Hello everyone.
Welcome.
My name is Lisa.
We are hosting today's webinar, "Navigating Fund development Strategies during Transition."
This is part of an ongoing webinars series on organizational sustain
ability, which is supported by the Department of Justice, and part of a training institute we host called the Supporting Organizational Sustainability to Address Violence Against Women Institute, or SOS Institute for short.
You will receive emails notifying you of additional webinars in the series.
Upcoming topics include social media and communication strategies, and engaging your board or other governing body.
Today's webinar will run until 11:30 a.m. Pacific time.
During the webinar, your phone line will be muted.
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At the end of this presentation, we will have a question and answer section.
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At the end of the webinar, you will be prompted to answer a short survey.
Please take a moment to give us feedback on today's presentation, and also make suggestions for future topics.
We want to be responsive to your needs.
Also as a reminder, recording of today's webinar and PDF version of the PowerPoint slide will be available on our web site after the presentation.
We also have a file pod on the lower right-hand corner where it says SOS Institute transition one megabyte.
That is an area where you can click on and download the files as well.
And as I mentioned, earlier, today's webinar is part of a series we're providing under the umbrella of the SOS Institute.
Created in 2010, offers an interactive 2 1/2 day training session, ongoing technical assistance for OVW grantees.
Participation is built around teams of three to four individuals from the same organization which may include the executive director, a board member, and a program staff.
We cover a broad range of topics from aligning your mission and core values to effective collaborations to draft development.
A link to the flier is also in the same file pod where you can download the presentation.
And those 432 kilobites.
We have an extraordinary team of faculty veterans in organizational sustainability.
Given they have founded led or currently leading -- we have one of our faculty members with us today.
Amy Sanchez.
Amy is currently the CEO of Break the Cycle and has over 20 years of experience in the domestic violence movement serving various service roles.
She previously served as an independent consult can't and past CEO of the National Latin@ Network and Co-Executive Director of Casa de Esperanza, where she held a variety of leadership roles within the organization during the past 15 years.
We also have with us here today our guest speaker, Tara Korthals, executive director for the Center for Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence Survivors who will speak to us about her and her organization's experience navigating major transitions and bringing to life some of the concepts we will discuss today in the webinar.
Prior to serving as executive director, she worked in child protective services doing child abuse and neglect investigations and has also pursued a career in law enforcement for the past 6 1/2 years for the Jefferson County Sheriff's Office.
She currently works part-time as a deputy for the Butler County Sheriff's Office.
And without further ado, I will turn it over to Amy who will be leading today's webinar.

>> Amy: Thank you.
Welcome to everyone.
It's really a pleasure for me to be here with you all today and talking with you.
Organizational development and strong organization in our field is one of my personal and professional passions.
I appreciate futures and the support that they have given as an organization to the SOS Institute.
If you haven't heard of SOS, I will selfishly do a promotion for that. It truly is a great way to bring together people from your staff and your board.
Really dive into organizational development from a whole different lens of really letting your mission guide your work and some of those themes will be coming up today in our time together as well.
I would encourage you to look at that, you know, if you don't know about the SOS Institute and hopefully I can meet you in person.
For today, we have two very simple yet very complicated objectives.
The first really is to just understand the concept of transition, right. And the different stages, what causes transition and the different stages that people within your organization go through and the second being to look at concrete funding but also leadership strategies right when you
are either in the middle of a transition or you are preparing for a transition to come.
So, before we start, I really wanted to kind get a sense of who is on the line.
I have been watching.
Thank you for all typing in your names and where you're coming from.
That is super helpful for me.
And so we wanted to kind of where everyone is from.
The type of organization.
So, if you could answer the poll quickly.
Service provider, advocacy organization is A.
B is legal advocacy.
C is service provider, advocacy organization.
D is a community-based organization.
And then E is other.
Please specify, if you could.
And I will give you 10, 15 seconds to do that.
>> Well, it looks like we actually have a really great mix.
Lisa, can everyone see the poll results or just me?
I'm sorry.
>> Lisa: Yeah, everyone should be able to see that.
And then in the chat box, folks are writing in -- typing in the other.
>> Amy: Yeah, excellent.
I'm really actually very happy to see.
It looks like we have a good mix of people from all kinds of organizations, which is really great.
So, I wanted to start out today with a visual.
We use this transition curve thanks to Becky, who is another faculty on the SOS Institute team.
And I like to use this because it's -- for me at least, when I first saw this, this transition curve, it kind of put a lot of things into perspective for me.
So, I will take a few minutes to explain it.
And I would really suggest that you do download this file.
If it is only just for this piece of information and when transitions happen in your organizations, whether they be big or small, you look at this and kind of keep it front and center.
So, a couple of fundamental principles that we have here in front of us.
The first one is that transition is a very normal thing.
It happens all of the time.
We're today going to be concentrating or bigger transitions in organizations.
But each transition has the beginning and an ending.
The inside -- inside of the curve you will see predominantly feelings, right?
And this, again, was helpful for me to kind of understand either to validate my feelings in a period of transition or people within organizations that I have worked with.
So, when, you know, when -- if you look over where the A is, you will see all of the words that go along with that.
Disbelief, denial, anger, betrayal, etc., etc.
Those are all very normal feelings when a transition is upon people, right?
To the left of that you will see things you can actually do.
When we say endings, what we mean by that, something is -- something has ended.
So that is the transition, right?
When that happens, some things that you can concretely do, giving space to people, just to experience what has just happened.
Giving them information.
Clarifying their role and your role and allowing time.
Time for things to sink in.
Time for people to talk amongst themselves, past members, board members, etc.
As we go further down the curve, moving towards the transition, neutral zone, other things you can do, listen, acknowledge people and where they're at.
Provide encouragement and support.
Focus on priorities.
Follow-up.
Again, these are how we are moving people through a major transition.
And then you will get to the neutral zone where people are neither very angry or in disbelief, but also like not -- they're kind of just waiting, waiting to see what will happen.
And that is a big piece.
Lots of people kind of fall there in that section of just kind of sitting, waiting, to see what happens.
And then as we go up the right side of the transition curve, again, on the inside, you will see lots of feelings, right?
And then also so still when you're coming out of the neutral zone, overwhelmed, moving up to people feeling like they're involved, active, exploring things.
Focused on the team.
And then, again, on the outside, things that you can do as a staff or board member to really help move people towards the top of that transition curve and the change.
Take so much time to talk about this because, again, I think it's so easy when you are in a period of transition to feel like you're the only one and to know that this is very normal and happens all of the time and the concrete steps that you can do to help people through transitions was a valuable tool for me.
The other thing that I wanted to highlight here is that for the people who are over in the transition, over on the A side, it's very hard to understand or talk to the people who are way over on the B side.
And vice -- vice versa.
Thing about in -- at your work, personal life, some people easily move forward.
What's the next step?
Where are we going?
How are we going to get there?
And are automatically on the B side.
And there are other people who stay longer in -- on the A side of things.
Again, you know, as leaders within your organizations, I think understanding that people do fall in these different areas is -- was just a very helpful tool for me.
The webinar will concentrate on major transitions in organizations.
And we wanted to do that, again, because we want to, of course, throughout the webinar talk about development and development strategies for how you continue to strengthen your organization. So, there really are three causes of major transition, and I will be going into those in depth in a couple of minutes. But it is really people, right? Leadership change. Funding, either a major loss of funding or a major gain in funding. And then changes in philosophy. So, your mission, your vision, or your core values. Have you ever experienced a major organizational transition at your current or previous place of employment? So, A, is yes. B is no. And C is I don't know. So, if you could all -- is that poll up? I'm sorry. I can't see that on my screen. >> There you go. >> Thank you. It is what I assumed. I think we all assume. So far at least it is 100% yes. I think that, again, it's -- what we really wanted to do was demystify some of the thinking around transition, and like I said in the transition curve, it is a very normal part of life, right? Not only personal, but professional as well. Something that happens and I think the more that we can prepare ourselves organizationally to deal with the transition, the better results that we will find. Okay. So, going back into a little bit more into depth around people and the different kinds of transitions that can happen with people. The one kind of -- what I would say myth around people, you know, we're often told as employees that, you know, no one is indispensable, but I, in my personal and professional experience, I really believe that people either make or break an organization. So, I think that people really are a critical piece, especially in times of transition. So, obviously the first kind of person that would facilitate a major transition is an executive director or other kind of leader within your organization that could be a senior person. It could be the founder of your organization that is moving on. The second piece is a board of directors. Oftentimes what we will see, you know, there are some organizations that have kind of rolled into their bylaws that the vice president or the vice chair automatically rolls into the chair position, but sometimes that doesn't happen. And, so, you may have a board of directors chairperson that comes on and has a different philosophy or way -- the work of the organization, and that can cause for a major transition. Also in -- how should I say --
in hard transitions, right, maybe transitions that weren't anticipated, so, for example, executive director gets fired or asked to leave, oftentimes we will see with the board of directors that half of the board will go along as well. And I'm sure some of you have experienced that in your own organizations. And, so, those are, again, sometimes we can plan for the transition of an executive director or a founder who is leaving, and it can be a very thoughtful process with -- transition, find another great executive, and then other times it happens in a very short period of time in one day or two weeks. And those obviously lend themselves to different transition angst and different problems that the organization has to confront. I wanted to highlight, because I think this is important and something that sometimes we forget to really talk about, is when you have other staff that may not be in executive positions, but are key relationship people with community. So, you may have, for example, an advocate that has been working with the organization for many, many years who is fantastic and all of the women from your community call her. You know, she is a key leading within the organization, and a transition from her oftentimes what we see especially with people who have community relationships is that it will be -- you know, it is important to as much as you possibly can, again, if it is a good transition, to transfer some of those relationships from the person who is leaving to the new staff or volunteer because otherwise oftentimes what happens is those key relationships leave when the staff person leaves. So, that is another in that area of people, that is another key person that I wanted to highlight. So, the next slide is probably not surprising or shocking for anyone. The other kind of key area where transition sometimes is forced upon us is in these three different areas. The government grants obviously. I think most, if not all of you are on the webinar having received or are receiving government grants. And it is important to remember in this area that there is some planning that you can do, right, to diversify your funding sources and I think that is key. I think Tara later on will talk about that as well. But government grants obviously, if you receive a new grant that is great, right, but, and it also is an opportunity for a pretty major transition to come, you know, into your organization. You are hiring new staff. You are, you know, first of all, just trying to do the community outreach that you need to do to bring the staff members on, but also you might have to look at program development. Taking staff from -- away from one priority to another priority. All of those kinds of transitions definitely affect staff. On the same side with government grants, if you lose a government grant, that has maybe supported five of your six staff members, right, obviously that will cause a major transition in your organization. Some of these things we can anticipate. Some of these things we can't, right? Again, one of the walk-aways from a funding perspective is to always have diversity in the funding sources that you have.
The way that I think about it is the - kind of the rule of thumb is that if you have any source, whether that be from individuals or foundations, corporations, or the government, if you have any one source of funding that if it would go away, your organization would not survive, that means you're too dependent on that source of funding. Again, proactively thinking about, you know, looking at your own organizations and the relationships that you have with your funders. How can you start to slowly bridge out and we will talk about this later on as well. But how can you start to slowly bring out and to diversify the funding sources. Even within government, if you only have a government grant from, you know, from HUD, right, so then maybe you look into other organizations from the government that funds DV or SV work. Look into others, the Department of Education -- it is not government in general, it is really the different funding sources within government and the more diversity that you can have in those areas, the better and the more easy it will be to deal with things during the period of transition. The final one, obviously, individual donors. I think in our field especially this is one area where we have paid particularly less attention to and in most cases we rely on corporations, foundations, government grants. Individual donors as well can especially those who have been involved in the organization for a long time, they may have, for example, if it is a family, right, they may have shifted their giving priorities. So, they have given you $50,000 every year for the past 10 years and then automatically just one day they say, you know, we're really not going to be funding, looking at domestic violence or sexual violence anymore, we are going to be funding education in school. That just happens. That is just a real part of fund development. An individual, as well as foundations and corporations, governments shift their priorities from time to time. So, that could be a cause, again, of a major transition, especially on the program side of things. And the last kind of cause of transition in organizations is a change in philosophy. So, mission creep is the first thing we have listed there. For me, kind of -- I will maybe give you an example of what mission creep looks like. It happens very easily. So, for example, with, let's say that I work at a shelter. And I look at -- you know, the participants that are coming into the shelter and I see, you know, some of the participants have chemical dependency issues. Then I say, okay, I'm going to find a grant to fund chemical dependency. Again, it is an easy leap. We do know that some women in shelters have issues with chemical dependencies for a variety of reasons, right? So, I -- that makes sense. I go and I get a grant for chemical dependency. And then I start to look at that -- the women who are looking -- working with in our shelter, chemical dependency, and then I say, well, most of
these women have lost their jobs, unfortunately, because of their chemical dependency. 
Then I look for and secure grant for you know job creation. 
So I'm doing that. 
And then I start doing job training. 
And then I say, oh, well, you know, there is also an educational component here to helping with job training and then we do an educational division, right within our organization. 
And very quickly over the period of not very many years, you started out as a shelter, right, and you are doing -- you are doing education stuff. 
And, again, it is not to minimize the intersectionality of all of those issues, right? 
Those are issues that people who experience violence face. 
But when the grant -- when you're looking for the grants and trying to get the grants based on things you get further and further and further away from your mission. 
So, it is always something to keep in mind as you are in this period of transition. 
The second thing that I would put in there is the different philosophy, right? 
And this usually happens like I mentioned earlier, with an executive director change or a board chair or a large component of the board shifting over. 
And, you know, the way that I think about philosophy and what -- is that it is always really based in what your community needs around you and what your community demands of your organization. 
Most of us do not work in places where there are tens or hundreds of domestic violence or sexual violence organizations in our community, right? 
Some of us on the webinar, we're the only shop in town, right? 
And, so, we have a very specific mission and focus and we have been doing this work for a long time in our communities. 
So, when you have a new leader coming into the organization, it's really critical that the changes in philosophy will automatically -- will happen because it is a new leader, right, especially if you're transitioning from an Executive Director that has been in the organization for many, many years. 
It is important that philosophy and that philosophical shift is based in what your constituency group really wants and needs. 
Again, I highlight that because not only is it just good ethical practice, but also from a fund development perspective, in order to be able to really secure the resources that you need, it is already important to say that we have made this philosophical shift, right, and that is a critical part of us moving forward. 
I will give an example. 
I -- Lisa mentioned earlier I'm CEO of Break the Cycle. 
I have been there now for a little over a year. 
We are an organization that was in transition. 
I think maybe some of the staff members will say we are still in transition. 
And I think one of those pieces is around philosophy. 
And the staff worked really hard this past year to, you know, as a youth-centered organization, it is easy to say that we are a youth-centered
organization, but how do we integrate young people's voices into all that we do, right?
So, in that way, taking a philosophical statement that we had as an organization, and what I call institutionalizing that or operationalizing that, making that real throughout the organization. Those are key pieces.
When you have a shift or a change in philosophy, that can happen.
And that takes a lot of time for staff and for donors and board members to grapple with.
So, that leadership change is an opportunity, right, as long as it is based in what your community and your constituency group needs.
Again, along that same kind of point, another change in philosophy.
An example of that would be if you as an organization do a different strategic plan or a new focus.
Not even that you have an executive director that is new, or your board has changed over.
It could just be that you have done a strategic plan and something new has emerged which causes you to look at things in a very different way.
An example of that, an organization that I know very well made a shift years ago now to move from being a shelter organization, to a community-based organization.
And what happened in that shift, as a result of a strategic plan, what happened as a result of that shift was that the organization lost about 40% -- about 40% turnover of staff.
I would say in a two-year period, maybe.
And that's a lot of turnover right on the staff level.
And a lot of institutional knowledge that left.
The reason why those people left though was really what the new strategic plan and the new focus away from shelter to a community, the employees that left basically said and it was a great transition as far as there were not hurt feelings, because there had been transparency in the process.
But the employees left because their personal and professional goals were really to work at a shelter and in a shelter organization.
They weren't as interested in working in the community-based organization.
So, again, it is when you make that shift, a very strategic shift, or even a pivot, right, just moving to a little different way of seeing the work or doing the work, you know, you very often will have staff transition in that process.
So, that would be another, what I would call a change of philosophy.
But that is an important component, right, in thinking about transition.
So, a couple of pitfalls to think about, and, again, I have alluded to some of this as -- in my comments up until this point.
Some things to remember as you're going through periods of transitions.
First of all, the loss of organizational values or your focus on mission.
We see this often happening if, especially in an executive director transition, for example, executive director who may be was the visionary or founder of the organization or the person that really held the vision and that staff looked to as the leader of the organization, when that person leaves, sometimes there can, you know, not sometimes, many times, often it happens that, you know, there may be, you know, less of an
emphasis on the mission of the organization or less of a focus because that was held so much in that person.
So, again, later on we will talk about strategies to remedy that.
But that often happens.
The second thing would be, again, which we talked about a little earlier, chasing money.
Promising to do all things for all people, right?
Again, especially if you are in a position where, you know, financial resources have been a struggle and a problem, or have been the cause of some of the transitions that you have had, it is very easy to go down the path of chasing the money, which, again, leads to the mission creep, which I was talking about earlier.
The last two, I think, are critically important.
Lack of attention to detail and then burnout.
For me, they go hand in hand, frankly.
You know, when you are in transition, remember back to the transition curve that we talked about at the very beginning of the webinar, you know, when you have anger and resentment and frustration and fear, all of those very real, true emotions that staff members are having, it's also very easy for things to fall through the cracks frankly.
Because, again, and I always try to put myself, you know, in that personal situation.
If I am not in a good place, right, I'm also not doing my best work, right?
So, things may fall through the cracks.
Emails might go unanswered.
The little details are the ones that make the biggest difference.
That happens quite often in organizations that you see that are in transition.
Some of it, a lot of it goes right hand-in-hand with number four, which is the burnout piece of the staff, board and volunteers.
Especially if you have lost funding for example.
The work doesn't go away, right?
It's -- the work remains.
The clients remain.
The participants remain.
But you have less people to do that work.
So, you're really asking, many times for people, for staff members, for example, to really step up to the plate and sometimes too much.
Which causes burnout.
The same for your board members and your volunteers.
So, with that, I'm really excited to introduce to all of you Tara.
Tara had the opportunity to meet Tara and listen to her story from the Center for Survivors in Nebraska, Columbus.
Use this time to listen, as we said in the beginning, we can ask questions in the end.
If there are any burning questions that you have for Tara, feel free to ask.
We can take some time when she is done talking as well to ask those questions.
Without further ado, Tara, do you want to take it over?
>> Tara: Yeah, thank you.
Good morning everybody.
I was asked to share the story from the center, and it just so happens that we hit almost every point that Amy was talking about in a matter of a year's time.

When I first came on at the center, we were in major staff transition. Bringing a new Executive Director in at the same time was an incredible transition for not only staff but then the board as well.

So, from January, when I started, we had a new board president start. And the previous executive director was an advocate, moved out to director and the board president was a medical professional, and, so, when we transitioned in, I came from a law enforcement background and the new board president is in -- is a prosecutor in one of our counties, and, so, it was definitely a big change of philosophy and how to handle that -- how to handle staffing and things like that from the old way of doing things.

We serve six counties, 65,000 people in the service area. So quite a big area.

When we lost our funding, which is another point of the -- not only do we have a bunch of transition for people, we also had a funding change where we lost about 75% of our operating budget this last year.

So, I think that I went through the transition curve over and over again going oh, my goodness, what are we going to do? How does this work? Where do we start?

What does our strategic plan look like?

We realized that we lost that in right around September. Luckily we had written in to a different grant that was able to pick up that loss, but with that, we had to shift major roles within our agency. And so we had to look at kind of our philosophy and say, okay, we don't want to leave what our mission statement is, but how do we, you know, get this funding stream and still make our work important and do great things in our community.

And still get that funding stream.

What we did was wrote it into a different grant and switched from focusing a lot on prevention, which was half of my staff, to more of direct services.

We had to change from a residential shelter to solely hotel/motel services because that funding stream went away.

We are trying to keep the same mission and goals and where our priorities are.

But it has to look different as far as what the staff's role was. A few things that I sat back and thought okay, time to get creative.

How am I going to keep all of my staff that I have? How am I going to be transparent with my staff and still get this funding that I need to keep this agency afloat?

So, right now, we currently have 18 staff employed here and was able to keep all of my staff and actually hire on another part-time bilingual advocate.

You know, just getting creative with their roles, it became very apparent that statistics and data was going to be the forefront of grant reporting and so one of our advocates was really excelled at that, and, so, I made that part of her role.

I had another advocate, you know, that was really great at communications pieces and public relations.
And, so, she moved from coordinating volunteers to really getting our public relations out and reaching out to our rural counties. Trying to work smarter and not harder was my focus. One of my stumbling blocks, I was spread very thin because during that change, we had also gone from a three-tier leadership to me being the only person in a supervisory role. And, so, it was running very thin and trying to avoid burnout even for myself. So, I was trying to delegate as much as I could and keeping that transparency with my staff and during staff meetings really trying to let them know what was going on and how they could help me, how I could help them during this transition period. It felt for a little while every time we came together at a staff meeting, I had more changes that I had to make based on the funding stream. But, you know, really trying to keep what their needs were in the forefront so that they could better serve clients because without my staff, I can't serve clients, which is the whole mission and the goal of the agency. So, really embracing what they had to offer and what they brought to the table was my priority. Prior to me -- out of my 18 employees, we had five that were employed at the agency in 2014. So, if that tells you how many new staff we have brought on in the last couple of years, but through all of this, I have not had one turnover in staff. So, I've done some things to really help with that transition. And, you know, for instance, I had one staff member that had four kids. And for her to get to work at 8:00 in the morning was very difficult. So, we changed her hours from 8:00 to 5:00 to 9:00 to 5:00. That kept her from being late to work and also helped to keep the agency running smoothly. Little things like that and maintaining flexibility and -- able to maintain staff and keep them from burnout and trying to avoid that. Trying to avoid starting over during this huge transition of, you know, new director, new board of directors. All trying to avoid that with your key staff. Really don't want to start over with the staff I already had in place and I had already changed. And, so, we just keep trying to figure out how to make things work with our new funding stream. We were able to open up satellite offices in all of our counties. We flourished in our outlying counties. Whereas before we were in Columbus and one other small town. Now we are in all six of our counties and at the local college. That was actually a positive that came along with the new funding stream. And, instead of, you know, really focusing on prevention, we do a little prevention but we have tried to figure out other ways to reach out in a different way. One of the things we also have done is set up Spanish-speaking -- trying to figure out what we can do in a creative way to make our agency work to maintain our philosophy, and still meet the funding requirements as needed.
Amy, did you have anything that I missed that we had talked about earlier?

>> Amy: I think it would be really great for you to talk about the shift in philosophy, right, and how you really integrated that in your new work, you know, based again on what the community wanted and gaps that you were seeing out in the community.

>> Tara: Sure.

So, with our old funding stream we had adolescent advocates in teaching building healthy relationship classes in 12 of our high schools in our service area.

When the funding stream went away, we picked up and thought we still need to be in the service area.

Hearing from rural communities that we are not there.

Instead of being in the schools there, we decided to open up satellite offices and switch our philosophy from prevention in schoolwork to satellite offices and going out to the clients to meet clients where they're at.

When we were at a satellite office a couple of weeks ago, I had a client come in and say I couldn't have come all of the way to Columbus. I'm so glad that you are in my community.

A lot of times it is a 15 minute drive one way to get to the home office. That is just not feasible for some clients.

So we really changed our philosophy in that direction and also wrote into the new grant that we could do presentations in our high schools.

We are able to be in our high schools and our middle schools. It just looks a little different now and not teaching very structured curriculum, but now doing more awareness presentations.

Just trying to keep that going and just looking a little bit different.

>> Amy: And what about, you know, if you were to think ofof -- I don't know how to really say this -- what would you have liked to know before you went into this?

What would have been like the major kind of ah-ha moments or walk-aways, the take-aways, having survived now this difficult year, right, of transition, you know -- what would you like to share with people about that?

>> I think, you know, the transition curve laid it out really great for me in seeing, yeah, I went through, I think, all of that. Just knowing that there is light at the end of the tunnel, so to speak and that, you know, when you diversify the funding with something that, you know, we knew that if we didn't branch out and diversify this, and that one program or that one grant cannot sustain our program.

And, so, really diversifying those funds and, you know, we kind of saw the writing on the wall and so we prepared and kind of laid out a strategic plan with the board.

And the staff and okay, what is this going to look like if we do not get this grant?

How are we going to sustain this agency?

That strategic planning was really that ah-ha, okay, we've got to have a plan in place if this does not come through.

Because no grant is ever guaranteed.

I think looking back that was the main keep your staff, the staff are going to be your key players.
Because when you are so thin trying to figure everything out as far as, you know, your board, your funding, all of that, your staff is who is going to be running your day-to-day operations.
They were also -- my strong -- the backbone of the agency while I was trying to keep everything going as far as funding and changes.
It all kind of weaves together.

>> Amy: Jacqueline and Marty have -- I have heard this as well. Jacqueline asks how do you deal with the question, well, we have never had to do it this way before?
And Marty asks, or we've always done it this way.
How do you deal with that in the day-to-day work of the organization?

>> Those were two questions that came up to me repeatedly.
We had some staff, a few staff that were here had been here for years.
And, so, they have seen executive directors come and go but they have stayed.
One of my biggest pushes was, you know, I wish that we could keep it this way, but due to our new grant requirements and our new funding streams, it is just not possible.
If we don't change with the requirements, you know, we're not going to be able to maintain that funding stream.
And that was well received.
Listening, listen to what your staff's concerns are.
They have been through it.
The staff that have been there for eight plus years, you know, they have watched a director try that and it not work out so well.
Listen to them.
They may have a good point of view on that.

>> Right, right.
There is another question, how did -- how did you put your efforts on maintaining the relationships with the community and/or individual donors?
How did you maintain those relationships or deepen them, grow them during this period of transition?

>> Tara: So, we created a couple of positions with our new funding stream.
One which was an outreach coordinator.
So, one of her jobs is to go out and make those connections with the civic groups, the chambers, individual donors, some of our larger industrial businesses.
Things like that and get those connections back together.
And my role was really to bridge the gap with the law enforcement community, the prosecutors, our court system and really that systematic advocacy.
We knew that we had to do something to bridge those outlying area gaps and so that's one of the things that we did.
We wrote it into the grant.
And have somebody that actually does really, really well at getting those -- getting our agency information out.

>> Amy: Uh-hmm, excellent.
So, for the participants on the webinar.
Thank you so much.
The questions are great.
This is what we wanted.
It is -- it is more of a conversation and we're getting your questions answered.
Another participant is asking how do you communicate a big transition in a grant without sounding unstable?
When you wrote that new grant, how did you do that, Tara?
That's a great question.

>> Tara: So, I feel like in Nebraska with a couple of our funders we have a great relationship.
They come to directors days meetings, know who we are.
We are lucky in that aspect where I can pick up the phone this is what my agency is going through.
I know I can fit it into this grant.
Do you have suggestions for me?
One of my biggest things was write it into the grant and what what we saw our agency moving toward.
Not saying we lost this grant so we really need your grant.
So, it was just picking up the phone.
This is what we are looking at.
This is what we want to do.
I know not everybody is lucky enough to do that.
So, just really, you know, laying out your strategic plan.
What does it look like?
This is what I want our agency to look like is how we wrote the grant.

>> Amy: Excellent.
It sounds like relationships, whether it be the outreach person, reaching to people, burned bridges in the past as an organization to your relationships with funders, either rebuilding those relationships or being strategic in the conversation about where you are today, but also where you are going, right?
So your vision and how you are going to get there was a key piece.

>> Tara: Right.

>> Amy: Communicating.

>> Tara: Really laying that out there.

When you talk about staff turnover and burnt bridges, it is very difficult for an agency to trust -- to say, for instance, law enforcement agency mainly because this came up when we were doing our outreach, they made the comment, they never know who is going to walk in the door because there was constant turnover.
When you don't have that relationship or that trust and you're constantly throwing somebody new in there and trying to make that relationship work and that trust, it doesn't work out that way.

So, for us keeping and maintaining that staff and keeping those relationships in good standings.

>> Amy: Excellent.
So, I think we are going to move on, but, Tara, I did want to tell you as I continue to move throughout the webinar, please jump in because, you know, obviously, you have tons of experience doing this.
I would say the best people to talk about this are people that are going through it.
Please feel free to add things to what I'm saying as well.
And for all of you, you know, thank you for the questions that have come in so far.
Keep them coming.
And we have a bunch of people monitoring them.
We will try to get to all of the questions as well. We will have time at the end of the presentation answer other questions as we finish up.

Thank you, Tara, for all of the really good work and for sharing your story with us.

>> Tara: Yes, thank you.

>> Okay.

We have talked about a story that I'm sure many of you, not unfamiliar to many of you.

What we really wanted to do now in the last couple of slides that we have is really making it real.

So, you know, now we understand, you know, what happens during a transition.

Transition curve.

We understand the major causes of transition, whether it be from a change in leadership, key staff members, board, funding requirements or change in philosophy.

And, so, you know, so what is the big question, what do we do with that? How do we take transition and use it as a way to bring in different kinds of resources and new resources into the organization?

So, the first thing that I would really like to suggest if you haven't already done it is to listen to and Tara mentioned this in a couple of different ways, and her example with her organization of going out and really listening to volunteers, to funders, to partners, and especially at the beginning of a major transition, especially executive director transition, really listening to staff.

Because you will very quickly recognize what some of the problems have been.

It is kind of like one of the questions earlier on.

Staff says we have always done it this way or we've never done it this way.

You will find out clearly what the issues are with staff but you are also setting the tone for a new kind of relationship.

You know, between in this case an executive director and staff members. Which is a key component, right, to making any shift in the transition.

When listening to funders, one of the key things that I had done in a period of transition is intentionally reaching out to funders that I knew stopped funding us and having a very honest and open conversation with them about things that they needed to get off of their chest, right? Things that they needed to talk about and just really listening.

I remember one funder, you know, in the past life, one funder said you know the person that was there before you, she like, you know, totally cornered me for money and everything else and as soon as I wrote the check, I never saw her again.

Right.

So, things like that that people really want to and need to share with you, all of the things are part of you doing your very active assessment. Where are you as an organization?

And where are you -- where are you going in the future?

The second bullet is rebuilding, right?

Rebuilding your relationships, and, again, this -- because sometimes like I said earlier, staff members will unintentionally take the relationships with them or relationships have been broken or maybe not even just broken but maybe mismanaged or just left alone, right?
So, rebuilding those relationships with community and with your partner organizations.

One thing that would really highlight in this rebuilding relationships, especially with community and the people that you serve is if you haven't already done this, one really great, again, fundable strategy from a development perspective, but it is also just really good practice, is doing what I would call listening sessions. Some would call them focus groups with your constituency groups and going back to listening.

Listening to what they say -- what are their needs, what are their strengths? What are their hopes? What are their goals? What do they want you to do?

You know, what do they -- what have you done in the past that is irrelevant to them or that they think needs to stop?

All of those questions that you see here in the list down below would be things that I think would be really great to bring out to, you know, not only survivors of violence. Other people that you work with. Communities, partnerships, funders, or to organizations that you have a strategic interest in building a relationship with them, right, because that will help you in the assessment phase of this. Okay.

So, the next action -- action step is what I like to call informed implementation, right?

Once you know what your constituency group wants you to do. Once you've listened to your staff and to your board and to your funders and to, you know, key community partnerships, then you kind of have, you know, what I call a plan of action.

One of the ideas that we have come up with is really making very strategic decisions based on things that have happened in the past that you have learned about.

For example, you may talk with staff and come to realize pretty quickly that some of the partnerships, collaborations that you have, just aren't -- haven't been working, aren't going to work, and really are taking your mission away from -- taking your organization away from your mission. And the core values and really what you wanted to achieve.

So, you know, making a decision, stopping partnerships that aren't working.

Again, I say that, you know, in a realistic light that you might not be able to have a deep partnership with another organization where funding is related and tied to it.

And then all of the sudden tomorrow stop that.

Most people would see that as being not realistic.

However, there are ways in which you are and the staff can guide your work so that as you are in this period of transition and building and solidifying your mission and core values, rest of the organizational emphasis and time is going to the partnerships that aren't working and they're going to the second bullet, which is building new partnerships that can work, right?

And, again, you know from both the government funding, but also foundation and corporate funding, you know, relationships that are built
on kind of mutual self-interest and definitely based on what you have heard from the community, those are key pieces that funders, you know, will really appreciate and will invest in. It is always kind of this -- it is not -- funding obviously is critical to all of our organizations. So I don't want to minimize that. But the other piece that is really critically important is that it goes back to your mission and core values and your vision as an organization for the future that you have created with your staff members and with your board because otherwise, then we fall into that what I talked about earlier, the mission creep or chasing the funding. When you are building a partnership internally with your staff, one great thing that can happen is you create this neutral vision, right. Everyone then is on the same page and it is less about the executive director versus the staff. Everyone has a critical job in this organization. We are all on -- it is kind of like -- the analogy, we are on the same train and we are all moving in the same direction, right? And, so, when you create a common vision together based on what your community wants and needs, then those new partnerships externally, you know, with community outside but also internally with your staff and key volunteers and interns and your board are much more -- are much more operationalized. They're stronger. And they really will propel your vision and mission forward. The final bullet that I wanted to highlight there is just streamlining, transition provides the opportunity so that you can look at operations -- we have always done it this way. We have always taken this day off. Whatever that example may be. And from a very specific operations perspective be able to streamline things and making sure that your mission and your values are coming out in those decisions, but transition gives you an opportunity to do that. Creating new opportunities. The second part of informed implementation is creating new opportunities. And specifically wanting to focus here on challenge grants, other kinds of opportunities with funders specifically. Especially like family foundations or community foundations or -- love to do challenge grants. For example, if you want to build your individual donor base, a community foundation might say we will match or an individual donor actually could also say, you know, we might match new giving for this new program that the organization is trying to do. We will match one to one any new donors that come in between July and December of this year. Those -- taking the opportunity in change to really build in a fund development strategy through challenge grants is a perfect -- is a perfect way to do this. The other thing is prioritizing signature works. In your listening, if you, for example, have uncovered the advocacy that you do in court is hands-down the best thing that you do and everybody loves it, so, how do you talk about that, right? How do you prioritize that when you are talking with funders FW this really being your signature work?
This is what makes you special. This is what clients or participants or survivors ask you for all of the time and this is what you feel really good about. Again, I think oftentimes in our field, because we're doing so many things and there are so many needs that we're responding to, we just do the things because we do them. And we often don't pull out from a fund development perspective, this is really cool. And this is really important. And if our survivors or our constituency group really appreciate the legal services that we give, let's talk about that in ways that might bring in new individual donors. Might bring in new foundation or family foundation donors. Might allow us to apply for an OEWLV grant that we have never applied for. Looking at stuff that makes you great and talking about that to all kinds of people all of the time. And then the final opportunity as an action step would be to engage in new leaders. I think traditionally about, you know, looking at places where you know there are people that want to be involved in your organization, but you maybe haven't had the time to reach out to them, or you're not even sure that they would be interested, right, it is more of a gut. I remember one time I was talking with an individual donor and I had worked in a culturally specific organization and she was not from that community. I asked her, so, why, you know, if you don't mind answering this question, why are you giving to us? Like what is the motivation behind that? Because you're not from this community. I don't think you have a lot of relationship with this culturally-specific community, so what's your motivation? That's listening, right? Some of the things that we have been talking about. She was very clear. She said because you're about social justice. You care about social justice. And that's what I care about. And you're the best organization around that does social justice work. And for me from a fund development perspective, that was really key. Because she was highlighting my signature work, right? That I didn't even know was signature work. Oh, those are the kinds of things when you listen, when you engage with new people that are outside of the -- kind of the traditional donors that we would think of, you can get lots of great feedback and ideas, but again in this period of transition, it is one of the biggest opportunities from a fund development perspective that I think exists. I see lots of questions. We will be getting to them. I think I have one more slide. And then we will be getting either Tara or I can answer those questions. Please keep them coming. I have not been ignoring them, I promise. Next action step is leadership.
Tara talked a lot about this. I am not going to spend much time on it. The first two -- transparency and taking ego out of things. For me, these are two of the most important leadership qualities that you can look for, right, or challenge yourself if you are the person that is part of this transition. Challenge yourself to do well. Transparency, especially if you are in an organization that hasn't had financial -- has had a financial problem, transparency not only with your staff, but also with your funders. And let me give you a couple of examples for that. I would not suggest, you know, saying to staff, you know, everything is terrible. The sky is falling. We have no money. Staff frankly already know that anyway. It is no the -- not about that kind of transparency, but about talking to them about key situations that you have as an organization. The key budgeting processes that you are trying to put in place for the first time. Getting their feedback on what is working in their programs and what isn't working on their programs and investing in their leadership to do better, if they're not doing a good job for example. The transparency piece I think is critical. It is about investing back and forth with staff so that in that -- in that transparency and I know this sounds counterintuitive, but in that transparency, people do feel more certain, right, of what's happening because they have information. I think that that is, again, from my perspective, is one of the key pieces around transition. The same thing with funders, frankly. And one of the questions earlier had been about how do you talk about transition without seeming unstable? My experience, foundations, individual donors, corporate foundations, community foundations, especially private foundations, they know that organizations have really solid strong terms and have terms that are not solid. They know some years you are going to have a profit and some years you are going to have a loss. If you are coming into an organization that has gone through a long period of financial strain, cutbacks, transitions, I think being very clear with funders about that and acknowledging that is actually a very good thing. In my experience, I have done this with funders specifically -- because, again, especially the private funders, they all will see your audits. Most of them, if not all of them will ask for your current actually, current financials, your actuals. They know exactly where you are financially. So, if you are able to have a very again transparent conversation and say, you know, I know that we have had two years of really bad deficits. You know, two things or three things that I have done since I have come on in this role. And this is what this next year is going to look like.
And I really need your foundation's support in this period of transition, because my vision is dot, dot, dot, and this is what we will accomplish with your support. It is about tying in -- things have been hard. Things have been bad. We need your support. With your support, these are the great things that we are going to accomplish. Those are two examples that I would give you around transparency. Taking your ego out of things I think is pretty self-explanatory but important to highlight, right? Especially in the listening process of doing this. This work in transition, you know, you are going to hear a lot of things that, you know, are frustrating, or, you know, if you are a person who you have a board chair transition, for example, and you're the executive director, you are going to hear things yeah, but I did this and did that and they asked me for that and it is very easy to get defensive around these issues. But the better that -- the better that you can do it, holding that in check and just listening the easier the transition will be. The other three we have talked quite a bit about. I will not belabor those points. But they are, key pieces around leadership that we wanted to highlight. And then telling your own story. Again, I have talked a little about this already. How do you make the transition story fundable. Being honest with the process. Especially, if you are -- if you live -- if you are in an urban setting for example and everyone in the nonprofit sector, Human Services knows everyone, people already know what is happening in your organization, right? If you are in a small town, people already know what is happening in your organization. So, from my experience, the more honest that you can be with what has happened, the best. Obviously we all know that there could be HR, human resource issues, for example, right? If your executive director was fired, you can't say that that person was fired. You know, you are opening yourselves up to lots of problems but what you could say in that case, when a major funder says what happened with the past executive director, very easy thing to say, the board and the director had different visions about this organization. And, so, you know, they decided to go apart. You are not putting down the executive director who was fired, but you are clear in saying there was a difference of opinion. I'm on board now as the new executive director and moving forward with the board with this vision, with this future thinking. And, again, I have already mentioned as well showing the changes and what's left to change from a financial perspective -- I gave the example earlier of trying to institutionalize young people's voices and young people's leadership in the organization that I work at. You know, and that's a process. That doesn't happen overnight.
And it is not automatic. And, so, when you are talking with funders, you know, it's easy to say this is where we were and these are the things that we have done to truly integrate young people in all levels of our organization and these are the three things that we want to do next year to make that even bigger and better.

Telling your own story in a way that is compelling, that's honest about where you're at and where you are going. All strategies that I think that are really, really important. And finally, proactive -- we put prevention in quotes. Things that you can do before your organization has a major transition, especially in the leadership side of things.

More funding.

Succession planning.
I'm sure some of you have succession plans in your organization. Really what they do is look at the whole process of major transition on your executive level, and, you know, looking at all of the support that need to be in place for that to be done well. Especially if you and your organization maybe have a founder who has been there for many, many years and is now going to be retiring, I know that is coming up quite a bit in the field. It is not that there are bad things happening, but it is time to move on. Succession planning might be a great tool for you to do and use.

Another preventative or proactive thing, institutionalize your core values as an organization. We mean oftentimes, if you have a founder who is still your executive director or someone who has been there for a very long time, core values may only be held in that person's mind and the relationships may be tied specifically to that executive director.

How can you, as a leader of the organization, begin to work with staff so that they begin to understand how those core values are lived out on a day-to-day basis in the way which you do your work or a key foundation partner that you have had in the past. All of those relationships and understanding can be transferred from, you know, from the one leader to then throughout the staff.

That's what I mean when I say institutionalizing. And finally, the other thing I wanted to highlight, screen board members and embrace the core values of the organization.

I think it is really important and I have seen a couple of questions about board come up that we will answer after this slide is finished. You know, I think from a board perspective, it is key that you do not have board members that think the same.

Diversity of experiences and perspectives and you know, walks of life, all of those things are key to having a well-rounded board. At the same time -- let's say that you are -- let's say you are an immigrant organization, right, the people that you serve are immigrants and your mission is about supporting immigrant survivors of violence as an example.

If you -- I would definitely screen board members for people who are -- who have an anti-immigrant -- who are anti-immigrants. Because that is kind of your line in the sand, right? You are not going to cross that line. Your board members have to believe in the strength of working within the immigrant communities.
Working with immigrant survivors.
So, it is not that you can have a person from corporate America, and you
can't have a person who has a different perspective on things.
That's not what I am saying.
It really is about your organizational values and how your board members
need to embrace those.
You can do that.
That is a preventative piece you can do when you are bringing them on
board.
And with that, I will turn it over for questions and answers.
Lisa or Monica, could you pull some of those out so we can see those?
I wasn't able to look at them as I was talking.
>> Yeah, so, we had a question from earlier on that said how do you
educate yourself, your key staff and your board that there will be
funding available in the future?
Also when do you start thinking about establishing an endowment, reserve
funds from -- and when should the transition be finalized if you can
determine the time and not force to do it on the spot?
And then towards the end, somebody that asked a question about, you know,
can you say a little more about succession planning, although we know
that is a huge topic in and of itself.
We only have eight minutes left.
I will turn it back to you, Amy.
>> Amy: I think -- I'm trying to thing what would be the best way to
start.
When we talk about when is the transition over, I think you will
intuitively know when the transition is over.
I know, you know, at the organization where I'm working now, we had a
great kickoff meeting in January of this year.
One thing that I said, okay, the transition is over.
And for us, it was -- we had spent really the last year truly listening
and talking with people and supporting staff and staff supporting staff
and, you know, great new board members.
We did some of those things.
But it is, sometimes, right, it is a -- okay, so, you know, now we have
all created this operation plan.
We know we're where going.
We know what we're doing.
Let's get down to the hard work of doing it.
Other times it's not as easy, right?
I think just transition is a really key important piece like I said
earlier that we have all been through.
And at the same time I think it's important to be able to call and say
now we have everything that we need, now let's move forward and get the
work done.
Hopefully that answered the question.
Tara, I don't know if you have anything to add about that.
You have been through this recently as well.
>> Tara: I would agree.
I think that we're ending --
we're coming towards the end of our transition, hopefully, fingers
crossed that nothing else comes up.
But, yeah, it is -- just making sure that you are keeping the agency's best interest, the big picture, is your focus really needs to lie in that big picture.

>> Amy: That goes into one of the other questions. It says I am a new ED in an organization that relied on one scheduled grant for 90% of our funding. How can I convince the board that we need to diversify our funding and that they need to help do that? So, my force response is come to the SOS training because we talk a lot about that and the key role really of board members in providing for financial stability. And when you look at what one of the primary roles of the board is, it is to provide for financial stability and part of that is fundraising, right?

Not only looking at the books and making sure that you -- that you're not in the hole, but also bringing in resources to the organization.

I think the other thing around diversifying the funding, the easiest way from my perspective, I have seen many organizations that have been, you know, 100%, 90% dependent on federal grant, and literally, this happens all of the time. Funding priorities change, right?

Or even with the Federal Government, they might have a focus on a certain region of the country, right, based on something that has happened or they might have a certain focus on, you know, a certain type of work, right.

Those things all change.

And if your entire organization is depending on that funding source, they have to then be as the board okay with the fact that today you might be here and tomorrow you might not.

And that is truly not -- I'm not trying to sound -- what's the word -- devastating, but really, truly, that is just real.

As an organization, you have to have funding coming in from other sources so that when one goes away, because it will, the whole entire organization won't because your organization is important to your community.

Hopefully that helps a little bit.

>> One comment, some of this was very employee/staff focused. What about when you not have employees but you, instead, are a resource for others?

>> A couple of things that I think about, you know, in the period of transition, I think one of the groups that don't often get listened to, we talked about it earlier, like interns or volunteers.

If you are resourced to others, it is really about trying to figure out the basic concept that we talked about earlier, the listening piece is critical.

Transparency piece is critical.

I think if you are resourced to other organizations, you know, finding out, again, clarifying partnership agreements, what you have all decided to do in the past.

Does it still make sense today and into the future in your partnership? The fundamental skills of the open communication and conversation I think are critical in that conversation.

>> Great.
We are going to come to a close unfortunately. I know folks are still typing. We only have a few minutes left. So, I just wanted to thank everyone for joining us today. Please fill out our survey, which should pop up on the screen when you exit the meeting. You can also access the files in the file pod below. We really appreciate your feedback and I want to say another round of thank you and applause to both Amy and Tara for putting on this fantastic webinar for us. Thank you so much. I am seeing a lot of thank yous and really great webinar in the comment box. Thank you again. Thank you again to everyone. Have great rest of the day. >> Thank you. >> Thank you. >> Bye. Bye-bye