



At the start of the year, I (Alexandra) attended a workshop at the **Sydney Centre for Creative Change** on making vision boards. A vision board is basically a collage of your hopes and plans for the year ahead (or whatever time frame works for you). It is a collection of images and words that represent the person you want to be, and the things you want to do, achieve, or have. For some people, their vision board will be symbolic and abstract, something that when you look at it, only makes sense to themselves. For other people, their vision board will be very concrete and obvious, with each goal detailed. Neither way is better than the other – it's about what works best and makes sense to you. Vision boards are a really good way of clarifying exactly what your wants are (which allows you to make clear goals and put plans in place) and attach feelings to those visions (which will encourage you to stick at the plans you have made through the ups and the downs). It's also a way of giving your creative-self a chance to be involved in the goal-making process.

A good way to start is to make some lists. Split up your life into all its different parts – health and physical wellbeing, relationships or social life, work or career, etc. Jot down things that are important to you in each category. How closely does your real life reflect what most matters to you? If you want to, you can then spend some time thinking more specifically about where you want to be in a year's time for each of those categories, and how that journey might look. What goals do you have? What resources do you have to draw upon? What are you looking forward to? What relationships do you want to invest in?

Then get creating! You will need collage materials (e.g. colourful paper, textured papers, a range of magazines, other craft materials), scissors, glue, maybe some pens, and a backing board. You'll also need to set aside time – preferably a couple of hours, which sounds long but goes very fast – for construction, so that you don't feel rushed, and you can allow your brain to assemble the pieces of the collage at its own pace. Some people will have a clear image in their mind of what they want before they start. Some will drift through the process, selecting images and words that appeal to them, whether or not they seem to fit with their stated goals. And others will fall in between the two camps, the goals in mind directly shaping the pieces selected.

Once you have finished, spend some time reflecting on your creation. What was it like to make? Does it feel right to you as it is? Is there anything surprising on it? Anything missing from it? Afterwards, think about what you are going to do with your vision board. Is it something you want to display at work, or at home? Would you keep it in a drawer, file, on the fridge? Or if you would rather, you can throw it away, its purpose served. If you do decide to keep it, you can follow up on this activity by spending some time journaling about your vision board as a whole, or about the parts of it. You can write about the thoughts and emotions that come up for you as you think about each goal, and the plans you have for how to attain them, and the experience of putting those plans into action. In your journal, you can track your progress across the year – your journey towards the vision that you made for the life that you really want.

Happy vision-boarding!

*Written by Alexandra Newmarch*