

WALKING YOUR TIME LINE

Description

Subjectively, we experience time as distance. A time line is a physical, external, usually linear representation of time, moving either towards the past or the future. It allows us to see clearly into our past and our future, and gives insight into how far away we perceive these to be. Walking our time line allows us to experience each step of the way, each moment in time, either re-experiencing powerful memories and accessing useful resources, or making future plans a reality. Walking our time line into the future, towards a specific goal set for a specific date, allows us to clarify exactly what that journey is going to be like and what will be required of us, as well as allowing us the opportunity to experience the goal and major milestones along the way. In education it can be useful for enabling learners to work towards and achieve important goals in the future.

How to use it

This can be done 1:1, or with several learners with similar or even different goals. Ask your learner(s) to think of what it is they want to achieve, and by when, including important milestones along the way. Ask them where in the future do they see this point in time, and encourage them to point this out. Ask your learners to imagine a line drawn from where they are standing, up to this point in the future, and divide this line up into linear units of time (days, weeks, months).

Walk your learner(s) along their time line, step by step, unit of time by unit of time. At each step, encourage your learners to think about the point in time they have now entered. What are you going to be doing at this time? What will you need to be doing at this point in order to assure you reach your goal? What milestone will you have achieved? How will that feel, what will that be like?

At the end of the time line, encourage your learner(s) to really experience achieving their goal, making it as vivid and multisensory as possible. Finish either by walking back their time line to the present time, or by asking their future selves to pass on some important advice or insight that they have gained along the way.

Helpful tips

- 1 Make it fun! Improvise, be creative, perhaps ask your learners to give their line an appealing colour or pattern
- 2 Guiding your learners through this quickly and confidently, in a relaxed way, is likely to lead to less resistance from your learners
- 3 Encourage your learners to switch off/ignore their internal dialogue, and just do it! Go with the flow, go with what feels right, discourage analysis or too much thinking
- 4 The language you use can be a powerful tool to enable your learners to use their imagination, trust in and engage with the exercise, mobilise their resources
- 5 Encourage your learners to immerse themselves in the experience of walking their time line, and ignore what might be going on around them