

# PAST PRESENT FUTURE

## therapeutic art activity

Sometimes it's easier to express something through art than with words. We can learn a lot about ourselves in the process of creating. The purpose of this activity is to look at your past, present, and/or future as parts as well as a whole. Either in the process of analysing different aspects of your life or at the end when you step back and look at what you've expressed, you might just gain a new sense of self awareness that can help you take your next step towards healing and your best self.

Remember - it's about the process not the product. Whatever you create is perfection.

I encourage you to journal as you work through this exercise. Journaling, whether you have a mental health professional or friend to talk to as well or not, will help make the most of it.

I found I could say  
things with color and  
shapes that I couldn't say  
any other way - things I  
had no words for.

GEORGIA O'KEEFE

## PAST

Use colour, lines, shapes, words, whatever you like in the way bands to express a different part of your past. It can represent a time period, a single moment, a relationship, an emotion, an activity, there are no rules. For the background, use colour and lines or shapes to represent your overall emotional response to your past. On the sweater, try to express your thoughts about your past self.

Art opens the closets,  
airs out the cellars &  
attics. It brings healing.

JULIA CAMERON

Reaching into our past can be enlightening but it can also be painful. Art can be a very effective way to calm your body and access long forgotten or hard to process memories. So please prioritise your own self care as you undertake this activity. You may wish to look up a good psychologist in your area or call a helpline to talk through anything that may come up for you. You are not alone. Please lean on some kind of support if you are struggling.

## PRESENT

Like the Past activity, express different aspects of your present situation in the way bands, your emotional state in the background, and how you see yourself now in the sweater.

This may also be a good time to research 'positive affirmations' and consider how you can incorporate some into how you choose to see your life and yourself. There is great power in the choices we make and the words we use.

Another thing that can help improve our current state is practicing gratitude. There are many ways you can incorporate gratitude as a regular part of your daily routine from journaling to prayer to simply thinking of three things you're grateful for as you wait for the kettle to boil.

When you make art I hear  
your soul speaking and I don't  
argue with soul because it is  
pure, honest, beautiful, perfect,  
worthy, lovable, authentic, true,  
vulnerable, kind, hopeful, open &  
divine, like your art.

ANON

## FUTURE

There are two different ways you can approach the future activity. The first option is to repeat the process above based on how you feel about your future now and how you see it unfolding.

Alternatively, or after you have done it the first way, you can do it from the perspective of your ideal future, your ideal self, and what you are striving for - to become, to experience, to have, to do, to contribute, and so on. Researching 'positive affirmations', 'visualisation' and 'manifestation' might be useful if you would like to try the activity from this perspective.

And finally, how about writing down 3 things you can do to work towards becoming your best future self.





