



## **Media Fact Sheet**

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## Background and Introduction

The Transition Network (TTN) is a national nonprofit focused on professional women fifty and forward who are exploring what's next in their professional and personal lives. Our members range in age from 50 into their 80's and at each stage they find the support of the community of TTN women to be invaluable.

Since 2000, over 10,000 women have come through our doors to find new connections, discover what's important in their lives and determine the impact they want to have on themselves and on the broader community.

Our members are women who have fully embraced lives packed with experiences, big and small. As they prepare to step away from their careers and all that came before, they are ready to continue a life of purpose, using their knowledge and skills in new and exciting ways.

For more information, contact us at [info@thetransitionnetwork.org](mailto:info@thetransitionnetwork.org).

## Our History

In the late '90s, co-founders Charlotte Frank and Christine Millen realized it was time to leave the careers that had defined them. They thought "retirement feels like a big empty space...and we're going to live to be 90, so we have a lot of time ahead of us. How do we make the most of these years?" The Transition Network grew from those conversations among our founders and their friends in New York City living rooms.

When TTN launched back in 2000, the world was going through a

seismic shift. Baby boomers, then in their mid-50s, were beginning to contemplate their next steps. Some chose to embark on new careers. Others were forced to pursue other options as long-time jobs disappeared. At the same time, modern medicine was enabling people to live longer and healthier lives. The idea of retiring at age 65 as an “old person” no longer made sense.

For women like Christine and Charlotte, there was no blueprint for moving from one life stage to another. So, they set out to create one. Within a year, word had spread. Women were meeting regularly in each other’s homes, collaborating on ways to ease and find joy in the transitions they were facing.

Over time, as members moved or spoke to friends in other cities about their experience in The Transition Network, new groups sprang up. Eventually these new groups were formed into chapters. Today, TTN has 14 recognized chapters with nearly 3,000 active members. In addition, we have approximately 100 members scattered around the country who are also seeking the same answers to the question, what’s ahead for me in the next stage of my life?

Our current chapters are located in: Atlanta, Billings, Boston, Central Ohio, Chicago, Long Island, Minneapolis/St. Paul, New York, Northern New Jersey, Philadelphia, San Francisco, Santa Fe and Washington, DC.

TTN is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, incorporated in the State of New York. We are governed by a Board of Directors. We currently have one full time Executive Director and three part-time administrators who provide marketing and member services support. The chapters are run by volunteers who form committees and build leadership teams to deliver the mission of the organization.

TTN was launched with funding from The Ashoka Grant. Later, a grant from the New York State Health Foundation supported the development of the Caring Collaborative, a health support program within the organization.

Today, as a membership organization, The Transition Network is supported by annual dues and program revenues. We also rely on the generosity of our members and friends with extra donations during our annual appeal. Occasionally we secure sponsors for specific programs or growth initiatives.

We are able to provide financial assistance for women who find themselves in circumstances that make payment of dues difficult. This allows them to take full advantage of the groups and workshops as they discover their own “what’s next.”

## Who We Are

Our members are women whose careers shaped their identities - the earliest generations of women facing the challenge of what to do after the end of their career with few role models to emulate. They come from a variety of professional backgrounds including business, education, law, counseling, marketing, social work, medicine, finance, science and technology, nonprofits and government. They range in age from 50 into their 80’s with our current media in the mid-60’s. Our members are educated (70% with graduate degrees) and many are still working (55% for pay, 14% full time.) They’re active, eager to continue learning and looking to build meaningful lives.

The most important benefit of membership in TTN is the opportunity to build new relationships for support and friendship. These connections affirm their continued relevance as contributing members of our society.

At this stage of life there are many transitions besides leaving one's career. Family structures are evolving; we may be downsizing or moving to a new city; we may be taking on caretaking responsibilities; and there are physical and emotional effects of aging. Despite these changes, our members are finding new enjoyment in family, friends, culture, staying physical fit, using new technology and being active in their community.

## What We Do

At its very core, The Transition Network is a community of women helping women. The organization offers a variety of ways for its members to connect, discover and have an impact.

### Connect

- Special Interest Groups – initiated and managed by members, focused on specific interests and hobbies.
- Social and Networking Events – member mingles, tours, dinners all designed to provide a way for members to socialize and enjoy each other's company.
- Caring Collaborative – a special service that connects members to provide support during an acute (not chronic) health situation, exchange referrals and experiential information.

### Discover

- Signature Programs – TTN designed workshops on transition and resilience, which offer unique value to women 50 and forward. These workshops are facilitated by TTN members
- Transition Peer Groups – small groups which meet monthly to discuss topics relevant to their current

situation and future circumstances.

- Programs – speakers, panel discussions, classes on topics of importance to this demographic or focused on developing or strengthening a skill.
- Virtual groups – designed to engage members outside our chapter cities.
- Discover Series Webinars – 1-hour online events featuring experts who deliver information on topics designed to enhance learning, health and well-being.

## Impact

- Volunteerism – Members determine how they want to engage in their local communities through actively volunteering time and talent.
- Philanthropy – Members engage in fundraising activities, pooling their financial resources to provide grants to organizations that align with our mission.

Our chapters offer over 425 programs and events each year for members and guests. There are also over 100 transition peer groups engaging over 1,600 members. Over 2,500 members are enjoying the varied interests of our 250 special interest groups.

## Our Local Impact

Our mission is delivered through our chapters where members connect with each other and discover what will be important to them during this next stage of life. It is here that they find opportunities to have an impact – on their own lives and also the lives of others – family, friends and members of their community.

Our members are very interested in supporting local charities. These local efforts include

- helping children learn to read
- caring for the homeless
- donating clothes and providing resume writing and interview training to women re-entering the workforce
- Knitting scarves, sweaters, etc. to donate to local shelters.
- Working local soup kitchens and food preparation facilities.
- Volunteering to assist formerly incarcerated individuals as they re-enter society.

Some of the organizations supported by members in the New York and Long Island Chapters:

- Reading Partners: [www.readingpartners.org](http://www.readingpartners.org)
- League of Women Voters: [www.lwvnyc.org](http://www.lwvnyc.org)
- All Stars Project: [www.allstars.org](http://www.allstars.org)
- My Own Book: [www.mobf.org](http://www.mobf.org)
- Care for the Homeless: [www.careforthehomeless.org](http://www.careforthehomeless.org)
- The Bottomless Closet: [www.bottomlessclosetnyc.org](http://www.bottomlessclosetnyc.org)
- The Fortune Society: <http://fortunesociety.org/>
- Book Fairies: <https://thebookfairies.org/>
- Care to Knit: <http://caretoknit.org/>
- Child Abuse Prevention Services: <https://capsli.org/>
- Global Eyes of Hope: <https://vspglobal.com/cms/vspglobal-outreach/home.html>
- Island Harvest: <https://www.islandharvest.org/>

In Philadelphia, our members have created a Giving Circle which provides grants to nonprofits benefiting women and children. Members pool their financial resources and have provided over \$150,000 in grants to the following organizations in recent years.

- PA Senior Law Center: <https://seniorlawcenter.org/>

- Turning Points YVLifeSet: <http://www.turningpointsforchildren.org/programs>
- Rebuilding Together Philadelphia: <https://www.rebuildingphilly.org/>
- New Lease on Life: <https://www.newleashonlife-usa.org/>
- Penn's Village: <https://www.pennsvillage.org/>
- People's Emergency Center: <https://www.pec-cares.org/>
- Valley Youth House: <https://www.valleyyouthhouse.org/>

Throughout the country, members of The Transition Network are using their heads and their hearts to support those in need in their communities. This is a direct result of TTN's mission to support them in their own transition and help them discover their own life of purpose.

## Our National Impact

In 2019 we launched our *Discover Series Webinars*, which has attracted experts in the field of positive aging, brain health, housing, friendship, among others. These webinars are offered to anyone and have been well received by both members and guests.

The Transition Network's *Smart Women Don't Retire - They Break Free* (2008, Hachette Book Group) combines member stories and expert advice for women thinking about what's next. It won a National Mature Market Media award.

We are a leader in the positive aging movement that is defining new opportunities for people 50 and forward. As a founding member of the *Encore Network*, we work with other organizations who support women, and men, who are finding ways to stay involved in their communities, organize to raise awareness of important causes and generally empower them to continue to be significant contributors to society.

In 2016, The Transition Network raised over \$6,000 to support the National Domestic Violence Hotline.

## TTN in the news

Women associated with The Transition Network are role models for living a life of engagement and leadership in the world. We are sought out by journalists looking for examples of successful career transitions; entrepreneurial transformations; community impact; health challenges and survival; financial challenges overcome; taking risks after 50. Their stories have been featured in:

- *The New York Times*
- *The Wall Street Journal*
- *Time, Business Week*
- *US News & World Report*
- *Forbes*
- *Newsday*
- *The Philadelphia Inquirer*
- *Kaiser News*
- *Woman's Day*

## TTN author references

The Transition Network has been featured or included as a reference in books from these notable authors:

- *The Happiness Curve*, Jonathan Rauch
- *Passages in Caregiving*, Gail Sheehy
- *The Big Shift: Navigating the New Stage Beyond Midlife*, Marc Freedman

- *Encore: Finding Work That Matters in the Second Half of Life*, Marc Freedman
- *How We Love Now*, Suzanne Braun Levine
- *What's Next*, Kerry Hannon.
- *Your Life Calling: Reimagining the Rest of Your Life*, Jane Pauley
- *It Ain't Over...Till It's Over: Reinventing Your Life – and Realizing Your Dreams – Anytime, at Any Age*, Marlo Thomas
- *Who's Going to Take Care of Me When I'm Old – Joy Loverde*
- *The Encore Career Handbook*, Marci Alboher

## Speakers at TTN events

Speakers who have presented at programs offered by The Transition Network

- Ashton Applewhite
- Marc Freedman
- Kerry Hannon
- Nancy Collamer
- Elizabeth Isele
- Suzanne Braun Levine
- Gail Sheehy
- Judy Woodruff
- Catherine Collinson
- Joan Lunden
- Dolly Chugh