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Pursuing Our Passions in a Climate-Changed World

A workshop about imagining a better future and using what you love to help get there.

Facilitator's Guide

This workshop is designed for groups, but an individual can complete it on their own. The workshop is structured around five prompts that will help participants identify and reflect on their passions. They will then connect these passions to our possible roles in a climate-changed world.

Learning Goals and Objectives

- To identify the many different types of passions and interests participants pursue or have pursued in their lives
- To learn more about each other's passions and interests
- To discover and understand how homelessness creates extra barriers and risks for LGBTQ youth
- To connect existing passions and interests to the impacts climate change and extreme weather
- To experience creativity and insights through imagination

The video portion of the workshop is 45 minutes long. We estimate that the workshop will take approximately two hours to complete. You may want to provide extra time for breaks and for more sharing.

Along with the first four prompts, workshop host, Peterson Toscano, along with two members of The BTS Center staff, will share their answers to the prompts. You will then be prompted to stop the video to give participants time to reflect on their own and then share their answers to the whole group or in smaller groups.

Participants will need paper and something with which to write. We recommend writing by hand, as the physical mechanics of handwriting help to spark creativity and imagination. As [Dr. Claudia Aguirre writes](#), "Recent neuroscientific research has uncovered a distinct neural pathway that is only activated when we physically draw out our letters."

Workshop Outline

1. Warm-up and Introduction

- a. PROMPT 1: *How did you personally adapt, modify, and change in response to the Pandemic? How did you use your skills and talents to help others?*
- b. Modeling by The BTS Center staff
- c. Reflection and Sharing (stop video)

2. Passions: Silly to Serious

- a. PROMPT 2: *Write a full list of all of your passions*
- b. Modeling by The BTS Center staff
- c. Reflection and Sharing (stop video)

3. Going Deeper

- a. Film on LGBTQ Youth Homelessness (4 min 23 sec)
- b. Peterson connects his passions for hospitality, storytelling, and LGBTQ issues with climate change
- c. PROMPT 3: *Looking at your list, choose ONE or TWO of your specific Passions. How can you use one or more of your passions to help your community address climate change or to protect a person, place, or a thing you love? How can you use your passions to adapt to extreme weather and other climate impacts?*
- d. Modeling by The BTS Center staff
- e. Reflection and Sharing (stop video)

4. Imagining a Better Future

- a. A World without Fossil Fuels video (3 min 9 sec)
- b. PROMPT 4: *Take a trip to the future. 10 years have passed. Write: Now I am XX years old. Then fill in the prompt: Back in (year 10 years ago) I (write about your work and life, what you did with your time). Now in 20XX (write what your day to day life looks like and give an update about your passion/s and your relationship to it/them).*
- c. Modeling by The BTS Center staff
- d. Reflection and Sharing (stop video)

5. Sharing and Closing

- a. Assignment: Within the next week, please share your future travel reflection in one (or more) of the following ways.
 - i. Read it to a loved one or close friend over coffee or a special meal.
 - ii. Write about it in a blog, social media post, or newsletter.
 - iii. Include it in a sermon.

- iv. Record a video telling us about your vision, so we can share it with others in the Leadership Commons.
 - v. Write a story or poem about your future life.
 - vi. Draw a picture or create a collage that captures this future scenario.
- b. PROMPT 5: *For a moment, write about any take aways you have from today's session and any next steps you want to consider.*
 - c. Reflection and Sharing (stop video)
 - d. Closing remarks

List of Prompts with Notes and Optional Additional Activities

PROMPT 1: How did you personally adapt, modify, and change in response to the Covid-19 Pandemic?

How did you use your skills and talents to help others?

PROMPT 2: Write a full list of all of your passions.

Note to facilitators: This list can include the simple to the sublime. Peterson's list includes coffee, manual typewriters, hospitality, storytelling, and LGBTQ+ youth homelessness. Participants' lists may contain over 20 passions.

As you write your lists of passions, consider the following questions:

- What captures your time and attention?
- What do you spend your money on?
- What would you miss if it were gone?
- What are the issues that move you?

PROMPT 3: Looking at your list, choose ONE or TWO of your specific Passions. How can you use one or more of your passions to help your community address climate change or to protect a person, place, or a thing you love? How can you use your passions to adapt to extreme weather and other climate impacts?

Note to facilitators: This is an important step in the imagination process, but some participants may struggle with it. It will be helpful if you provide your own example along with the ones provided in the video. You can even ask a volunteer to share one passion and together the group can consider the ways this passion can be a tool in addressing climate change and the impacts of extreme weather.

Note to facilitators: An additional optional activity to do with your group is to brainstorm about the diversity of climate impacts. *What are the climate impacts we are facing and will face?* With flooding, drought, storms, and excessive heat, climate change and extreme weather events are leading to:

- People and pets being displaced from home for short and long periods of time. This includes both regional displacement and national and even international migration.
- More people, pets, and livestock are getting ill because of diseases spread by insects like ticks and mosquitos.
- The loss of electricity for days or even weeks.

- Mental health risks. Mental health experts are highlighting the ways extreme weather events and the uncertainty that climate change brings [impacts mental health](#) for children and adults.
- Dangerous conditions for seniors. Extreme heat is the number one cause of death from all climate related disasters. Elderly people are especially vulnerable to extreme heat and sometimes need a cooler place to stay during extreme heat events.
- Food insecurity. With both droughts and storms food supplies can be disrupted for short and longer periods of time.
- Disruption of education for young people displaced by extreme weather.

Note to facilitators: In preparation for Prompt 4, participants will see a short film, *A World Without Fossil Fuels*. It helps them to engage their senses in a world that no longer runs on greenhouse gasses. After they see the film, an optional activity is to ask them, “What did you see, smell, hear, and feel as you imagined this whole new world?”

PROMPT 4: Take a trip to the future. 10 years have passed.

Write: Now I am XX years old (you will add 10 years to your age.)

Then fill in the prompt: Back in (year 10 years ago) I (write about your work and life, what you did with your time). Now in 20XX (write what your day to day life looks like and give an update about your passion/s and your relationship to it/them).

Example: If Jane, a school teacher, who is 46 years old, takes the workshop in 2022, Jane would write: *Now I am 56 years old. Back in 2022 I was working as a school teacher in an elementary school. Now in 2032 I also run an after school program that teaches young people and adults resilience building skills which include gardening, disaster preparedness, and first aid. I am seeing the anxiety level drop in the students as they learn concrete skills to help them cope with more and more storms and heat.*

NOTE: It is important to keep participants speaking in the present tense. The act of imagination that 10 years *have passed* and we are reconvening is critical to the success of this activity. If you break into small groups, you may want to select group leaders who will help keep people in the present tense.

For instance, if a participant says, “Well in 10 years I guess I would be living in the same house...” gently correct them to say something like, “10 years have passed since we met, and I live in the same house...”

Sharing Your Insights after the Workshop is Over

Sharing your discoveries and visions are important steps towards making it a reality. Within the next week, please share your future travel reflection in one (or more) of the following ways.

- Read it to a loved one or close friend over coffee or a special meal.
- Write about it in a blog, social media post, or newsletter.
- Include it in a sermon.
- Record a video telling us about your vision, so we can share it with others in the Leadership Commons.
- Write a story or poem about your future life.
- Draw a picture or create a collage that captures this future scenario.

PROMPT 5: For a moment write about any take aways you have from today's session and any next steps you want to consider.

NOTE to facilitators: We would love to get feedback from the participants and from you as workshop facilitator. Please fill out the facilitator feedback form, and share the participant feedback from with all of the participants.

- Participant Feedback Form: [Form Assembly link TBD]
- Facilitator Feedback Form: [Form Assembly link TBD]

Additional Resources

- Film on LGBTQ Youth Homelessness: <https://youtu.be/RJlJorwXCTw>
- A World Without Fossil Fuels video: <https://youtu.be/ODjltB0z440>
- Citizens' Climate Radio Ep. 49: Unleashing our imagination: <https://citizensclimatelobby.org/citizens-climate-radio-ep-49-unleashing-our-imagination/>
- How climate change has affected each state by Stephanie Parker for Stacker. <https://stacker.com/stories/21974/how-climate-change-has-affected-each-state>
- Regional Effects of Climate Change (wikipedia) https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Regional_effects_of_climate_change
- [Weather: A Novel, conversation with Jenny Offill](#)