

Seven. I have an ACE score of 7. I thought it would be higher. Then I read about ACE scores and thought I should be dead already. But NO! I am still fighting and believe I have dealt with as much of my past as I want to. I've spent too many years in hard but effective therapy. Yet here I am again, seeing a weekly therapist to deal with my present.

I've had my share of physical issues. Pneumonia twice, allergies, broken back and surgery. Three of four people in my family are handicapped; we expected some bad news to come. I thought I had beat it until May 15, 2021 when I had an episode of TGA, transient global amnesia. In NY, with my husband. For 45 minutes.

I have had head injuries as a kid and an adult, but corticobasal degeneration, (CBD) I was not expecting. There are a constellation of symptoms but my primary issue is the damage to my auditory processing. Two of my scores are below the 20th percentile.

Maintaining balance is problematic. Thus I recently moved into the Vi to be sure I have care in the future and don't have to climb stairs. Falling has serious consequences for me. As a Parkinson's Plus disease, if I don't stretch every day, I won't be able to move my limbs. Breaking a leg or hip would significantly reduce my mobility.

The interesting point of CBD is that like ALS, the IQ remains intact. For me, my IQ and visual processing are very high. I just don't appear to be, given my auditory processing and word finding issues.

I haven't connected this with my childhood issues, but I can believe they are related. So what? That damage is done and the people involved are out of my life.

I have an amazing husband and wonderful children. I prefer to consider them and enjoy as much time as possible with them.

Today, health looks like this: I spend 90 minutes every day with a helper to get through my brain homework, stretching, and maintaining a sleep diary. My psychological work is to define my palliative care including determining when enough is enough. My daily therapeutic work is drawing.

Nearby you can see a sampling of my work. I will be sketching my family and friends. These will be part of my visual biography.

Health and Well-Being

Health is an important influence in shaping our lives. Our relationship to our bodies and minds may be shaped by family, cultural or religious traditions as well as celebrity and social media images.

In this theme we explore how, why, and what we think about our health and self-image. Our physical and mental health may be influenced by factors such as genetics, acute or chronic illness, diet, environmental exposures or access to health care.

- ☐ Has your health or the health of someone you know influenced your life path?
- ☐ How have your attitudes about your health and body been shaped?
- ☐ How comfortable have you been in your body during your lifetime?
- ☐ Have you taken steps over the years that have changed the way you feel about yourself?

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Probing Questions: These questions are designed to help reflect on your life and forgotten memories. They will help get you thinking and are not meant to all be answered. Some questions will bring more thoughts or memories to your mind than others. Write what comes to mind. Choose two pages to share.

1. How was your health when you were a baby, child and adult? Have illnesses or accidents changed the way you lived? Has the health of a friend or family member changed your life path and attitude towards health? In what ways? Are you aware of any genetic markers that could affect your health?

2. Growing up, who would you turn to when you were sick? What types of treatment would you seek?
3. Has healthcare accessibility been a barrier for you? Have you needed to postpone treatment due to lack of resources or health insurance? How has this changed over time in your life? How has this affected you? How has gender, skin color or economic status affected the way you received healthcare?
4. What ancestral stories affect your attitude towards health and wellbeing? How does your culture influence your approach to health and wellness? How has that changed with time? How does this impact your self-care today?
5. Did you or anyone in your family experience a trauma that influenced your trust in the medical establishment?
6. What does a healthy life look like to you? What is your role in achieving it? Does anyone in your family or community have healing powers or remedies for ailments?
7. What do you like about your body? What do you like about yourself? How comfortable are you in your body? What would you like to change and how?
8. What connection do you experience between your mind and body? How do you manage your stress? How have your stressors changed over time? Describe a stressful time in your life. How did it affect you? Where did you feel it in your body?
9. Have you ever made a conscious lifestyle change to improve your health? What prompted it? What was the impact?

10. Where do you feel the most whole? How have your workplace or neighborhood culture and environment affected your physical and mental health?
11. How has aging affected your health? How do you feel about your physical health today?

is a very broad topic and affects our lives from beginning to end. It's not just physical health but mental, and emotional. What comes up may focus on you, or a parent, sibling, partner, children, other loved ones or friends—the family we build around ourselves. I hope some of the 11 prompts (probing questions) that follow uncover important memories. I've also attached one handout and two links for TED talks that have a health theme. They're optional but may cue some long buried memories. In any case, write what comes. Enjoy the process. Here are the TED talk links:

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Regarding health, there's no topic that is more a part of your life from beginning to end. Our ideas, beliefs, thoughts, feeling about our health and well being direct much of our lives. Health, energy, strength/weakness, vulnerability, and vitality is central to every experience we have. We have expectations, judgments and responses to our own and other people's bodies and health. Others respond to our bodies, health, and well-being too. The reality of your relationship with your body and health has a significant impact on the choices you make. Take stock, pause, and reflect. What is there to notice?
