

Reflection Timelines

ART & JOURNALING PROMPTS FOR THE NEW YEAR

WE ARE SOLD THE IDEA THAT
THE NEW YEAR IS A TIME OF IMPROVEMENT...

But what if, instead, we view it mostly as a time of reflection?

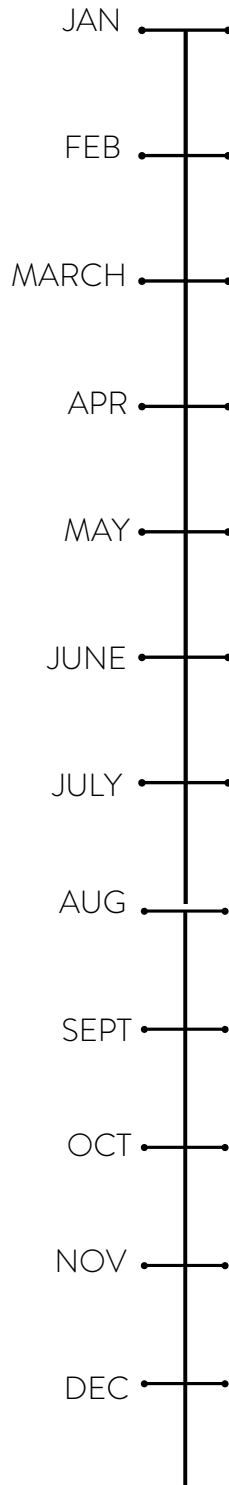
The self-improvement industry bombards us with ads for weight-loss programs, gym memberships, and promises that if we change our bodies, we will gain health and happiness.

The new year may stoke in you a desire to make changes and plans. But first, let's take a moment to honor the things that have happened, intentionally or unintentionally, in the last year.

We hope this prompt for journaling or art-making will help you to honor the You of 2022 and, if you like, set some soft intentions for the year to come.

PROMPT: FIRSTS ON THE TIMELINE

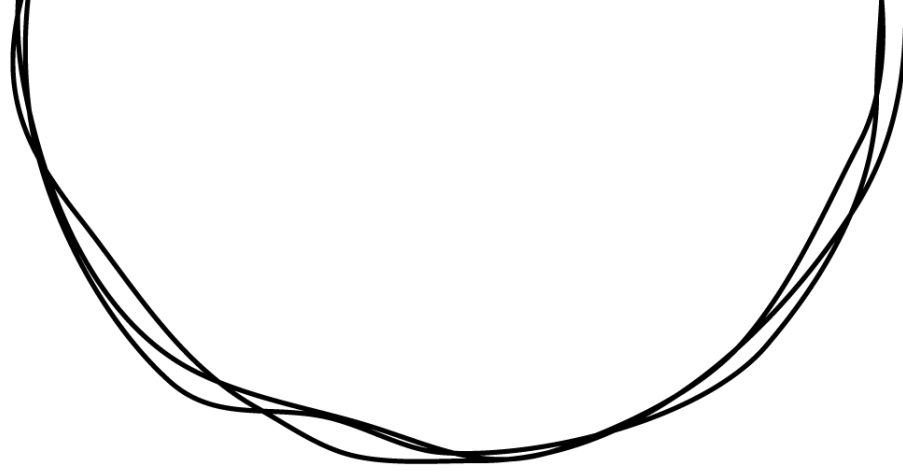
Think back over the last twelve months. On the timeline, make a mark for things you did for the first time. These could be public & external (think "visited Portugal," "started my degree," "held my new nephew," "rode a motorcycle") or private and internal ("started medication," "questioned my religion," "told my family member the truth.")



PROMPT: LASTS ON THE TIMELINE

Now think back over the last twelve months, and on the timeline, make a mark for things you did for the last time. (Last time seeing someone, last day at a job, last time before giving up a habit, etc.) Big or small, personal or public, add them to your timeline.

A vertical timeline for the year 2022. The months are listed on the left side of a central vertical line. Each month has a horizontal tick mark extending to the right from the central line, with a small dot at the end of the tick mark. The months listed are: JAN, FEB, MARCH, APR, MAY, JUNE, JULY, AUG, SEPT, OCT, NOV, and DEC.



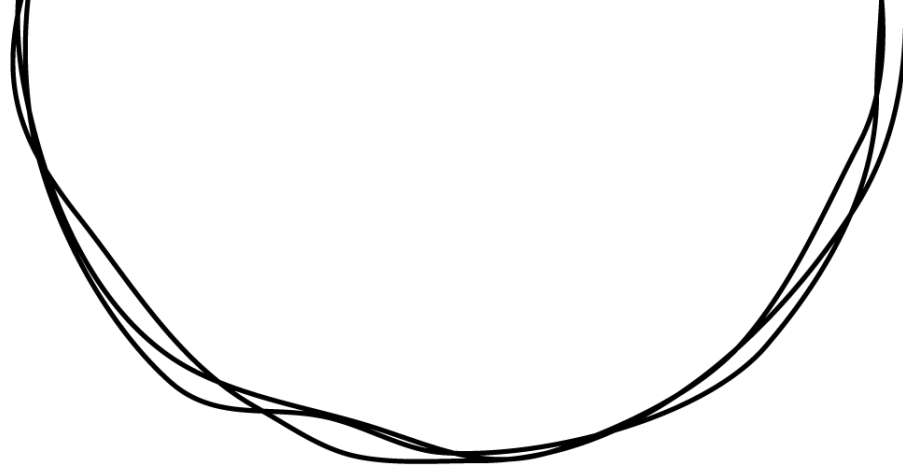
ONE FIRST

Looking over your timeline of "firsts" from 2022, choose one that feels especially meaningful. On the pages below, or in your own sketchbook or journal, make art or write about the experience of doing this thing for the first time. Did it change your perspective? Bring new connection into your life? Mark a new era?

ONE FIRST

MAKE ART HERE





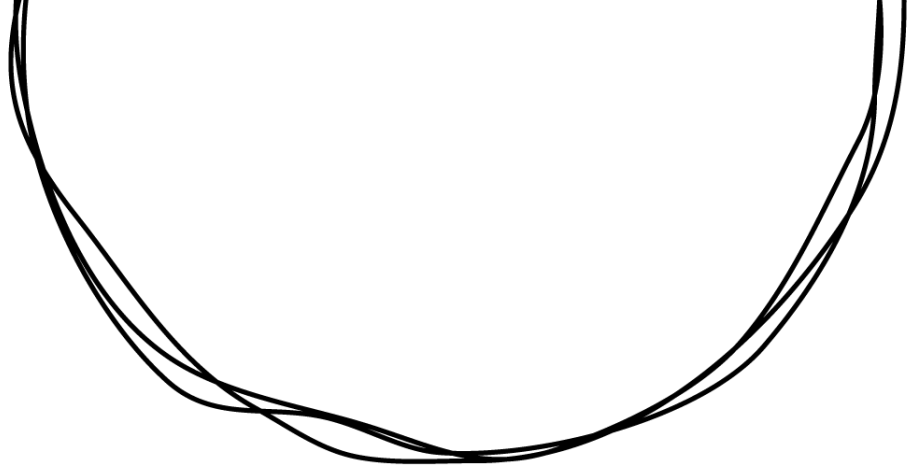
ONE LAST

Now do the same for your "Lasts" timeline. Choose one and reflect further--how has this "last" impacted you? Did it launch a period of grief, or a period of joy? Has it made your life feel lighter or heavier? Is it gone forever, or something you might revisit? Do you feel welcoming of this loss, or resistant to it?

ONE LAST

MAKE ART HERE



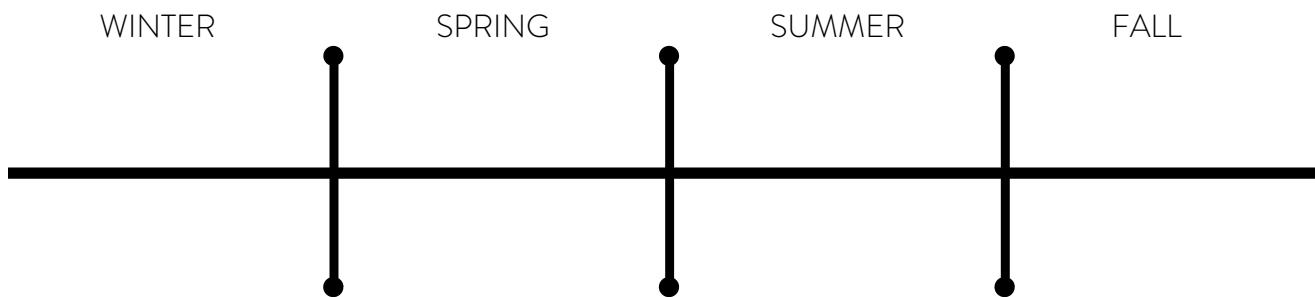


ONE LAST

LOOKING FORWARD . . .

At this point in the exercise, reflection may be enough for you. You may wish to stop and remain in a reflective headspace, granting yourself permission to turn away from the planning or goal-setting pressures of this season.

If goal-setting does feel right for you, take a look at this fresh timeline for 2023. Continuing with our prompt, add a few ideas of things you would like to do for the first or last time within the season you'd like to see them. Or, below the timeline, make a general list. Consider different kinds of novelty and departures: visit a new city, visit a museum for the first time, meet a new friend? And what for the last time? The last time bullying yourself about your body? The last time allowing someone to violate your boundaries? The last time making a student loan payment? Place this timeline somewhere you can see it as the new year begins.



RESOURCES

If you enjoyed this prompt book, you might enjoy some of our other resources for journaling and art making. Find more ideas at the links below:

20 Prompts for Art Making: <https://alexandriaarttherapy.com/blog/20-prompts-for-art-making>

Journal Prompts for Introspection: <https://alexandriaarttherapy.com/blog/journal-prompts-for-introspection>

5 Journal Prompts for the New Year: <https://alexandriaarttherapy.com/blog/five-journal-prompts-new-year?rq=prompts>

3 Journal Prompts for Spring: <https://alexandriaarttherapy.com/blog/three-journal-prompts-for-spring?rq=prompts>

5 Art Prompts for Processing Emotions with the Mood Meter:

<https://alexandriaarttherapy.com/blog/mood-meter?rq=prompts>

7 Art Prompts for New Parents: <https://alexandriaarttherapy.com/blog/7-art-prompts-for-new-parents?rq=prompts>

A Guide to Journaling: <https://alexandriaarttherapy.com/blog/guide-to-journaling?rq=prompts>

Self Care - Thinking Outside the Box: <https://alexandriaarttherapy.com/blog/self-care-thinking-outside-the-box?rq=prompts>

