)



Involvement at Wake



Outcomes of Involvement



Resources to Remember

- Office of Student Engagement - their job is literally to help every student find their place:
<https://studentengagement.wfu.edu/>
- We Are Wake: 336.758.WAKE (2273) or <https://we.wfu.edu/>
- you or your student can use We Are Wake for caring consultation if your student is struggling, and they will connect to campus resources
- Hit 'reply' on any Daily Deac or e-mail parents@wfu.edu. Both go straight to Betsy Chapman.

Tips from the Experts - For the Families

- Give Them Space!!!
- Normalize the First Year Challenges
- Encourage Campus Connection
- Get Involved
- Check In...But Not Too Much

Tips for the Students - From the Experts

- Get involved (both with the new and the familiar)
- Find connections
- Normalize the discomfort
- Use the resources that are right for you
- Be true to yourself - even if that changes



Questions and Discussion