Tree of Life

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Draw a tree with each of the parts listed below. (You may also use the template that has been provided.)

**The Roots:** Where we come from
Might include location, culture, language, those who have taught you the most in life, favorite things, organizational associations.

**The Ground:** What we choose to do
Things you choose to do rather than those you feel like you are forced or have to do.

**The Trunk:** What we care about and our skills
Represents your values, skills, and abilities. Try to include a diversity of things on your trunk as you begin building connections between different parts of your tree.

**The Branches:** Our horizons
Hopes, dreams, and wishes for yourself, loved ones, and/or your community.

**Leaves of the Tree:** Those who are significant to us
People who are close to you or have influenced you directly, living or dead. May also include family, friends, pets, or heroes.

**Fruits:** Legacies bequeathed to us
Gifts that have been passed on to you, or contributions that others have made to your life. May include personality characteristics/traits or material items.

**Flowers and Seeds:** Legacies we wish to leave
Gifts you wish to pass on to others

(If your tree is getting full, you can use the basket for fruits, flowers, and seeds.)

**Compost Bin:** Sources of hurt (optional)
The compost bin transforms rotten stuff into rich and nourishing fertilizer for our lives.

After you have created your Tree of Life, take another look and see if you can make any connections between different parts of the tree. Are the roots, trunk, and branches linked in any way?

If you are doing this exercise with someone else, pay close attention to what they placed on their trunk, and use these to ask them to tell you a story about themselves.

Making links between what you care about in life, your skills, your hopes and dreams, who is significant to you, and the gifts you have received and hope to pass on is a process of creating a particular "storyline" of your life. This is not a story about problems. This story is about what you give value to, what you stand for in life. This is a preferred storyline.