

FLOWING TOWARDS HEALING: EXPLORING TRAUMA WITH THE RIVER OF LIFE

As we may know, trauma can have a lasting impact on our mental health and well-being. It's important to explore and understand the different types of trauma that we may have experienced in our lives.

This following reflective exercise will help you explore your experiences with trauma and gain a deeper understanding of how it has affected you. Have you ever thought of your life as a river with twists and turns, obstacles, and moments of calm? Just like a river, our lives are constantly flowing and changing.

In this activity, you'll reflect on your life experiences and create a visual map of your life river to understand what were some experiences that left a deep impact on your life and how have they shaped you.



The River of Life



Step 1:

First, grab a piece of paper and draw a simple line that represents your life journey so far. This line can be straight or wavy to show the ups and downs you've experienced along the way.

Step 2:

Next, let's think about the boulders in your river - these are the significant events, people, and moments that have impacted your life. These can be positive or negative experiences, and can include anything from a big life transition to a significant relationship.

Also, think about what was happening in the world around you at the time. Were there any major world events that influenced your journey?

Step 3:

Mark each of these points on your life river using symbols or drawings, like stars, hearts, or rocks. Then, write a few words next to each symbol to describe what happened and how it made you feel.

Step 4:

As you step back and look at your life river, you may notice patterns or themes that emerge. Are there any significant bends or turns? What events or experiences have shaped your life the most?

Step 5:

Now, divide your life journey into sections based on significant transitions or changes. You can label each section of your life river with a name that represents that period of your life. For example, you could label one section "Childhood," another "Teenage Years," and so on.

Step 6:

Reflect on the relationships that have been most significant at different points in your life. Who has shaped you into the person you are today? Have there been any significant losses of relationships along the way?

Step 7:

Finally, think about what you've learned from your life river. What have you overcome? What challenges have you faced? What moments have brought you joy?



Now, take a moment to write down any insights or realisations that come to mind.

By creating a visual map of your life river, you'll gain a deeper understanding of your life journey and the moments that have shaped you. It's a helpful tool for reflecting on your past, present, and future, and can be revisited and updated as you continue to grow and evolve.

You may also consider seeking support from a mental health professional if you are struggling to cope with past trauma. They can help you develop healthy coping strategies and work through any unresolved feelings or emotions.

We understand that dealing with trauma is hard, but it's important to remember that you can learn to heal from it, and that you aren't alone.

If you, or someone you know is looking to seek professional help, reach out to us at **The Mood Space** <https://www.themoodspace.com/getstarted> and our Care Team will get back to you within 24 hours.

Not looking for professional help just yet? We understand, keep browsing through our Care Space tools and explore our self-help handouts and worksheets to navigate mental health-related challenges in a better manner.

