



THE BOOK OF MY LIFE

Why?

In this exercise, you'll have the opportunity to reflect on your own life and experiences through a timeline and writing. The purpose of this exercise is to help you make sense of your past experiences and understand how they have shaped you. You'll also have the chance to reflect on your plans for the future. Creating a timeline gives you a visual representation of the important stages of your life, which can increase your self-awareness and clarify your goals. This exercise also helps you identify what has been meaningful to you and how you can build on those experiences in the future.

How?

1. **First, think about your life using a timeline.** What have you done? What have you studied, what hobbies have you had, where have you worked, where have you lived, etc.? Start with your childhood and end with today. You can draw a line, make a mind map, or even list things using bullet points. Choose the method that works best for you.
2. **Divide the “book” of your life that you’ve created on the timeline into chapters and give each chapter a name.** Keep in mind that the chapters on the timeline can be of different lengths; one chapter might span five years, while another might be just a month. You get to decide how many chapters your book will have. If you're having trouble coming up with chapters, you can divide them, for example, based on your time in school, college, or working life.
3. **Under each chapter, list a few things you’ve learned during that chapter.** What you've learned can be a skill, a strength you've identified, a new interest you've discovered, and so on. It doesn't have to be related in any way to your current studies or your future plans.
4. **If you'd like, you can also write next to each item the kind of situation in which the thing you learned came up.** You can use bullet points, a mind-map, individual words, or whatever works best for you. You don't need to produce high-quality writing for this assignment.



5. **For each chapter, also consider whether something happened in your life at that time that still affects you today.** Be sure to think about positive things as well, such as the kinds of people you've brought into your life and how they can support you.
6. Read what you've written under the different chapters. You've now reflected on the kinds of things you've done up to this point and everything you've already learned. **Now give your book a title.**
7. **Think about the name of the chapter that's about to begin right now.** What are you aiming for? What are you striving for? What interests you? What kinds of things do you want to focus on right now?
8. **Under the chapter you just named, list at least three things you should do or keep in mind to achieve your goals.**
9. If you'd like, you can also write a longer text under each chapter. What kind of thoughts do the things you listed bring to mind? How have the things you listed impacted on who you are right now? How should the things you listed possibly be considered in the chapter that is just beginning?

The assignment has been adapted from the source:

Niles, S. 2024. "Using Hope-Action Theory to Foster Authentic Living: Strengthening Insight, Courage, and Endurance". Keynote at the IAEVG Conference. Jyväskylä