



Defining Moments: Looking Back to Move Forward

Instructions:

This activity is designed to help us step back and take a closer look at the experiences that have shaped who we are today.

Each card represents a type of potential **defining moment**, which are experiences that stand out in our lives because they influenced our perspective, decisions, or direction. These moments can be positive, painful, confusing, meaningful, or even ones we didn't fully understand at the time.

We often move quickly from one experience to the next without stopping to reflect. This activity gives us the opportunity to slow down and **look back with intention**, increasing insight and self-awareness.

How to Use This Activity:

- Select one card at a time (or the facilitator may opt to just read them)
- Think of a real moment in your life that fits the prompt.
- Briefly reflect on what happened, and then focus on the meaning of the experience:
 - How did this moment affect you at the time?
 - How do you understand it now?
 - Did it influence your thinking, behavior, or choices moving forward?
 - What did you learn—then or later?
- Share your reflection with the group if you feel comfortable.

Keep in Mind:

- ✚ There are no right or wrong answers. This is about honestly sharing your thoughts, feelings and experiences.
- ✚ You are always in control of what and how much you share.
- ✚ Some moments may feel easy to talk about, while others may take more thought.
- ✚ Insight often develops over time—it's okay if your understanding is still evolving.

**“We do not learn from experience... we learn from reflecting on experience.”
— John Dewey**



<p>Something that hurt for a long time after</p>	<p>A “win” that you are still grateful for</p>	<p>Wise words or advice that changed things for you</p>	<p>An opportunity that opened doors for you</p>
<p>A close call that woke you up before it was too late</p>	<p>Something you witnessed that opened your eyes or changed your viewpoint</p>	<p>Somewhere you went that changed you</p>	<p>A time when you were at the right place at the right time</p>
<p>A time when you wish you would have listened to people who cared about you</p>	<p>A time when you trusted someone and they came through</p>	<p>Something you often thought would happen but it never did</p>	<p>A time when you walked away and it was the right choice</p>
<p>A time when a friend or associate lead you in direction you may not have gone on your own</p>	<p>A consequence that was a true eye opener</p>	<p>A time when a relationship gave you a new perspective</p>	<p>A time when you walked in someone else’s shoes</p>



An overall life lesson learned	A time when you experienced an emotional “high”	When you made your parents proud	A memorable childhood first
A low point in your story	A time when you realize now that you did not know what you were doing	A moment when you may have thought “I waited my whole life for this”	A loss that hit hard
A life situation where you did not know what was going to happen next	Something that significantly changed your perspective	Something you thought would never happen, that happened	Life experience that came as a complete shock or surprise
When I learned about this, my life changed...	A hope that was fulfilled	A disappointment or an unmet expectation	A failure that taught you a memorable lesson



A struggle that made you stronger	A time you really understood about responsibility	An experience when you were exposed to a world or lifestyle that was completely new and different for you	A time where you may have said “I am not who I thought I am”
A line you crossed that you won't forget	A decision you are still grateful for today	A time when you realized that no one was going to fix it for you (and you had to do it yourself)	A financial lesson learned in your life
One thing you learned about people, the hard way	An experience where you wish you would have let go or moved on sooner than you did	An experience when you realized how small we all are in the universe and in the larger scheme of things	An experience or bit of wisdom that deepened your understanding of your purpose in life
A moment of sheer awe in your life	Something that made you question everything you knew at that time	A change you made that was super-rewarding in the long run	A time when you felt truly heard or understood



Process – Closing Discussion

- ❖ Which moment you discussed today still impacts you the most today?

 - ❖ Which event was the most impactful at the time it happened?

 - ❖ Which experience helped you understand the world, or yourself, the most?
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Gaining Insight

Learning from ourselves and the answers we shared...

- ❖ Why is it important to reflect on life lessons and moments that expand our perspective?

- ❖ Reflecting on today's discussion: When considering both what you shared and what you heard from others, what stands out to you about what you have learned about yourself at this point in your life?

- ❖ How can you use the life lessons discussed today to move forward in a positive way and continue your growth?

“Insight doesn’t change the past, but it can completely change how we move forward”