

Planting the Flags

This aim of this exercise is to reflect on some of the people and experiences that have made an important impact on your life.

Part 1

Take five pieces of paper to represent your flags and, on each one, write the name of someone or something that has made an important impact on your life. The "someone" can be a person or a pet. And the "something" can be related to your present or past, and be positive or negative, whatever you want to choose.

Find some wooden skewers and stick one through each piece of paper to make a set of flags. If you don't have any skewers, you can use pebbles to serve as anchors.

Part 2

Go outside into your garden, or somewhere else in nature, and plant your flags in different places. The places that you choose should symbolise something about what the person or experience on the flag has meant to you.

You might plant a flag with the name of someone you love beside some flowers. You might plant a flag about a difficult experience in a rocky or thorny place. Only you will know the right spot because these are your flags and your experiences.

Part 3

As a next step, invite someone to walk with you and visit your flags. Take them on a tour. Explain about the people and life events that feature on the flags, how you came to choose them, and the meaning of the place where you have planted them.

If you do the exercise on your own, visit the places where you have planted each flag and take time to remember the person or event that they symbolise. You might want to do this over a period of days, one at a time. As you visit your flags, notice what feelings and thoughts emerge for you. If it feels right, speak some words to the person or experience, or do some free-flow writing.

Part 4

As a follow up activity, try doing a painting on the theme of flags. Then work through the reflection questions on the guide "*How to explore the meaning in your picture*".

Part 5

What are your learning points from this exercise? See the guide "*How to draw out your learning*".



The flags of my life