

Create a Me Tree- A Self-Reflection Activity

Overview

Self-awareness is defined as “the ability to understand one’s own emotions, thoughts, and values and how they influence behavior across contexts... including capacities to recognize one’s strengths and limitations with a well-grounded sense of confidence and purpose” (CASEL, 2019). Confidence is a key component of self-awareness and is a skill that requires lifelong exploration. Confidence can be defined as the way in which we view ourselves and our ability to achieve our goals. There are many internal and external factors that contribute to our confidence. As we get older, we develop a deeper sense of self as we push through challenges, celebrate successes, and everything in between. External factors such as support of family and friends, education, and community relations affect our confidence and sense of self. As adults, we can help to create safe and supportive environments for our children to have the space to learn, grow, and gain confidence in themselves.

Art allows us to express ourselves in ways that words cannot. When we tap into our creative brains, we can uncover feelings and thoughts that we were unable to see. The art project below invites children to explore how they view themselves, what makes them unique, and how that image fits into the world around them.

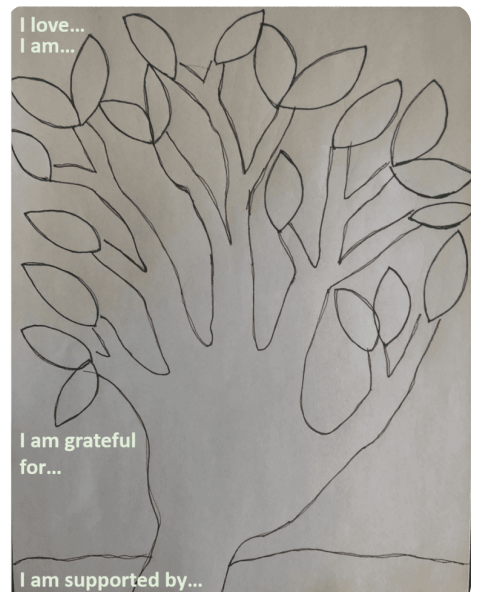
Take Action

Create a “Me Tree”

Use this activity to reflect on the unique things that make you – you, and the people and communities that surround and support you.

Steps:

1. Trace your hand on a piece of paper leaving the fingertips open to draw longer branches.
2. Draw your branches from your fingertips leaving room for lots of leaves.
3. Draw as many leaves as you want (make sure to make them large enough to write things or draw inside!)
4. Draw some soil on the bottom of your page leaving room between the bottom of your paper and the top of the soil for writing or drawing!



Each element of the tree represents a different area of reflection. Doodle, draw or write in each of the sections your reflections of the prompt below.

- Soil: "I am supported by..."
 - Reflect on the people and communities that support you to grow strong and kind.
- Tree trunk and branches: "I am grateful for..."
 - Beginning at the bottom of the tree and working your way up through the branches, reflect on the places, things or experiences that you are grateful for (e.g., my family, friends, doctors that help me feel better when sick, school where I meet my friends, the outdoors where I can exercise and see new things, etc.)
- Leaves: "I love..."
 - Lastly, reflect on the many things that make you - YOU! They could be adjectives (funny, smart, kind, helpful, good friend etc.) or your favorite hobbies and passions (playing soccer, painting, dancing with grandpa, learning math, etc.)

If you have them, color in your tree with crayons or colored pencils and get creative with other decorations! Continue to add to your tree as new reflections are discovered.

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Tips



Take this activity outdoors and complete it with sidewalk chalk. Turn your Me Tree into a “Me” with body tracing! Invite a friend or family member to trace the outline of your body with chalk. Take turns tracing and then spend some time filling in your outline. Reflect on the prompts above with doodles, writings, etc. then swap and take turns writing or drawing your favorite things about them!



Create opportunities for sharing and discussion while doing this activity with a group. Although you do not have to share in detail, sharing our self-reflections out loud reinforce our feelings about those reflections and create space to discover similarities, learn about our differences, and celebrate what makes us unique. Next time you do this activity in a group, be sure to save time for sharing!



Make this activity your own! In lieu of tracing, you can also collage, paint, draw or doodle using the above reflections. Allow art to be an avenue for creative expression and self-exploration.

For more activities and ideas like this one, be sure to [sign up for our news and updates](#). And if you like what you see, please [donate to support our work](#) creating more ways to help build a healthier future for kids.

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Feeling Through Colors

Discover ways to help children of all ages identify and express feelings through a rainbow of colors and art.

Journaling and Reflective Writing

Reflective writing allows us to list our thoughts, emotions, and questions in order to gain a deeper understanding to what we are feeling and how we relate to the world around us.

Creative Expression and Movement

Have fun and explore feelings and emotions through movement and dance.

Mindful Breathing Exercises

Deep and thoughtful breathing exercises help to calm the nervous system and can act as a “reset” in times of unrest. Explore these mindful breathing exercises and make them your own!