

Wandering Map Exercise

*Adopted from Katharine Brooks' book **You Majored in What? Mapping Your Path from Chaos to Career** New York: Plume, 2010.*

Supplies: large piece of blank paper, something to write/draw with (pens, markers, coloring pencils, crayons) OR use of a mind mapping website such as bubbl.us OR mindmeister.com (Both are free to use for up to 3 mind maps. Sign up is required).

- 1) On a large piece of paper, or mind mapping website, start thinking about all the interesting or significant things that have happened in your life, think back as far as you can. Write down what comes to mind when answering the questions below. Keep your answers short (1-2 words or draw pictures). There is no need to organize them, just write everything that comes to mind.
 - How do you like to spend your free time?
 - Did you have a memorable summer experience?
 - What things are you most proud of?
 - Did you take any interesting classes?
 - Did you participate in extracurriculars or volunteer experiences?
 - Have you had a job?
 - What are your hobbies?
 - Who do you consider a role model?
 - What challenges have you overcome?

- 2) Draw a shape around each word/thought to keep them separate and continue writing.

- 3) Do any of these thoughts seem connected? Connect (by drawing a line) the obvious links. Example: Did you play a lot of sports? Have you had different jobs or volunteer experiences?

- 4) Reflect:
 - What do these things have in common?
 - Do you see any patterns?
 - What are some of the themes throughout your map?
 - Which of these themes or categories most energize you?
 - How do these themes/patterns align with your values, interests, personality?

Example Themes

- Awards/Achievements
- Family
- Books/Reading
- Travel
- Tools/Equipment
- Risk
- Roles/Jobs
- Music
- Indoor/Outdoor
- Research
- Problem Solving
- Learning
- Animals
- Being active
- Alone time/time spent with others

Example Competencies/Skills

- Communication
- Team work
- Analytical
- Artistic/Creative
- Detail Orientated
- Leadership
- Presentation/performing
- Negotiating
- Interpersonal
- Serving/Helping