

Artistic Expression

Overview: Draw or paint a visual representation of one of your experiences with a monster. The objective is not to create an impressive or aesthetically pleasing piece of art. The objective is to use the artistic process to engage with your emotions.

Instructions: Choose your medium: Paints, markers, colored pencils, crayons, and pens are all fine. Use a canvas or quality piece of paper. This exercise works best with color if possible (but not required). The steps listed below are optional if you want help to figure out what to create. Feel free to ignore some or all of them -- start whenever you're ready..

- Think through some memories connected to your monsters. Find a memory that stirs an emotion in you. Sometimes an unexpected memory will come to mind that only seems tangentially related. That's okay. Once you can capture the emotion from your memory, proceed to the next step.
- Write one or several words/short phrases to describe that memory
- Think through each of these elements in light of your emotion and memory, and write down whatever comes to mind as descriptive or connected for each:
 - Colors
 - Shapes
 - Objects
 - Lines
 - Textures
 - Patterns



- Additional Suggestions:
 - If you still do not have an idea for what to paint or draw, it may be helpful to start by simply writing your word or phrase graffiti style. Then add color, texture, shadows, shapes, more words, and/or backgrounds.
 - Another idea: paint or draw one of the items present in the background of your memory (eg: a chair, a dog, a car etc), and then fill in colors and shapes and texture from there.
 - And if nothing else, you can always start by creating an abstract monster or something you feared as a child.

REMEMBER: The goal is to paint or draw things that help you engage with your emotions. This exercise is about the process, not the end result. Take your time, breathe deeply, and focus on how you feel during the exercise.

Journal Assignment:

- Review your journal rules
- Write down what medium you used and why
- Describe the memory that inspired your art.
- What feelings were you best able to engage with?
- In what ways was this exercise challenging for you? Why?
- Pretend you are explaining your art to someone else. What do the basic elements of your art represent?
- What observations do you have about your memory that inspired this painting?