

Body Mapping

Body Mapping is the process of tracing your body outline along a giant sheet of paper. Participants answer guiding questions based on reflection and describe their sentiments in an arts-based way. Body Mapping is inspired by Cuerpo-Territorio, an indigenous based pedagogy from the Xinka women in Guatemala. Cuerpo-Territorio (Body Territory) began within indigenous spaces and developments in feminismo comunitario in Guatemala. What started as a conceptualization of defense for women facing violence, especially sexual violence, has expanded to the practice and process of understanding the body as a territory in connection to the land (Cabnal 2020). Cuerpo-Territorio is connected to the land and thrives on ancestral healing from our mothers, aunts, grandmothers, and so forth. Despite starting as a process centered on women, I like to believe there is a plurality to the concept as well. Bodies, that include gender non-conforming individuals are part of this process, even men. However, what seems rather obvious to me, is not always understood by the daily capitalist activities that remain entrenched in this society. * **Music Education power point attached**

In the pursuit of academia, there is a prioritization of written documents that often leave little space for creativity. Body-Mapping offers an opportunity for students in academic spaces to engage in body, land, and territory reflection while considering who they are as leaders and beings. Body Mapping can be used as a motivating leadership exercise and class ice-breaker. Students have a life-sized body map traced using a 48x200 sheet of white poster paper. For students who might prefer not to trace their bodies, a handheld 8x11 size paper is available so they may participate and engage equally. I incorporated this component out of awareness and respect toward students who might not feel comfortable tracing their bodies in a life-size way. I developed a series of guiding questions that aim to have students ask themselves who they are, how they would describe where they come from, what their aspirations and desires entail, and more. The guiding questions function as a working document that evolves with every Body-Mapping group. It is meant to function as a living document where questions change as conversations about identity fluctuate. Having conducted this activity in various academic classroom settings that range from elementary to undergraduate education, I have noticed the intrigue and energetic engagement Body Mapping has with its participants.

Therefore, the workshop I created emphasizes creative and artistic expression. Participants are encouraged to use mixed media materials and tools to demonstrate their answers to the guiding questions in the exercise. Scrap pieces of paper, magazine clippings, ribbons, colorful construction paper, beads, feathers, and thread are among the materials that can be used. This practice offers hands-on expression often lost in the collegiate academic setting and connects strongly to the conference theme of critical making. At the end of the workshop, participants may place their body maps against a wall for others to see in a “gallery walk style,” where they may engage with viewers and provide context to their maps or leave it up to artistic

interpretation.

Body-Mapping acts as a reminder to participants that reflection on embodied experiences should not be neglected. Our bodies speak to us, both about ideas and aspirations for the future or the kinds of generational traumas we have faced in the past. How do we show that and describe that with creative materials and tools? Simultaneously, I believe Body-Mapping in this process offers an opportunity to engage with indigenous pedagogy. It is important to speak about Cuerpo-Territorio with students and the process of returning to our relationship with land and territory.

Instructions to students: In this body-mind map, I want you to share your story. Be creative as possible, feel free to draw, color, and paste images. The goal is to describe who you are in this body-mind map. (Teacher is the facilitator that will go through all questions one by one. Changes can be made as well pertaining to the course and objective)

Guiding Questions

1. Write down your name anywhere on your body map. What do you like people to call you? How do YOU spell it? How do YOU pronounce it? Do you have any nicknames? or specific ways of spelling?
2. What are your hobbies? What kinds of activities do you like to participate in? Draw them on your body map and make sure to place the drawing near whatever body parts are used.
3. Loaded question: Where are you from? Think in terms of space, city, or any location that YOU feel represents where you are from. This can be cultural too. Maybe you're from many places? What does that look like?
4. Let's talk about food. What kinds of foods or snacks do you like to eat? Be specific! Where would you describe this in your body?
5. Languages? What languages do you speak?
6. What about pain? Have you ever been heartbroken? Ex-partner? Unrequited love? How would you describe that?
7. What is your relationship to your body?
8. Physical pain? Ever broken a bone? Where?
9. What is your relationship to spirituality?
10. What stresses you out? Too much homework?
11. What brings you peace? What are some things that make you feel relaxed and with yourself? I.e. reading a book, playing an instrument, bubble baths? What are some spaces that break you peace or make you feel relaxed?
12. Family? Who are you within your family? Brother, sister, child, parent? Feel free to describe your family.
13. What is your relationship to the natural environment?
14. Who are your ancestors? What is your relationship with them?
15. What do you want? (Aspirations? Goals? Tangible or fantasy? Money? Graduation? College? New iphone?)
16. What makes you angry? How would you describe that? What annoys you?
17. What "belongs" to you?
18. What brings you joy? Feel free to dive into memories.

19. Where would you like to travel to if given the opportunity?
20. What kind of music do you listen to? Or silence?
21. What does community look like to you?
22. What does solidarity look like to you?
23. What do you dream about?

- Attached is a printable version of the body map for students to use. This is incorporated when doing an online class. I also provide this as an option for students who might not be comfortable being traced. Students are also encouraged to draw their own smaller-scale versions. All bodies are different and exceptional!

Materials for larger-scale version (Besides the giant white paper, materials work for smaller scale)

Materials:

1) Roll of white or brown paper

https://www.amazon.com/Bulletin-Runner-Wrapping-Painting-Packing/dp/B07PYM1TDK/ref=sr_1_7?crid=TKS0ZZB7XZAR&keywords=Roll%2Bof%2Bwhite%2Bpaper&qid=1645575372&srefix=roll%2Bof%2Bwhite%2Bpaper%2Caps%2C141&sr=8-7&th=1

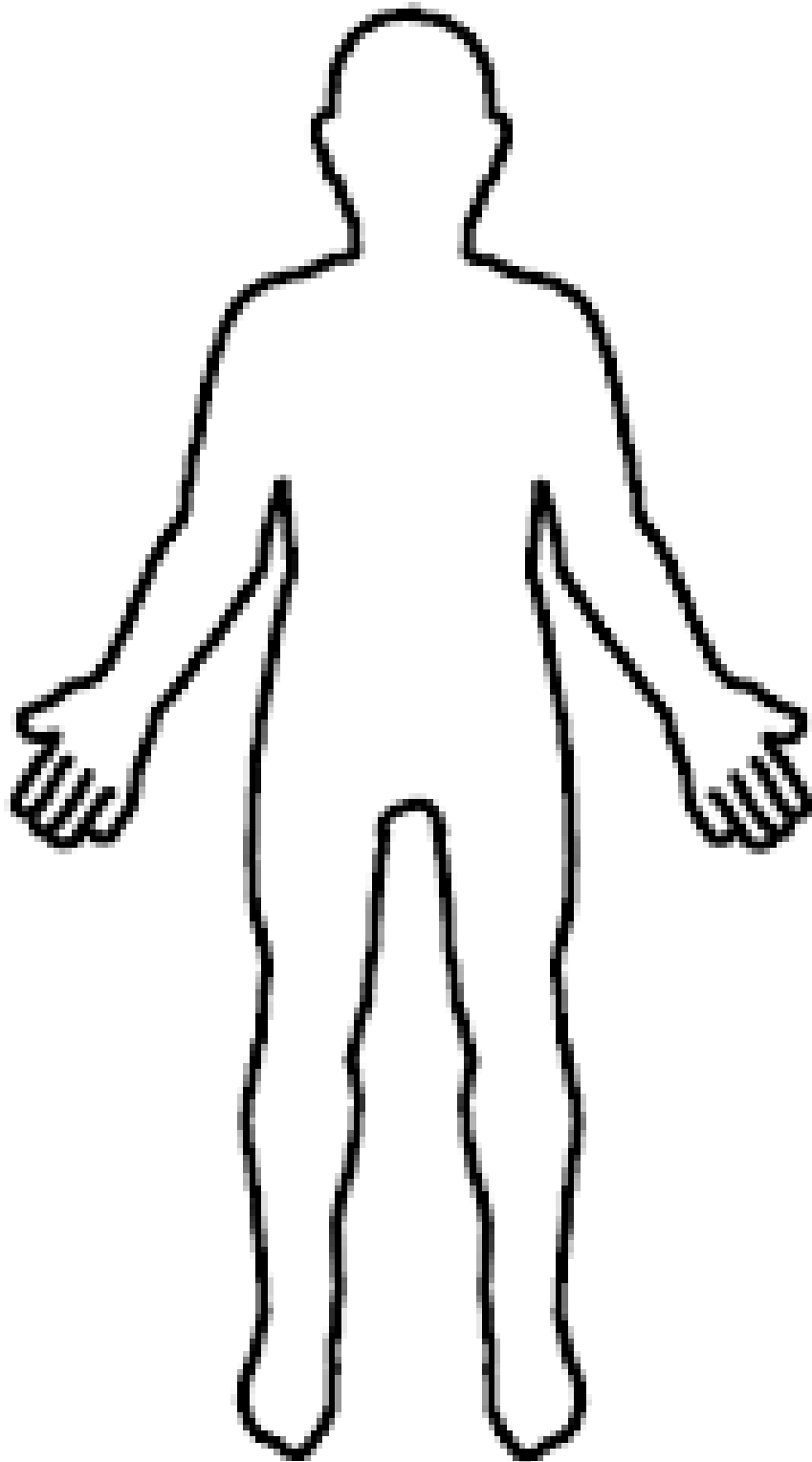
2) Scissors (I figured we could borrow from the school or classrooms?)

3) Color pencils/crayons (3-4 packs)

4) Colorful markers (6 packs)

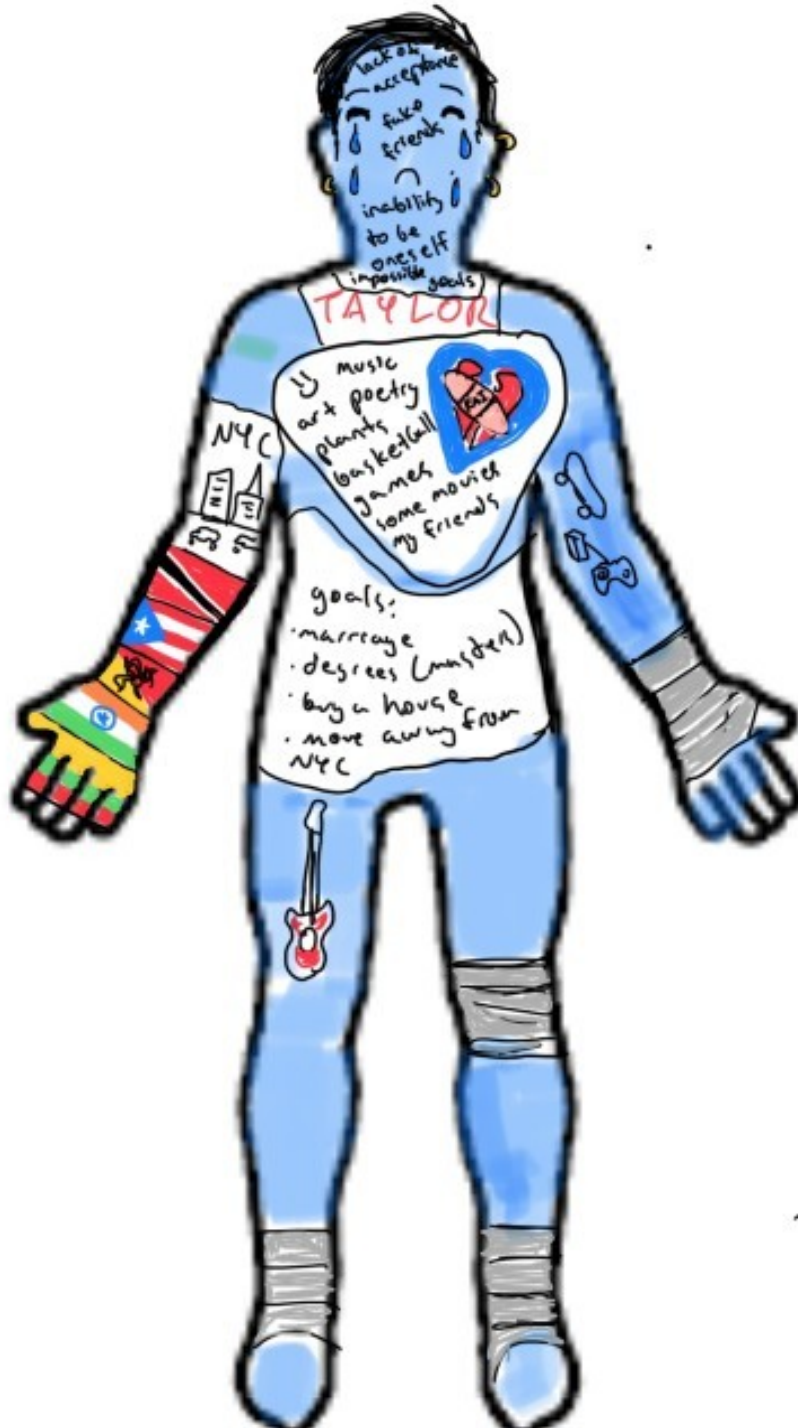
5) Magazines, newspapers, construction paper (colorful), various assortment of crafts (found in dollar stores)

6) Tape (masking or blue works) 2-3



Examples:

1. WILLIAM





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