**WANDERING MAP ACTIVITY** (good for exploration of career, identity, goals)

Origin: adopted from Katherine Brooks’ book called ***You Majored in What?  Mapping Your Path from Chaos to Career***

Materials: Students will be provided large sheets of white paper and markers to participate in the Wandering Map Activity (adopted from Katherine Brooks’ book called *You Majored in What?  Mapping Your Path from Chaos to Career*).  
  
**Creating the Map:**  
  
On a large sheet of paper, start thinking about all the interesting and/or significant things you’ve done, or that have happened to you. Go back as far in your life as you wish. Have you had unique jobs or taken unusual classes? Did you have a memorable summer experience? What are you most proud of? Do you have hobbies you’ve pursued for a while? What honors have you earned? What successful experiences can you recall? Consider writing down things like objects, events, classes, jobs, etc.  
  
Write down your thoughts- anything that comes to mind. No explanations are needed, just write down **key words, short phrases, or draw pictures**.  
  
As you write things down, do not try to organize them. Write or draw them, draw a circle around them, and keep going. You can write down any number of items. Don’t worry about appearance, spelling, etc., and don’t censor your thoughts.  
  
**Identifying Categories (at least 5):**  
  
Looking at your map, identify items that may fit into a category. Notice what things have in common: jobs, vacation spots, friends, classes, creativity, sports, etc. Then, using the markers, crayons, or colored pencils, draw lines on the map connecting the separate categories (or circled events).

1. Are you surprised by the list of categories?
2. Are there categories you weren’t expecting to see? Is there a pattern to your categories?
3. Does one category have more items than another?

**Identifying Themes and Threads:**  
  
Look at your map again, ignoring the categories that you’ve identified. Look more closely.

* *Do you see a thread that follows you from elementary school through college and beyond?*
* *Is there a pattern to the types of positions you’ve held?*
* *What might some of your seemingly disparate experiences have in common?*
* *What did you learn or what strengths did you acquire by pursuing a particular activity? (e.g. leadership, teamwork, practice/discipline, writing, risk taking, working with children, physical/hands-on work)*

*Some possible themes are:*

Adventure – taking risks, trying new things  
Creativity – self-expression, ideas as in art and music  
Family – nurturing, children, family gatherings  
Health – exercise and eating well  
Independence -- freedom and autonomy  
Leadership – organizing, inspiring  
Learning – acquiring knowledge, life-long learning  
Physical Work – using your hands, building  
Security – safety, stability  
Spirituality – practicing religion meditating  
Wealth – acquiring money, economic security

**Reflection:  
*Take some time to journal about your Wandering Map. What were your primary themes and how are they important to you? What are some feelings you experienced as you wrote your initial list? What surprises you? Would you predict the outcome?***