

Creating Your Belonging Map



Introduction

A belonging map is a visual representation of the groups and communities that contribute to your sense of belonging. These groups could range from family and friends to professional networks and hobby clubs. The size of each circle on your map reflects the importance of that group to your overall sense of belonging. Creating this map can help you assess where you currently find a sense of belonging and guide you in making intentional decisions about where to invest your time and energy.

Step-by-Step Instructions

Step 1: Gather Your Materials

You will need:

- A piece of paper or a digital drawing tool (like an iPad or tablet)
- Pens, pencils, or a stylus for drawing and labeling

Step 2: Draw the Circles

1. **Identify Groups:** Start by listing all the groups, communities, or relationships that you feel connected to. This could be family, friends, work colleagues, hobby groups, online communities, etc.
2. **Draw Circles:** For each group, draw a circle on your paper or digital canvas. The size of each circle should reflect how important that group is to your sense of belonging. Larger circles indicate greater importance, while smaller circles indicate lesser importance.

Step 3: Label the Circles

Label each circle with the name of the group it represents. For example, you might have circles labeled "Family," "Friends," "Work," "Hobby Club," and "Online Community."

Step 4: Reflect and Analyze

Once you have completed your map, take a moment to reflect on it. Ask yourself questions like:

- Where do I want to invest more deeply?
- Where do I want to pull back?

- How has my map changed over the last few years?
- How can I align my time with where I feel a sense of belonging?

Example Belonging Map

Below is an example of a belonging map where "Friends" contribute the most to a person's sense of belonging, while "Neighbors" contribute the least.



Additional Considerations

- **Change Over Time:** Consider how your map might have changed over the years. This can provide insights into how your sense of belonging has evolved.
- **Intentional Adjustments:** Use your map to make intentional decisions about where you want to invest your time and energy. If a particular group is very important to you but you haven't been spending much time with them, you might decide to make more effort to connect with that group.

By regularly updating your belonging map, you can maintain a clear sense of where you derive your sense of belonging and make conscious choices to nurture those connections. You can also use it to help others decide where to put their efforts in their own lives.

Conclusion

A belonging map is a powerful tool for visualizing the groups and communities that are important to your sense of belonging. By creating and reflecting on your map, you can make informed decisions about where to invest your time and energy, ensuring that you are fostering the relationships and communities that matter most to you.