

Q & A



After College: Revised Edition *Navigating Transitions, Relationships, and Faith*

February 18, 2025 | \$18, 256 pages, paperback | 978-1-5140-1118-8

Erica Young Reitz is the founder of After College Transition, an organization that helps practitioners (higher education professionals, church leaders, and college ministers) equip students to thrive after college. Her experience working with college students includes teaching advanced writing at The Pennsylvania State University and campus ministry with the CCO (Coalition for Christian Outreach), directing Senior EXIT. She holds an MA in higher education from Geneva College with a research focus on the senior year transition, and her writing has appeared in publications including *Christianity Today* and *Relevant*.

Postcollege Thriving for a New Generation

Why were you initially drawn to write *After College*?

Erica Young Reitz: My initial draw to write *After College* came, in part, from going through my own more-than-bumpy transition out of college. Career counselor Mark Savickas says that we seek to “actively master what we’ve passively suffered.” Despite having a great college experience and a good head on my shoulders, my transition out of college rocked me in ways I wasn’t prepared to consider. I felt “lost in transition” as I experienced the painful gap between my expectations (of what I thought life after college should be) and the reality I faced each day.

But there’s more. My passion for equipping students to thrive after college also comes from talking to alumni early on in my work in college ministry and realizing they were struggling. Big time. Some of our best and brightest students were floundering—in nearly every area of life. We had to do something. Something preventative, not remedial. These early-on observations led to the launch of Senior EXIT—a one year experience that prepares students for life after college. And they eventually led me to write *After College*—the book I wish someone would have handed me during college or upon graduation.

What made you decide to do a revised edition of *After College*, and with Gen Z in mind?

Erica: In the short time since the publication of *After College* (2016), our world has changed dramatically. From the global pandemic to conversations about race, power, and sex to widespread smartphone, social media, and AI use, the landscape has shifted. So have our students. The generation of students entering and exiting the gates of college thinks and acts differently than those who came before them. Many current students and recent graduates not only grapple with what it means to pursue faithfulness in this cultural moment, but also *how*.

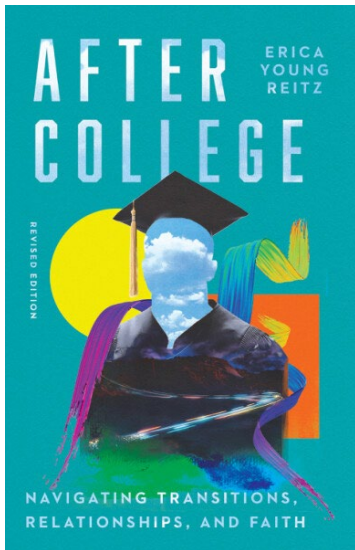
I wanted to offer an updated edition of *After College* that attends to the unique concerns of this generation and addresses a shifting culture while also preserving the timeless wisdom that’s relevant for anyone going through the transition out of college. The revised edition aims to serve a generation of students that’s more anxious than ever about what lies ahead. It also aims to serve a growing population of leaders who are desperate for resources that will equip students for life-wide, lifelong faithfulness after college.



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What role does the church play during postcollege transitions and shifts in community?

Erica: The church has a critical role in both sending and receiving students in this crucial transition. I'm so encouraged as I help leaders across the nation who desire to rise to the responsibility of equipping students for the transition and caring for them after they graduate. Research shows that students who "approach" the transition rather than "avoid" it are more likely to thrive within it.

The local church has an incredible opportunity to walk alongside students and open up the conversations that matter most (preferably before they graduate, but also as they experience the transition). *After College*, along with the After College Experience companion curriculum, allows leaders to do just that—to know what to talk about and how to engage students in the content. Preparing students for the transition and welcoming them into community postcollege is not a tangential or add-on ministry to core discipleship. It is the mission. Postcollege thriving—and the future of the church—hinges on our willingness to come alongside the next generation.

What is the main message you hope readers take from the revised edition of *After College*?

Erica: You're not alone in this transition. There's help and hope. Even if you experience significant bumps along the way, a future of flourishing is more than possible. Most importantly, God—our solid rock and sure foundation in every shifting time—goes before you, and he is with you.



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