

This program seeks to gather, center and prioritize our Indigenous, queer, and gender diverse relatives in affirming and culturally-rooted spaces to create community, solidarity and foster community pride. With the workshops and activities you will engage with one another through digital media, the arts, traditional Indigenous practices and medicines. This program is deeply rooted in community, relationship building and it explores a number of topics relevant to our 2SLGBTQIA+ relatives. It draws upon the strengths of various learning styles, content mediums and ways of being.

## Curriculum Design

This curriculum is designed with the recognition of the distinct seasons and stages of life that have always been important to our Peoples. The life stages honored within this structure are an adaptation of Native Wellness Institute's (NWI) Gathering of Native Americans (GONA) curriculum. In adapting this model to our Two Spirit community, we reimagined the West as Becoming, a concept analogous but distinct from Mastery because of the emphasis on transition so central to our Two Spirit experiences in today's world. Each season/direction will feature facilitated discussion to engage young people around key topics through interactive dialogue and activities in the virtual space, and exploration of the topics through mixed medium arts activities. Speakers and facilitators will be selected from the community for their knowledge, wisdom, and experience.

Join us as we honor each of the seasons and lift up the incredible and resilient lives of the young Two Spirit people in our community.

## A note from the creators:

We are excited and thrilled that you are engaging in our program curriculum. This was created out of the desire to dream and envision spaces that are for us and by us, as 2S LGBTQIA+ community. This was developed in Seattle Washington, the beautiful Pacific Northwest. This curriculum is meant to be place based and you will notice that reflected in the content. We encourage you to adapt our activities to your communities, to your land, songs, plant medicines and cultural knowledge. Our content is meant to be a guide to explore, discover and learn with elements that are relevant to you and the communities you live in. The content of this curriculum is a reflection of our diverse team; intertribal, intergenerational, 2S LGBTQIA+, non-binary, trans and gender diverse. Our stories, lived experience, professional experience, community organizing and educational background are woven into the content and activities that you will see throughout. We facilitated this curriculum in its entirety over the course of a year. We intended to offer this in person, but because of the pandemic we moved to virtual. You can facilitate this as a whole, or opt to do the sessions individually. Please feel free to use this curriculum as you or your community need. We hope that it offers space to be authentic, intentional, and present in who you are, and who your community is as 2S LGBTQIA+ relatives.

We share our knowledge with open hearts and giving spirits. We ask that you steward this information in a good way and acknowledge us as you share this out. Please keep the core content, definitions and workshop structure in its original form. If you have any questions, concerns or need support in facilitating any portion of this please reach out to us via email, [gatheredinthisplace@gmail.com](mailto:gatheredinthisplace@gmail.com). We are honored to share this with community and we hope it brings you joy, as it did for us.

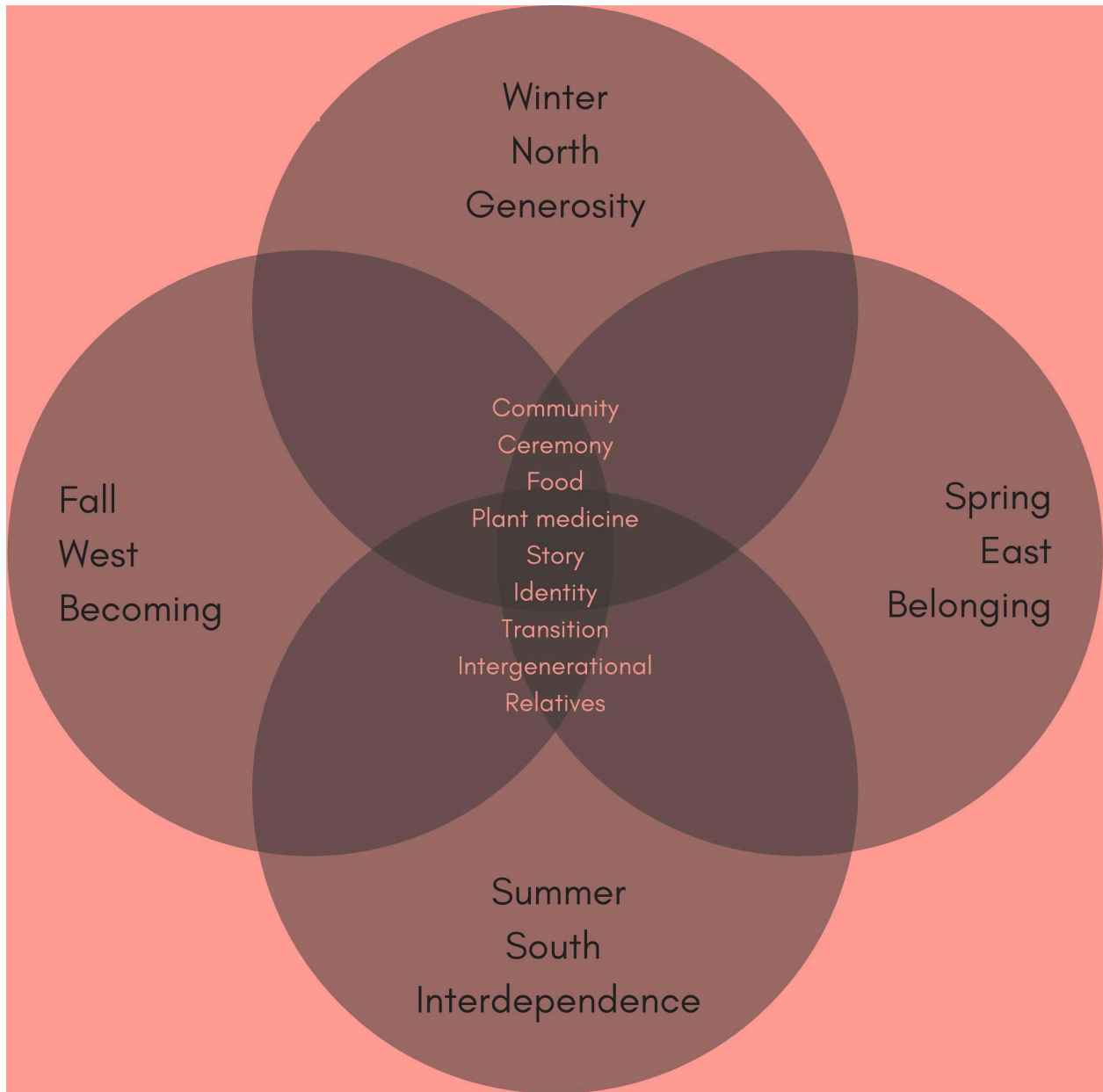
With gratitude,

Hank Cooper | Cherokee

Raven Two Feathers | Cherokee, Seneca, Cayuga, Comanche

Itai Jeffries | yesah / Occaneechi

Shawn Peterson | Nuuchah-nulth



## Guiding Principles

**Tradition:** Tradition refers to the ways in which we (re)member the practices, ceremonies, medicines, songs, stories, languages, belief systems, and ways of being that have sustained our families, communities, and Nations since time immemorial. As our people have existed since Creation and have long adapted to changes in our lands, waters, and peoples, traditions may be ancient or experienced within recent memory, but all are important for their abilities to help us to survive and thrive on Mother Earth and to walk in balance with our Creator and many Relations.

**Creative Expression:** The identity of Native cultures survives through artistic expression by creating our own spaces to gather, practice and experiment with various mediums. When our youth expresses themselves creatively, the continuation of Native Art is able to exist through contemporary forms, practices, and often political/social climate. Encouraging the evolution of the artist and their work as it relates to their own individual cultural identities and backgrounds is paramount as we are a multi-faceted people that challenge colonial ways of boxing in and mainstream categorization. Creative expression for our youth promotes the growth of artistic and emotional development by allowing the artist to draw on, embody, and (re)create traditional practices within their own tribal knowledge while existing and moving through the contemporary world as an American artist. Our youth create the traditional Native art of tomorrow.

**Community Solidarity:** Community solidarity is an active commitment by individuals to choose mutual care and recognition of one another's needs and abilities in order to allow each person's best self to shine. We do this by holding each other accountable to being our most genuine, vulnerable selves while knowing there are many layers of complexity that we carry. Community solidarity allows us to confront individual and systemic aspects of our lives with the support needed to create radical positive change.

**Social change:** Social change is the transformation of cultures and ideas over time. Collective activities like movements can bring change to existing schools of thought. We are actively engaging in change daily in our lives. A conscious act of remembering our sovereignty and our ability to enact change collectively. Continuing to exist as Indigenous and Two Spirit people defies hundreds of years of colonial genocide. We engage in and enact social change to Indigenize and (re)member our ways of being.

## Winter ❄️

**Winter/North Generosity:** Winter is a powerful and ceremonial time for many of our People. It is a time for slowing down, engaging in introspection, and listening to story, family, elders, and stillness. Winter comes with traditions of sharing, giving, and receiving. Generosity is a cornerstone of Indigeneity. Wealth and respect are measured by one's contributions to their people and their lands. We give generously with the understanding that any one of us are only as healthy, happy, prosperous, or successful as those among us with the least physical, emotional, or spiritual resources.

## Session 1- (Re)Membering Traditional Two Spirit Stories

### **Focus:**

This session features teachings about the significance of winter across tribal Nations. Story is ceremony and winter is a ceremonial time. It is a time to listen, still, and protect your medicine. It is a time to honor Elders and our Ancestors. We will be sharing traditional stories about Two Spirit traditions and teachings, and present the concepts of (re)membering and blood memory as strengths inherent to our communities.

*We encourage you to share your stories and invite others from your community to share their stories with the group during this activity*

### **Activity:**

Go over our definition of this season with a group. Discussion with all participants.

Guiding Questions for discussion:

- What does Winter mean to you? What does it mean to your community?
- What does Winter have to teach us?
- What did you hear in the shared stories?
- How do you see their teachings in your life?
- What do they teach us about Two Spirit medicine?

## Session 2- (Re)Creating Our Own Two Spirit Stories

### **Focus:**

Reflect on the concept of (re)membering. Discuss how teachings, meanings, and knowledge comes back when we walk in spirit, prayer, and community because we live as extensions of our ancestors embodied.

If you could tell a story, what would it be (because you can)?

### **Activity:**

For the activity, divide the participants into smaller groups (size will depend on how many participants you have). Symbols, themes, meanings, and ideas can be woven together into a new short story. The group combines and shares their stories with the larger group. We will all discuss common themes across the stories and reflect as a group.

## Session 3- Songs That Carry Us

### **Focus:**

Teaching about songs and how they connect to storytelling. Discuss protocols for how songs are (re)membered, learned, and shared.

*Reach out to those in your own community and invite them to share songs and the stories behind them. Take this opportunity to learn a new song and share it with community if possible*

**Activity:**

Protocols and traditions discussed by guest speakers, followed by the presentation of a Two Spirit song from guest speakers. If time remains, the group will reflect on the importance of song as prayer storytelling and spirit in our community. This connects back to Winter as it is the time to share story, song, and ceremony.

**Session 4- Self Care in the Time of Stillness****Focus:**

Group discussion on self-care, self-love, and community care/love. Participants will collectively explore how we take care of ourselves and community, and share tips/strategies with one another.

**Activity:**

Making medicines and/or art to facilitate conversations about taking care of ourselves. We will be setting aside what we make for community, and exploring how gifting can be an act of self-care.

*Take time in this activity to connect with place and make medicines with your plant relatives that are meaningful to you and your communities. Use this time to share about their uses and any stories that are associated with them. Our intent with this activity is to connect with our plant relatives and make medicines that can support our self-care and community-care.*

*Create art together as well in this session to practice cultural ways and to use art as a way of self-care and to slow down and be present*

Guiding questions for discussion:

- What are our medicines?
- How is generosity a medicine?
- What does self-care look like for you?
- What does community care look like for you?

**Session 5- Storytelling in the Digital Age****Focus:**

We will discuss the process of creating and telling stories, and what sort of decompression comes from recognizing how we all get through the things that occur in our lives. We will explore (as a group) ways to approach oral storytelling in the digital age and get our stories out to our relatives for whom they are medicine.

**Activity:**

Learn to understand and talk about what is coming to mind for each participant as they contemplate their own lives and how they might intersect with the podcast speakers.

## Guiding Questions

- What is a moment when you were proud of yourself (that might help you or someone else get through what they are experiencing now)?
- What is something that you are going through right now?

Story-telling/stories as recognizing the past and future, and creating them in the present digital age.

Other potential questions:

- What did you learn when you were telling your story?
- What lessons are there in what we've done so far as a group?

End by discussing the transition to spring

## Spring

Spring/East Belonging: East, the direction that blesses us with new days and blessings, is a time for birth. Young ones learn how they are related to all of our relatives, and our elders learn from their playfulness and new ways of seeing our world. Spring is the time for nurtured play and exploration as we emerge from our time of contemplation and reflection in winter. We are allowed this space by the sense of and striving towards belonging, within ourselves and with others. In this sense, we are better able to communicate our place and commonalities with one another and move forward collectively and with intertwined support.

## Session 1- Seeding Ideas

### **Focus:**

We will send a basic garden starter kit, ancient squash and Cherokee purple tomato. We will discuss how to raise and care for them. Just as they require adequate water, warmth, light, care, what do those things look like for participants.

*We invite you to create a garden kit that is local to your area. If creating garden kits isn't accessible, an alternative can be to visit local cultural keeps and producers and learn about traditional foods in your community*

### **Activity:**

Go over the garden kits and discuss Spring and the lesson from the kits.

### Guiding Questions:

- What do you need?
- How will we tend to this garden?
- How do we tend to our garden?
- What do we need to thrive?
- What happens if you don't get it?
- How do we support one another?

### Session 2- Plants We Call Home

#### **Focus:**

This is an exploration of common medicine plants here in the Pacific Northwest. We will draw on the GRuB SEL (PNW) Plant teachings with a selection of 4 common PNW plant medicines and corresponding cards/SEL curriculum materials.

#### **Activity:**

We will have each participant state which one of the four medicines they relate to and why. We come together and talk about how our medicines and walks complement one another. Connect back to Speaker's story from Winter session 1.

#### Guiding questions:

- Which of the plant medicines best represents you? Why?
- What does our medicine and its complementary nature say about our village?

*This session focused on our plant relatives in the Seattle area. We invite you to explore the plant relatives in your area and community to ground you in this activity. Below are a couple of links to the resources that are referenced here.*

[SEL Grub resource](#)

[Grub website](#)

### Session 3- Picturing a Healthy Community (Part 1 of 2)

#### **Focus:**

[Part 1] PHOTO VOICE SESSION- Belonging and building into interdependence through photo voice activity. We will explore each participant's vision for a healthy and whole Two Spirit community.

#### **Activity:**

Have participants take four photos with the prompt.

Prompt- What does a healthy community look like to you?

We will collectively share/listen/learn from each other's perspectives as our photos are brought to the larger group.

#### Session 4- Picturing a Healthy Community (Part 2 of 2)

**Focus:**

[Part 2] ZINE CREATION FROM PHOTO VOICE-

**Activity:**

Taking the ideas, sentiments, concepts, words, and actual photos, we will create Zine material based on the prompt.

Prompt- What does a healthy community look like to you?

#### Session 5- Weeding Our Gardens

**Focus:**

EXPLORING INVASIVE PLANTS AND TOXINS- We will explore invasive plants and toxic environmental conditions in the PNW, and explore how this relates to our lives/communities.

*Feel free to explore and discuss plants that are local to your area and community.*

**Activity:**

Group discussion connecting invasive plants and toxins to our relationships.

Guiding Questions:

- What invasive plants can you name in your area?
- What are some environmental hazards near where you live?
- What belongs in a space/context and what doesn't?
- What is healthy/unhealthy? Balanced and unbalanced?
- What happens when a medicine is taken out of its context and used inappropriately?

One's strengths can be used in ways that are unhealthy. We will use this as a platform to talk about healthy relationships. [If time allows, we will draw on the "[Nettle Saves the People](#)" story]

"Nettle Saves the People" Hyperlink: [vimeo.com/90379255](https://vimeo.com/90379255)

Feel free to listen and explore these stories linked here, as well as incorporating any traditional stories meaningful to you and your community.

#### Session 6- Fruits of Our Labor

**Focus:**

As we transition toward responsibility developed in Summer, we take a moment to acknowledge the gifts that came in the time of new blessings/Spring. The work that began in

spring begins to pay off. While it is great to have plenty and to create things, we explore what responsibilities we have for what we create/manifest.

**Activity:**

Prepare a light meal or dish with traditional ingredients (sent to participants in advance). The recipe will also be shared with all participants. We talk about the balance of fun/exploration, and responsibility/feeding our Relations.

**Summer** 

Summer/South Interdependence: The South brings heat, rapid growth, exploration, adolescence, and learning about the roles that sustain our communities. Summer is a time for us to reflect on our relationships to community, the land, and our nonhuman relatives. We are deeply interconnected and this kinship helps us learn and understand our responsibilities to one another and All Our Relations. This is a time for reciprocity, to give back, and to continue the circle.

Session 1- What is Home?

**Focus:**

This is an exploration of land, space, and the meaning of home.

**Activity:**

Group Discussion

Guiding Questions:

- What does home mean to you?
- How do you connect to the lands you come from? The lands you live in?
- What do we honor/celebrate land/space?
- What are our responsibilities to the land? What do we do to heal the land? (and therefore ourselves?)
- What comes with repairing our relationship with the land in terms of ceremonies and practices?

Session 2- (Re)Membering Our Locality

**Focus:**

We explore land and place by diving into local history. Specifically, we will hear an elder(s) talk about activism regarding important historical sites in the area. [feature local speakers/elders for first half]

**Activity:**

Presentation by a local elder (first half). The second half is a group discussion.

Guiding Questions:

- What are we fighting for?
- How do we create Indigiqueer space? Who are the folks who have and are doing that?
- What is Indigiqueer liberation?
- What is body sovereignty and how does it connect to sovereignty of the land?

*This section is meant to connect you to place and the stories of this place. To invite your elders and knowledge keepers to share their stories of resistance, hope and strength. This is an opportunity to ground yourself and participants in the stories of place, to know the story of the land*

**Session 3- Lifting Our Voices (Part 1 of 2)****Focus:**

Part one of podcast construction. We will create space to reflect on our journeys so far as Indigiqueer people and our hopes for the future. Clarity can come from making sense of our narratives, Individually and collectively.

**Activity:**

Refer to “Structure for a Podcast” in Appendix.

**Session 4- Lifting Our Voices (Part 2 of 2)****Focus:**

Part two of podcast construction. Speaker will walk participants through the technical skills of interviewing and recording.

**Activity:**

Participants will record segments of audio for the podcast. Refer to “Structure for a Podcast” in Appendix A.

**Session 5- Coming of Age****Focus:**

We will discuss coming of age ceremonies and their significance. Guest speaker will talk about their Navajo and San Juan Southern Paiute Traditions in the first half. In the second half, we will unveil the podcast which will serve as a coming of age ceremony for group participants. We will celebrate and acknowledge the work/medicine in the podcast and honor everyone who contributed.

**Activity:**

Guest speaker (first half) + podcast release as coming of age ceremony.

## Fall 🍁

Fall is a time for manifesting our medicines and unique gifts to align with our teachings, authentic selves, and our visions for liberated Indigenous communities. Manifesting our most powerful selves can require transforming and creating space to be in our bodies, minds, voices, communities, and worlds. We are all in a constant state of becoming through our awareness of our own needs, the needs of our communities/Nations, and the future of all Peoples. Fall also reminds us that shedding of the old is inevitable and teaches us that there is rebirth after death and therefore in a constant cycle. We embrace and respect the realities of death and transition as not to be feared but as a part of life, rebirth, and becoming anew.

### Session 1- Honor and Harvest Your Growth

#### **Focus:**

Speaker will talk about the time of harvest, harvest protocols, and ceremonies that originate in the place where they come from. We will discuss what we have all been growing/tending, and what we are harvesting this Fall. We will introduce and discuss the theme of Becoming.

#### **Activity:**

We will run the discussion as a virtual talking circle.

Guiding questions:

- What are you harvesting? How have you been growing/tending it? What are your responsibilities?
- What does Becoming mean to you?

*Invite your community to share the stories of food, of medicine of the land of your people*

### Session 2- Teachings of the Equinox

#### **Focus:**

Equinox is September 22nd and will just have passed. We discuss the meaning of Fall and equinox. In this session, we will have a creative arts prompt so that students can illustrate (written story or visual arts) their interpretation of the Equinox.

#### **Activity:**

Written/visual creative prompts in development

### Session 3- Love & Protection

**Focus:**

Teach the Love and Protection (Rose Hip) lesson from SEL (Rosehip Medicines- SEL p. 48-49). Together we can make one of the medicines in the curriculum.

Resources: [SEL book](#)

**Activity:**

Rose hip medicine making workshop, following GRuB SEL guide. Rose Hips (in appropriate form) will be sent to participants ahead of time.

### Session 4- Web of Trauma, Web of Strength

**Focus:**

We will contemplate both 2S trauma and our resiliencies. Each participant will complete the trauma web exercise developed by NWI on their own (sent ahead of time). Then, the Speaker will present 2SLGBTQ+ resiliency data from NPAIHB. Together, we will discuss ways that some of the lived and (re)membered traumas from the group manifest as resiliencies. [We will make sure to make clear that folx only need discuss things they are comfortable mentioning with the group, and no-one is expected to share their web.]

**Activity:**

NWI Trauma Web; facilitated group discussion

### Session 5- Sacred Space

**Focus:**

We each have a bundle, our own medicine that we've been blessed with. When we are transitioning toward adulthood, and picking up our bundles, we learn that all bundles come with responsibility. In our cultures, responsibility to others, to community, is as important as one's own wellness. Our community health requires our health, and we require our communities.

**Activity:**

In this session, we will pair off participants in the first half into breakout rooms (2-3 per room, wide age gaps). We will practice sacred witnessing. In the second half, we will do a VIRTUAL yarn exercise.

### Session 6- Building Your Altar

**Focus:**

We will acknowledge both the transition toward winter and the fact that we are becoming keepers of our own bundles. We will do an activity about altar building. Participants will have received packages with key altar materials, and everyone will also engage in show and tell for

one item significant to them that they are placing, or have already placed on their own altars. In the second half, everyone will prepare a holiday gift for another participant...something for their altar.

**Activity:**

Alter exercise; show and tell; gift making for holidays

**Structure for a Podcast (or other time based creative medium)**

From Summer Sessions 3 and 4, "Lifting Our Voices"

A lot of talk/ background and sharing before we even touch equipment (if we feel it's necessary)

Podcasts, films, and other artforms that come to fruition over time are all just structures for stories and expression. Stories that have come to me initially were geared towards film (what I studied in a Western capacity) but as I've been exposed to more ways of telling stories and provided space to explore without ridicule for automatically being good at the artform, it's opened my eyes to all the ways I can express myself. I re-applied myself to creating a soundscape back in 2019 for an Indigenous art show (I'd done a couple in college), released a zine/graphic novel/comic that I did with a highschool friend in February, did a podcast with a local non-profit, and am working on my second VR experience.

- How do you like hearing and taking in stories (e.g. tv, film, podcasts, theatre, dance)? What do you like about that form?
- Do you like making what you like experiencing? What overlaps and what doesn't?

The best thing and hardest thing that has helped me keep going is believing I'm worthy and the work is as good as others say it is. From my fear of the imperfections has grown the belief that, much like humans, art can never be perfect and keep its personality. Thus, I clean it up and get it gussied up to be presented to the public, but I don't expect it to be a hole-less spongebob (picture provided for reference). This isn't to say I'm not still confronted by these fears, but that I have the tools to work through the doubts.



when u first start talking to  
someone and u act all proper  
bc u ain't sure when u can  
start being weird

- What are some things that hold you back from exploring or making things?
- What gets you so pumped that you wanna share it with the world?
- What aspects of yourself have you never seen portrayed?

-Exercise option: go introduce yourself to either a rock or flower, tell them about you with as few inhibitions as possible. Or go talk to a pet or an inanimate object if you can't get outside. How did you talk to them? What did you tell them, why? How did it make you feel (before and after)? Why that being and why those topics?

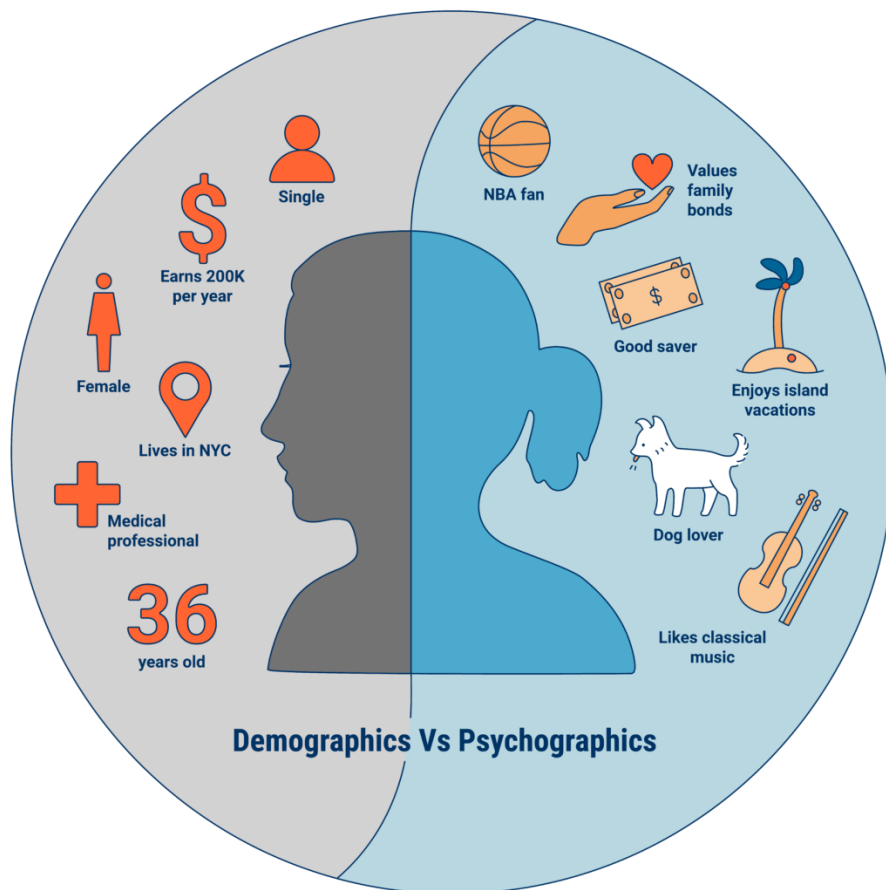
Recording can be weird, especially hearing your own voice for extended periods and possible dysphoria from it. The benefit though is that no one can see you, you are literally a voice in the ether. I found the acute attention sound requires to be a more engaging form for me and not as "out there" as being in front of or part of the camera team (I started off in film production sound). People literally are choosing to listen to you.

-Exercise option: Step out of your own self for a hot second. What do you think someone would find interesting or intriguing about you? Why? Who is the person you envisioned?

In any art, we are thinking about the message/theme we are trying to convey, then who we are trying to reach, and how to have the former stay as true to its intentions while also being engaging to people. We have to think through how we made the same journey we are introducing them to now. What sort of base information would need to be included or are they for the most part up to speed on the topic? Don't dumb down what you are saying unless you are trying to make something an "introductory" or 101 piece. For my zine/gn/comic, I walked through my life in as genuine of a manner as I could (while of course editing it down for

consistency and clarity) and including information foremost for people just starting in on questioning or beginning their journey, and secondarily for the people around them.

Exercise option: who do you want to hear what you want to talk about? Is there any background information you need to weave in for them to understand? It may be helpful to come up with your “ideal” person with a mix of demographics and psychographics. Narrowing down your audience is the best way to reach them, because from that one person you just made up, there are thousands of actual people that fit the bill perfectly.



Now, for the recording bit and all the considerations as to speaking and where you film

### **Gear:**

For cheap recorders, and by cheap I mean \$120, the Zoom H1n (handheld, thus portable recorder) is a good pick or you could do a USB mic for the computer (Blue's Snowball Ice for \$50). However it would tie them to the computer or other device that has a full size USB port, limiting when and where they could use it.

Either way, maybe also providing them with headphones (not earbuds as it is generally easier to place where sound is in a virtual environment, as well as easier to block outside noises). The cheapest actually decent headphones start around \$50 dollars but last years. A good student level while also semi professional are the **Audio-Technica ATH-M20x** (\$50). Industry standard for film production are the **Sony MDR-7506** (\$100) but not necessarily fine tuned for podcasting. Another brand I trust for headphones are AKG, Beyerdynamic, and Grado, but we will probably be going for the cheaper on ear (instead of over ear) headphones. I would heartily recommend Sony headphones (from my experience in the \$300 level) as they have lasted me nearly a decade. I would warn against their cheaper earbuds (\$30) as I had one of the buds fail on me after about 7 months. I've used the **Sony MDRZX110** before and they're....fine, but definitely feel cheap because they are (\$15). If you have the funds to get the ATH-M20x headphones or other headphones around the \$30-50 range, do that. If you do go looking for headphones, make sure they are over ear (doesn't sit on the ear) and closed back (won't leak out audio).