

My life experience has led me on a path of creativity and healing for as long as I can remember. This led me to apply to college later in life despite coming from challenging circumstances. I understand from working with groups that though each person and situation is unique, we all have commonality. We all suffer or go through hardships, and the challenge is to continue to keep an open heart and take responsibility for making the best out of circumstances, regardless of the situation. An attitude of gratitude, aiming to do our best, do no harm, have humility, kindness, and compassion and to be ourselves is a continual practice on my life path.

What I learned at Goddard College is creative practice is not just the technical aspects of artistic growth. It is important to look at what you are doing when you are *not* making art, such as: *how do I live my life in each moment? What is the quality of my life? How do I self-care and relate to others in healthy ways? What stimulates clarity? What people, things, situations are distractions to let go of? What are my blind spots and areas of needed growth? How do other people think, feel, and experience this Earth walk? How can I listen to their perspectives and see through their eyes with compassion and respect?*

Living is a form of creation, disintegration, and the cycles of nature. By slowing down and being present one can experience the magic, beauty, and wonder of life. Walking in forests, meditating, listening to music, reading, writing poetry, drawing, painting, singing, time with friends and family and meaningful work environments are what I need to serve my purpose on earth as an Art Teacher.

Art making is about play, but it's also about finding your power through expression. It is about recognizing that everyone is the best and everyone's voice, art and expression is special and needed to create the beautiful rainbow garden of earth light (life). My goal is to teach others how to empower themselves with art.

For teaching and working with children in secondary education, I currently work at the YMCA as a group leader for an after-school program at Roosevelt Elementary School in Olympia WA. This has prepared me to work in a post-secondary environment with students, parents, staff, and teachers and begin connecting with students by making art together daily.

My strengths in preparation are mastery in fine art studies, continued studies in social justice, indigenous studies, volunteer work at the Edmonds Arts Festival Kids Corner for six years making art with postsecondary children, and experience working with the YMCA in after school childcare for post-secondary age groups at an elementary school. The areas needing growth are a host for an art class at a postsecondary school and experience teaching. My plans for next steps are finding a host for an art class in elementary, middle school, or high school, and to attend the Evergreen MIT program.