Tools for Living Democracy **CIVIC AUTOBIOGRAPHY WORKSHEET**



This worksheet helps users tease out and embrace the potentially hidden civic dimensions of their work.

CIVIC MOTIVATIONS: intentions and aspirations related to improving people's lives, solving public problems, or creating new resources for the common good.

What were your **civic motivations** in choosing your discipline, profession, major, or degree?

Examples:

I chose to become an engineer because there were so few women in the profession, and I wanted to help blaze a trail for other women.

I hope to become a doctor because I really like helping and supporting people at moments when they're feeling overwhelmed.

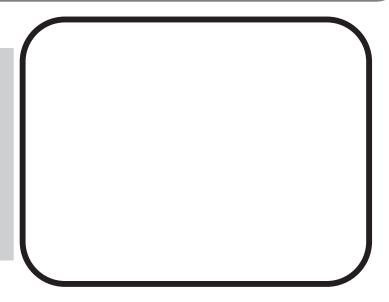
CIVIC INCLUSION: the intentional development of relationships that mitigate power imbalances and inspire a sense that you are a full participant (not merely an employee, apprentice, or customer).

How have you experienced and/or practiced **civic inclusion** in your discipline, profession, institution, or community?

Examples:

I didn't really start to feel included at my institution until I discovered and joined an informal network of LGBTQ faculty and staff. Some of the senior staff have become my mentors, and we're working to make our institution's culture more supportive.

Through student government I served on a campus committee that reviewed our dining services contract. The faculty and staff on the committee actually listened to me!



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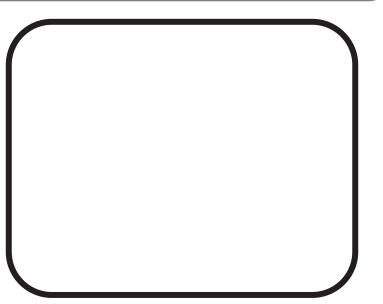
CIVIC HAVENS: settings in which people can connect authentically around shared values, interests, and experiences.

When and where have you experienced **civic havens** within your discipline, profession, institution, or community?

Examples:

I have served frequently as a faculty mentor for service trips. Every time I do it, I'm blown away by the opportunities to share stories and really connect with everyone involved.

As a returning student and woman of color, I felt marginalized in many campus settings. But the Women's Center has become my home, and the people who spend time there have become my people.



CIVIC AGENCY: the capacity to imagine an alternative future, coupled with the sense that you can create that future through collective work.

When and where have you experienced **civic agency**?

Examples:

My neighborhood association worked for years to advocate for the creation of a playground on public land near my home. I was part of the key meeting with the City Manager. Our success made me feel like the world was opening up for me.

At a student leadership retreat, I was invited to develop my own vision for positive change on campus. That was amazing; nobody had ever asked me to think that way before, or taken my ideas so seriously.

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CIVIC LEGACY: the lasting consequences of your contributions.

What do you want your **civic legacy** in your department, institution, discipline, profession, neighborhood, city, or nation to be?

Examples:

I want my colleagues to be as committed to caring, humane teaching practices as I am.

I want to raise awareness of mental health issues so nobody has to deal with the stigma I experienced when I first shared that I was anxious and depressed.

