

Ten-Year-Old You

Purpose

- To encourage and invite personal reflection
- To spark a sense of wonder and curiosity
- To build connections and deepen relationships

Materials

- Pencils, pens and paper for journaling and personal reflection
- Childhood photos of participants (Optional)

Background

Harnessing the curiosity and wonder of 10-year-old you, this exercise invites participants to see themselves and their work from a slightly different perspective.

Grounding this in a reflection of self helps to remind participants of the importance of bringing their whole self to their work and the focus on the perspective of a child aims to reinvigorate senses of curiosity and wonder.

Hosting Notes

This exercise blends personal reflection and group sharing and learning. Participants will be guided through a series of questions and reflective prompts and invited to share the ways they would describe their work and the impact they want to see in the world to their ten-year-old selves with others in the group.

While there is an intention in asking participants to focus on a specific time in their life for this exercise, be mindful that a fixation on a specific year of childhood may bring up feelings or memories that are not always positive. When hosting this exercise, you can invite participants to reflect on another, albeit somewhat specific “younger you” or “childhood you” that they are comfortable with.

1. Individual Reflection - Part 1 (25% of time)

Invite participants to take a few minutes to think back about themselves as a 10-year-old and write/draw a profile of themselves as if it were the present day. Questions to guide this reflection (in the present tense) could include:

Where are you living? What are you wearing? What kind of music are you listening to? What are you having for dinner tonight? Who are you playing with? What is your favourite subject in school? What do you want to be when you grow up? What are you afraid of? What makes you happy?

The goal isn't necessarily to answer all of the questions, but to invite participants to take a few moments to embody their ten-year-old selves.

2. Individual Reflection - Part 2 (50% of time)

Once participants have been reintroduced to their ten-year-old selves, invite them to come back to the present day and to take a few minutes and think about their role and the impact they want to have through their work. After a few minutes of reflection, invite participants to try to describe their work to their ten-year-old selves.

Some prompts for this reflection could include:

How would you describe your work to 10-year-old you?
Would 10-year-old you be excited about this? If no, why not? What could make it so?
What questions would 10-year-old you ask you about your work?
How would 10-year-old you describe your work to their 10-year-old friends?
What would 10-year-old you find boring about your work?

Ask participants to come up with a 3-4 sentence description of their role and the impact they want to see in the world that would excite and inspire their ten-year old selves.

3. Sharing & Debrief (25% of time)

Bring participants back to plenary and have each of them share the descriptions of their job and the impact they want to see in the world that would appeal to their ten-year-old selves.

When everyone has shared their stories, you can host a plenary debrief of the experience.

Questions you can ask include:

- What was it like for you to tell your story to this group?
- What surprised you?
- What insights have you gained about our group and your work?
- What can you do to bring back some of that wonder to your work?