



Session led by UN Women



Exploring Your Personal Journey

You are invited to an experiential, participatory opportunity to reflect on your personal journey, set intentions and actions to help achieve your aspirations.

Taking time to intentionally pause and reflect on your personal journey is a crucial part of managing and cultivating your leadership, professional and life journey.

In the challenging and complex contexts that many of us work in, we often feel we are not able to really pause and connect to ourselves in an intentional way. Some of us, work in extremely difficult circumstances and the decisions and choices we make are influenced by many factors – which present different opportunities and constraints for each of us individually. This session provides a safe space for you to reflect and explore your personal journey and provide an opportunity to connect to your aspirations, challenges and actions to help in your journey – and the intersections of leadership, professional and personal.

Objectives

- Reflect on your personal journey, sense of purpose and identify initial concrete actions in support of your aspirations.
- Experience and apply mindfulness and reflective practices to enhance your self-awareness as part of your journey
- Connect to practices that will enhance well-being

What will help you to maximise benefit and value from this session?

An open mind to explore and be curious.



Exploring your Personal Journey

Guided Journaling Process (adapted from the [Presencing Institute](#) 2021)¹

Questions

- 1. Challenges:** Look at yourself from outside as if you were another person: What are the 2 or 3 most important challenges or tasks that your life (work and non-work) currently presents?
- 2. Self:** Write down 2 or 3 important accomplishments you have achieved or skills / qualities you have developed in your life (examples: work, raising children; finishing your education; being an effective listener)?
- 3. Emerging Self:** What 2 or 3 important aspirations, areas of interest, or undeveloped talents would you like to place more focus on in your future journey (examples: writing a novel; learning new skill, starting a social movement; taking your current work to a new level)?
- 4. Frustration and Inspiration:** What is it about your current work and/or personal life that frustrates you the most? What inspires and energizes you the most?
- 5. Inner resistance:** What is holding you back? Describe a couple of recent situations (in your work or personal life) when you noticed one of the following three voices or mindsets (judgement, cynicism, fear) kicking in and preventing you from exploring the situation you were in more deeply.
- 6. Watch yourself from above (as if in a helicopter or mountain top).** What are you doing? What are you trying to do in this stage of your professional and personal journey?

¹ C. Otto Scharmer, (2009) Theory U: Learning from the Future as it emerges. Berrett-Koehler: San Francisco. Chapters 21.

7. Your younger self: Look at your current situation from the viewpoint of you as a younger person, at the beginning of your journey: What does that younger person / self, have to say to you?

8. Imprint or Legacy: Imagine you could fast-forward to the very last moments of your life, when it is time for you to pass on. Now look back on your life's journey as a whole. What legacy do you want to leave behind on the planet?

9. From that future point of view: What advice would you give to your current self?

10. Now return again to the present & crystallize what it is that you want to create: your vision & intention (for yourself, work, for the next 3 years. What are some essential core elements of the future that you want to create in your personal, professional & social life? Describe / draw concretely as possible the images, metaphors & elements that occur to you.

11. Letting-go What would you have to let go of (eg behaviors, assumptions, beliefs, mindsets) in order to bring your vision into reality?

12. Prototyping & support: Over the next 3 months, what are 2 or 3 opportunities or ideas do you see now you could test / try as a microcosm (small part) of your vision and who could help you with these? (3-5 core people).

13. Action: To bring your intention into reality, what practical first steps would you take over the next 3 days?