

Lifeline activity

SCRIPT

One of the personal experience methods described by the innovators of Narrative Inquiry (Clandinin & Connelly, 1994) is constructing a *Lifeline*. The purpose of drawing a lifeline is to immerse ourselves in past experiences and so be able to discern significant relationships and events that contribute to who we are today as persons and professionals.

Our research explicitly invites participants into creative expressions so that subsequent reflection is informed by dwelling in life experience. We call our work Arts-Informed Narrative Inquiry (AINI). This activity is presented to give visitors to our website (www.theartofexperience.ca) a flavor of the method and how it could be used for personal and professional development. The creative activities and extensive resource list are available on the website. Activities are available in video and text and are a rich resource for exploring personal and professional experiences.

Materials: Sheet of paper and pen or pencil (coloured pens are an option)

- Take a moment to sit quietly and settle your mind; think back on your life
- Draw a line on a large piece of paper that represents the timeline from your birth to today's date; it can be a straight line or a curved one or however you envision it
- **Below** the line note significant to you, events/milestones/relationships that happened in your **personal** life
- **Above** the line note significant to you, events/milestones/relationships that happened in your **professional** life
- Identify one or two events/milestones/relationships that are of particular significance to you. Note if they your personal and professional events/milestones/relationships converge at any point in time.
- Write a story about each of these significant events – what happened, who was involved, what were the consequences, what did you learn at the time, what can you see now that wasn't evident to you at the time of event – write in the present tense with as much detail as possible
- Review your stories and note any patterns, ideas or word that arise
- Share your reflection and what arose for you in a journal or in a dialogue with a colleague. How do these stories contribute to who you are today, as a person and a professional?

Clandinin, D. J. & Connelly, F. M. (1994). Personal experience methods. In Denzin, N. & Lincoln, Y. (Eds). *Handbook of Qualitative Research*. (p. 413-427). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.