



Groundwork

Climate Change and Culture

Snapshot - Self Reflection Activity

“SNAPSHOTS” REFLECTION ACTIVITY

It is hard to head in the direction you want to go if you don't first stop to make sure you know where you are. **The purpose of this activity is to help us see a “snapshot” of where we are so we can more intentionally choose where to go and how to get there.**

Expect this activity to take one to four hours, or as long as you like. We break it into two separate 2-hour sessions here.

The key to success in this activity is being vulnerable and honest with yourself. You don't have to share it with anyone; it is just for you. This is a chance to peek through any walls built up in your life, face your fears about yourself and others, and move beyond both. Try to be 100 percent present with whatever it is you are doing, whether making a list or drawing a line.

Part I

Find a place in your house or yard where you feel relaxed and where your thoughts are free to flow. It should be as free from anxiety and distraction as possible and feel safe and comforting to you. You may want to prepare a new space. You can clear a table, a desk in a private bedroom, space on a back deck, or sit under a big tree in the yard. A clear space with limited images or objects around is helpful. If you choose to listen to music while you do this activity, something with no words is preferable as singing along can often be a distraction.

Take a moment to make your space and gather these items:

- Paper of any size, color, or type that makes you feel creative — This could be a brown paper bag or watercolor paper.
- Pens, pencil, markers, crayons, or any other paints you may have in the house with colors you like or want to try using on the paper selected.

Now that you have your space and supplies ready, we will begin.

1. Close your eyes. Take three deep breaths, in through your nose and out through your mouth. Commit to being really honest and objective about yourself and your life. There is no judgement here. Say either out loud or in your mind: *I am not judging myself; I am looking at myself and learning about myself.*



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2. With your eyes still closed, think about the last six months of your life before the Coronavirus pandemic. The daily rituals, the people who were part of it, and how you spent your time. Think about the emotions and pace of your daily life during that time.
3. Open your eyes and draw the "shape" of your life over that period of time. It can be as abstract or linear a shape as you want, but should not be complex. Don't include details, just an outline. Maybe it looks like something, maybe it doesn't.
4. To one side of the image you just drew, make a list of 7-10 things that took up your time during that period. These might be people, habits, daily rituals, tasks like work, or "extracurriculars" like video games, social media, surfing the web, running, or reading. These should be the physical happenings of each day. (Examples: email, the internet, singing, Instagramming, FaceBook, Gary, my family, soccer with the kids, piano lessons, driving in a car, running errands, working, cooking, etc.)
5. Below your first list, make another one of 5-10 emotions and thoughts that occupied your mind and time during that period. Maybe there was a specific relationship or person you thought about a lot; maybe it was anxiety about work; maybe it was stress about school or family. Make sure your list is of single word emotions. (Examples: ear, sadness, worry, joy, happiness, meditation, panic, depression, gratitude, peace, etc.)

Here is a word bank of some emotions:

disgust anticipation craving shame anticipation
anger surprise joy sorrow confidence self-doubt
 fear calmness
trust kindness sexual desire awe nostalgia
 happiness loss envy determination romance
curiosity reflection sadness suffering lust
 love contentedness self-love pride sympathy
loneliness empathy
 satisfaction adoration compassion

6. Look at each item on your lists. Think about the proportion of time it took up in your life. Close your eyes and say the word and think about the person, object or emotion. What color and texture does it evoke?



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Use your art supplies to fill a space within your life shape for each word that is proportionate to its “size” in your life. It can look like anything—maybe just filling in a spot with color and writing the word there. Maybe it is a symbol with personal meaning to you, or an image you draw that takes up space. If the shape you drew was the outline of something more detailed, like a bird, maybe one of the words is the eye and another several feathers. Worry less about making a realistic picture and more about honestly representing the proportions of time. Each word’s space should be proportionate to how much of your life, thoughts and time you feel they took.

Do this for each word on your list. It could take you one hour or three hours; the goal is to let yourself be guided by feelings as much as possible. Spend time with each word and embrace creating something for the sake of creation, not for what it looks like or to just get it over with. If you make a line and think, “I don’t like that,” let that thought go. This activity is not about making art you like. Its value lies in the act of finishing this exercise and reflecting on it in specific ways.

Take 1 to as many hours as needed to complete your drawing.

After you have finished creating your pre-pandemic life snapshot, flip it over or move it out of sight. At this point, pause the recording if you would like to finish the second half of this exercise at another time. Continue listening if you would like to continue to Part Two.

Part II

1. Get a new piece of paper and your art supplies. Close your eyes. Take three deep breaths, in through your nose and out through your mouth. Commit to being really honest and objective about yourself and your life. There is no judgement here. Say either out loud or in your mind: *I am not judging myself; I am looking at myself and learning about myself.*
2. With your eyes still closed, think about the last 2-3 months of your life **during** the coronavirus pandemic. The daily rituals, the people who are part of it, and how you spend your time currently. Think about the emotions and pace of your daily life now.

Repeat steps 3-6 of Part one. You are making a map of your current life and emotions, **during** the pandemic.

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Part III – *Do this step after you have two complete maps.*

Place both your snapshots/life maps aside, out of sight. Get a separate piece of paper or use the lines below to make a list of 7-20 of your values. Values are the things that are important to you as you pursue the life, career, and relationships you want. Try to put them in priority order. Be honest. This is about thinking about what you care about in life and why you get up in the morning.

Word bank of common values (use these or any you like that are not included):

money food family love children sex work
community drugs reputation hard work physical fitness
trust being outdoors friends pride control nostalgia
happiness kindness looking good determination traveling
reliability power wealth healthy diet intelligence integrity
social status contentedness self-love honesty being wise
achievement credibility education respect market share



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1. Flip over your life snapshots and place them side by side. Place your list of values between both maps.

Think about the following and write down the answers in a stream-of-consciousness paragraph on the blank space of your values sheet of paper or the lines provided here.

- a. Are your values represented in your current life snapshot? What about in your snapshot before the pandemic?

- b. If there are values that are **not** represented in either map, ask yourself: Why do I value these things?

Write each value with the answers to the following questions under it:

- What do I think it brings me or means about me to value this thing? What type of person do I associate with this word? Can I be that type of person without valuing that thing?
- Do you really value this thing or do you like the idea of valuing this thing?
- If you really value it, what has kept you from prioritizing it in your life?



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- c. Are there things missing from your pandemic snapshot or map that were present in your pre-pandemic snapshot and that you wish were still there? What are they and what did they bring you that is now gone?

- Are there other ways to get these missing things, access those parts of yourself or feel the missing emotions? What are they? If none come to mind immediately, brainstorm ways you can reach the same outcomes without the missing items.

Example: Going to a meaningful job might be missing from your current life. Maybe going to work brought you a sense of purpose, daily appreciation from others, and a sense you were making a difference in the world. If you are missing your work, what things can you do now to bring you a sense of purpose every day? Maybe you can do small rituals for you, or maybe you can participate in digital communications with others. If you are missing daily appreciation, think about how you can still have meaningful contact with others. Were your interactions with others passive contact (you went to work and by default, you had conversations and people said things to you) or active (you sought out others and invited them to join conversations or events)? If you haven't been reaching out to others, make a list of three individuals who you will reach out to, check in on, or initiate conversation with this week. Brainstorm what emotions you miss that come from having a sense of purpose. Can you recreate them or get them in another way?

- d. Are there things in your pandemic snapshot or map that were missing from your pre-pandemic map? If these are good things, how will you make sure you have



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space for them in the future? If these are things you would rather not do or feel regularly, what can you do to change the situation going forward?

- e. Are there things in either snapshot that are taking up way more space than you would like? Make a list of possible, real-life things you can change—whether actions or ideas about yourself or others—that could make your map look more like you want it to.
- Write down what the challenges you will face
 - Write down what the easiest things to do will be and when you will start. That could be as simple as waking up every day and saying one self-affirming phrase about yourself or as complex and committing as leaving a career that exhausts you and drives you to unhealthy habits.

- f. Write down what you like about your pandemic snapshot—your life right now. What do you want to stay the same or to grow into a bigger part of your life as our economy and world start figuring out how to move forward?
- Write down 3-5 things you can do in your life or the lives of others to make sure you have space for those things. (Examples: breakfast with your family every day, daily walks, phone conversations with friends, etc.)
 - What are three demands you can make of new systems, life contexts or workplaces to ensure you get these things?



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END ACTIVITY

DATE: _____

Continuing the reflection and Examples

In six months or one year, complete another snapshot of your current life. Compare it to your last snapshot, in this case your pandemic snapshot. Reflect on what has changed. What did you change on purpose? What changed by happenstance or circumstance? Have your values changed, or their order of priority? What is there space for now that there wasn't space for before? Why is that space available now? Does your "new normal" reflect the values you listed when thinking about life after the pandemic? Why or why not?

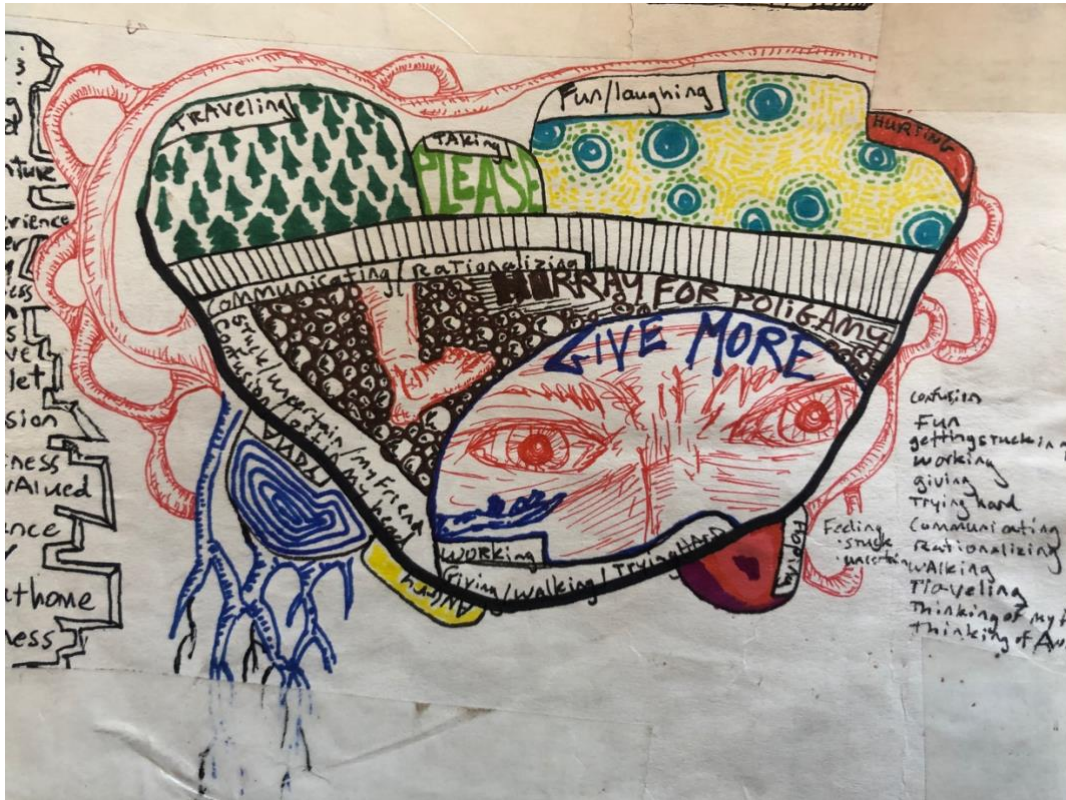
Examples of snapshots/life maps 2010 - 2020



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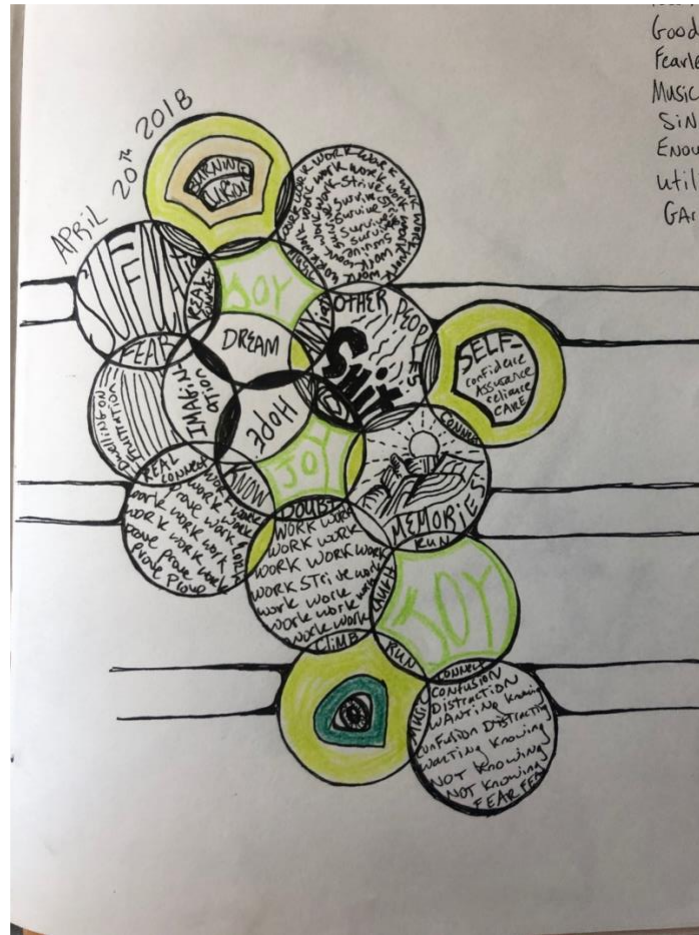




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