



What is a Roadmap? – a Life Map

And how can it help you?



Making a Life Map

Life maps are a powerful tool for self-reflection. They can be used at any time and for different reasons.

Some people use a life map for grieving, some use it to plot their movement toward a career promotion. You can use a life map to track – a mental or physical health issue. It notes what was happening and when, plus the decisions you made.

Here we will use the life map to plot the ups and downs of your life so you can track key events plus your emotional response.

This will give deeper insight to the choices you made.



1. Grab a notebook for taking notes, a pen or pencil.

You will begin by brainstorming. Sit in a place where you won't be disturbed. Begin to list the key events of your life. Don't sweat it. Let it be fun. Maybe put on your favorite music. Have a cup of tea. Put up your feet and relax.

Now list the events. Some of these events may be milestones, e.g., you learned your multiplication tables after studying for weeks and you got a star from your teacher.

Don't filter your thoughts. Just write them down as they come to mind.

If you need a starter, ask yourself questions about different periods of your life, e.g., as a toddler – yes, you may have toddler memories. Your first day at school and what did it look like year after year? School activities. Your 18th birthday. The job interview.

Some memories will be about the absence of something – an award you didn't get, the absence of a parent at a significant event. Falling in and out of love.

Give yourself at least 30 – 60 minutes.

Making a Life Map

The first step was just for collecting information.

Now, begin to reflect on those key moments in your life. You may have responded, “I had forgot all about that.” Or, “I wish I had forgotten about that!”

It’s okay. Choose the most significant events, usually 15-25.

Put them in chronological order.

Do the reflection part of the exercise.



2. Now reflect on these events.

*Consider the impact these events had on you. One storyteller suggests you “**Imagine your life story as a novel.**” This is particularly helpful if you get stuck at any point. So, you can think of your life story (and life map) in terms of plots, themes, characters, and all the different factors that may have influenced who you are today.*

“The big decisions that took you on a new path, small choices that led to unexpected discoveries or realities, the impact of overarching historical events or politics in your life, important relationships, goals, beliefs, and even aspects of human behavior (fear, conformity, prejudice, etc).”

Consider, how did these events influenced you? Put a “+” in front of those events or activities you saw as a high point / with a positive influence and a “-” before those memories you remember as a hard time or having a negative impact.

Give yourself at least 30 – 60 minutes.

Making a Life Map

Almost there! Draw the Life Map Template.

After you've built the template, you are going to position the 15-25 key times in your life at the appropriate time in your life – at the age when it happened.

If the memory was –

- ✓ *a high point, or*
 - ✓ *had a positive influence on how you felt about yourself, or*
 - ✓ *had a positive impact on the decisions you took afterward,*
- put it above the horizontal line.*

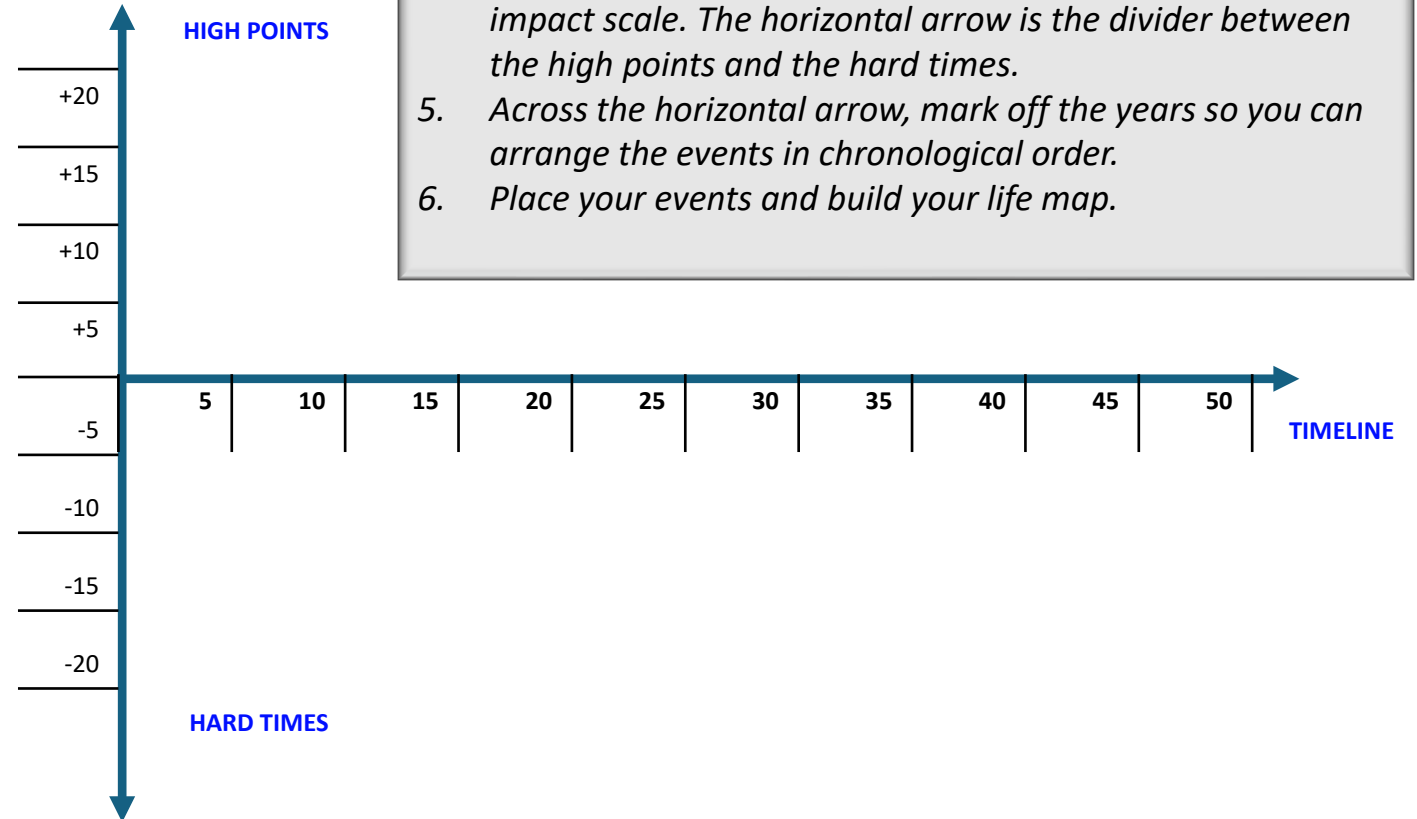
You may want to add a 'scale of impact' on the vertical arrow. (Use numbers that make sense to you.)

See the examples on the next page.



Draw the Life Map template.

3. *It's time to get a piece of paper for sketching. I prefer a 11"x17" sheet of paper or a tabloid size. I use it in the landscape position. It gives me more room to sketch.*
4. *On the paper draw two arrows. The vertical arrow will mark the beginning of your life and its where you will put the impact scale. The horizontal arrow is the divider between the high points and the hard times.*
5. *Across the horizontal arrow, mark off the years so you can arrange the events in chronological order.*
6. *Place your events and build your life map.*

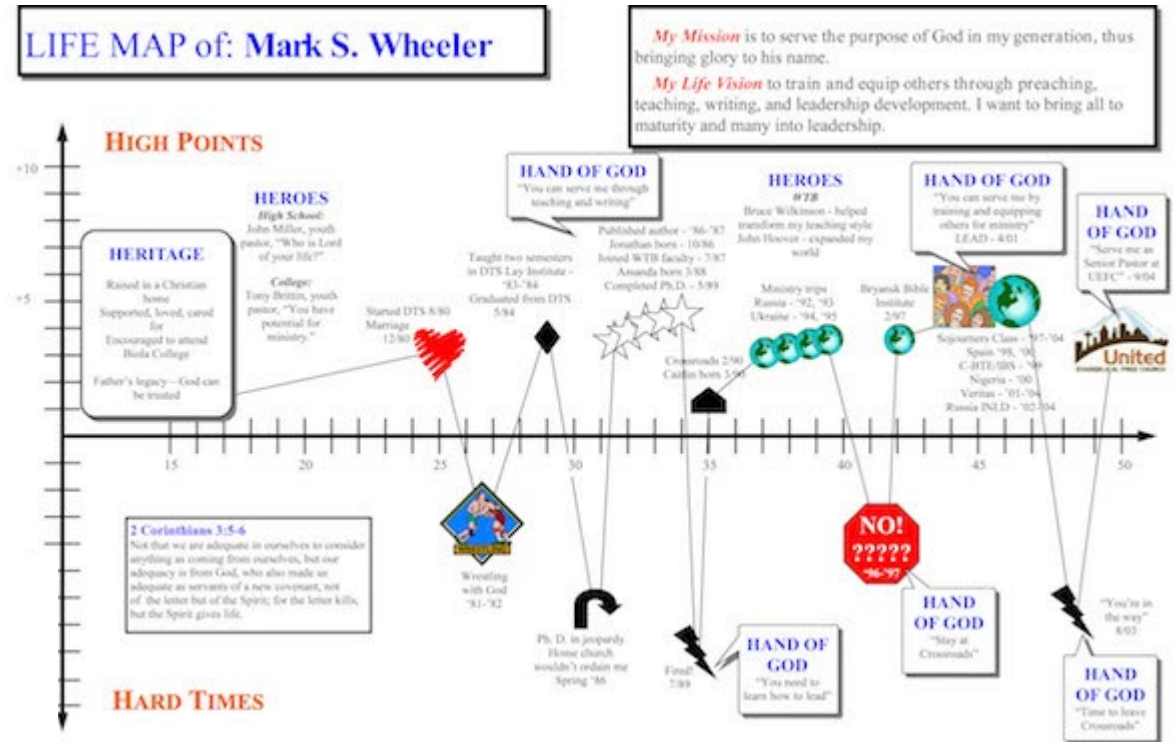
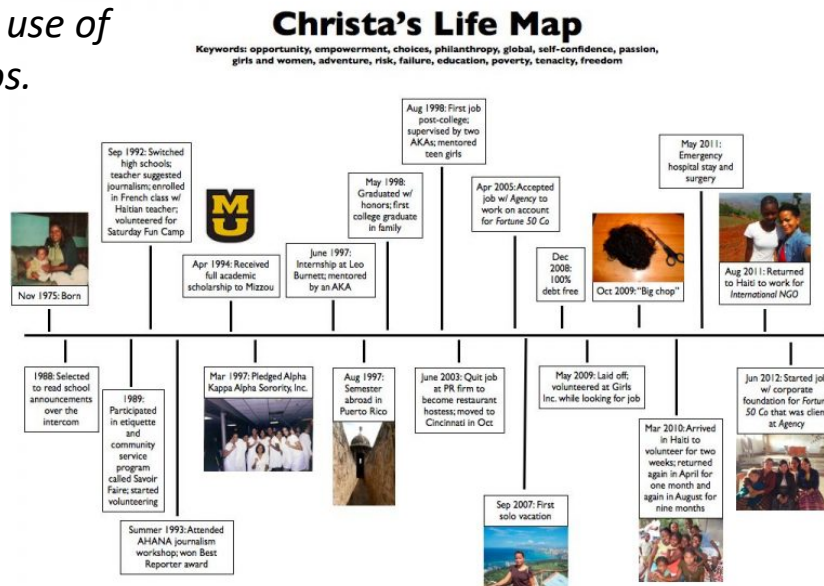


Making a Life Map

Christa's life map doesn't designate highs and lows. It's focus is to track her major milestones and successes.

Mark's life map includes his highs and lows, plus the learnings that got him through the hard times.

They both are made very interesting with the use of drawings and photos.



Take a couple of days to complete your life map. Better than a vision board, it will help you discover how you got to the place where you are today; the experiences, emotions and motivations that are driving you.

Making a Life Map

Now that you have completed your life map, sit with it for a couple of days.

Reflect on the experiences which had the greatest impact. Were you happy, sad?

Ask yourself about your response. Would you do anything different? How did it make you feel?

What is the common denominator for the high points and for the hard times?

What sets you back? Where and when did you find energy or perseverance?

Give yourself a few days to marinate in your life map. And then journal what it is teaching you.



Marinate in the meaning that comes from your experiences. Journal your insights.

What have you learned about you?

How will you use that information?

Making a Life Map

I hope you had fun making this life map.

Now that you have, you can continue to build it out. Or, make a 12-month life map to help you track your decisions and motivations over a year.

Building this life map is one tool in the Finding-Me Mini Self-Assessment. If you are doing the self-assessment, take what you have learned back to the self-assessment and continue there.

If you are doing the life map as a stand alone task, contact me and let's discuss your next steps. talkwith@liveohigh.com



Put **Life Map** in the subject.

