



Traveler, your footprints
Are the path and nothing more;
Traveler, there is no path,
The path is made by walking.

By walking the path is made
And when you look back
You'll see a road
Never to be trodden again.

Traveler, there is no path,
Only trails across the sea...

-- Antonio Machado

Stepping Stone Exercise

Using the image of stepping stones in a creek bed as a metaphor for the stepping stones of our lives, and using the context of vocation, reflect on **five or six events** that were significant points of movement and energy in your life. This is an opportunity to investigate the flow and detours of your vocational path that brought you to your work in this moment.

- * *This is not a standard list of steps - school, first job, etc. Your list might include events, people, or even ideas.*
- * *Not all stepping stones are positive. We often learn as much from doors that close as from doors that open wide.*
- * *Don't overthink. Your list does not have to be a chronology. It could be a snapshot of what comes to mind. Tomorrow, it might be different.*

What did you notice? Pay attention to your own narrative - the plot points, the characters, the setting, the pivots, the story arc.

- * *What steps were the result of intentional choices? Of serendipity? What steps are from closed doors?*
- * *Do you notice any themes or threads? Surprises?*
- * *Who might have influenced your steps?*
- * *Where might you have limited your own thinking or growth? Where have you widened it?*
- * *Which steps are the result of you taking charge and claiming your own gifts, your own identity?*
- * *Do any steps invite you to imagine a future step?*

Play...

- * *Take one step and link it to what you do in your classroom or in your work*
- * *Do this with a close friend and switch places -- what narrative does your friend tell about your life? How is it the same? Different?*
- * *Do it again after reading a favorite poem or something that you do to shift your mindset - what steps come to mind then?*