



Journaling STEPPINGSTONES

Close your eyes & sit in silence, breathing slowly, & not thinking about any specific aspect of your life, but trying to "feel the movement" of your life.

Whatever the form in which the continuity of your life reflects itself to you now, respond to it, observe it & let the flow continue. If images present themselves to you on the twilight level, images in any form, whether visual or not, take note of them. Passive receptivity is the best attitude to adopt in doing this. As you sit in silence, let the cycles, the rhythms, the tempos of your life present themselves to you. Let them be free & undirected so that they can shape themselves into whatever form truly reflects their basic qualities; let yourself be free in your quietness to perceive them as they come to you without editing or falsifying them.

Write a list of 8-10 & no more than **12 Steppingstones**. A Steppingstone is an event, image, sensation, a thought, or milestone of your life that comes to mind when you review your life from the beginning to the present.

- Select Steppingstones spontaneously, without a lot of mulling & conscious direction, but with an intuitive sense of selecting the right ones. You do not need to be concerned if the events you list are not in perfect chronological order.
- Write only a word, a short descriptive phrase, or a sentence that will trigger your memory when you go back to the list. You may want to use the phrase, "It was a time when..." as the beginning of the description.
- When you have completed the list, go back & read the Stepping Stones. Try re-reading the list from a neutral frame of mind, rather than thinking about whether the list is praiseworthy, disappointing, or even complete.
- Rather, determine whether there is a focus or pattern or theme.
- What do you feel when you read the list? What things do you observe about it? What is the thread of continuity? What do you learn from the list?

Depending on your point of view at the time of the writing, the Steppingstones may shift. The first time you do the exercise, you may find that you include just the basic chronological facts of your life. Each time you do this exercise, three days or three months later, you are viewing your life through a different lens. Identifying what the lens is may give you information about your present focus & may help you see in a new light the path you have taken, where you are today, & a trajectory for the future. You may continue to work with this list, choosing to select a Steppingstone period that you feel may offer insights, & explore it in depth.

Ask yourself questions about the period to help it become more three-dimensional & tangible. Start with general recollections--such as adjectives describing the periods, images you have, sensory recollections, & metaphors about the time period. Go to more specific recollections, such as dreams you had, attitudes or beliefs to which you subscribed, aspirations, life philosophies, conflicts, frustrations, key relationships, feelings, & hopes. You may want to write dialogs between different aspects of your life during the time period, such as a dialog with family, friends & other important relationships; a dialog with your health; your work; your religion/spirituality; an important event; or cultural or societal norms, attitudes, or values of that period. Source: <http://www.lifejournal.com/articles/the-steppingstones-of-ira-progoff/>

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