

# Culture - Narratives

## Personal and Collective Narratives

### Exploring and Comparing

This exercise will help you **identify differences and overlaps** between your personal stories and the broader narratives of your culture or community.

#### 1. Define the Focus

**Choose a theme** or area of life to explore, such as:

Success   Relationships   Identity   Work or career   Health & well-being

#### 2. Write Your Personal Narrative

**Reflect on** your own beliefs and assumptions about the chosen theme. Write down your answers to the following questions:

- **What do I believe** about this area of life?
- **What** stories or experiences **shaped** these beliefs?
- **How do I act** or make decisions based on these beliefs?

#### 3. Identify Collective Narratives

**Think about** the group, culture, or society you belong to **and write down** the shared narratives about the same theme. Ask yourself:

- **What** does this group **value** in this area?
- **What messages** do I hear from family, media, education, religion, or peers?

- **What behaviours** or choices **are celebrated**, and which are discouraged?

## 4. Compare and Contrast

Review your answers and consider:

- **Alignment:**  
Where do my personal beliefs match the collective narrative?
- **Tension:**  
Where do my beliefs or actions differ from the collective narrative?
- **Influence:**  
How has the collective narrative shaped my personal story?  
Have I internalised it, rejected it, or adapted it?

## 5. Reflect on Impact

Finally, **think about how** these narratives **affect your life**:

- **How do the similarities** between personal and collective narratives **support or empower me**?
- **How do the differences** create **conflict or limit** my choices?
- Are there collective narratives I want to challenge or step away from to better align with my authentic self?

## Optional Extension:

**If you feel creative**, try representing these narratives visually (e.g., through a diagram, collage, or artwork) to further explore the interplay between them.

**This exercise encourages you to notice the invisible** forces shaping your worldview while clarifying where your personal truth stands within or outside these cultural stories.