

Step 3: What Stories Do I Have To Tell?

You have connected some defining experiences, relationships, and/or identities to some of your most fundamental qualities, values, and passions.

Now it is time to explore -- to experience -- the stories that can be told about those defining events, practices, or people.

The purpose of this exercise is to see how it feels to remember and write about these experiences. It is a crucial measure not just in figuring out what stories you have inside of you to tell, but also in retaining ownership of your story. Because it really does not matter if your parent, teacher, college counselor, tutor, family friend or relative who works at a college, or best friend thinks that a particular event in your life “would make the perfect college essay!” It does not matter what anyone says a college admissions officer is “looking for.”

It matters that this is a story that you

- Want to share
- Feel good about sharing
- Feel good writing

So it is absolutely critical to explore how it feels to write about these experiences before selecting one of them to craft a narrative essay about.

Here's How The Exercise Works:

Choose one of the experiences you identified in Step 2, “How Did I Get That Way?”

Meditate on it for a minute. Think of one particular **moment in time**, a feeling, and close your eyes and remember what it felt like to be in your body at that moment -- what the space felt like, what you could feel, hear, see, touch, taste, what you were doing, what you were feeling, what was happening around you.

Set a timer for anywhere between **5 to 10 minutes**. Just start writing. Write in present tense like you are there right now and going through it in real time. Don't stop until the timer goes off.

When the timer goes off, STOP -- no matter what!

Freewrite:



Quality, Value, or Passion:

Set a timer for 5-10 minutes.

STOP! Reflect:

- What feelings did that bring up?

- How did it feel to write about that?

- Did it come out easily, or was it really hard to put yourself back there?

- Did you want to keep writing when the timer went off, or could you not wait for the timer to sound so you could stop?

Freewrite:



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