

# What Are All the Different Groups You Belong To?

by David Tillman – September 2022

My spiritual coach and friend, Mike, and I were talking one day. He suggested that I take time to list all the groups I have belonged to throughout my life. Mike said, “These are your support people. You are closer to some more than others. What purpose do each of these groups serve in your life?”

Once I sat down and started to list all the groups I belong to (or did belong to) in my life I was amazed. I thought of Mike’s article “Navigating Our Many Worlds,” where he highlights eleven different “Worlds” we all navigate most of, or all, these throughout life.

THE WORLD OF ME -- Who am I?

THE FAMILY WORLD -- Where do I fit?

THE SCHOOL/PEER WORLD -- How do I cope with others and organizational demands?

THE PARTNER WORLD -- How do I maintain my own integrity and still adapt to my partner?

THE PARENT WORLD -- What skills are needed to raise this child?

THE GRANDPARENT WORLD -- How involved do I become?

THE WORK WORLD -- How can I be productive, make a living, and get along with others?

THE ADULT FRIEND WORLD -- Who are my people?

THE COMMUNITY MEMBER WORLD -- What is my social and political responsibility?

THE SPIRITUAL WORLD -- What is my relationship to the Divine?

THE ELDER WORLD -- How do I grow old and still maintain my sense of identity and worth?

What did we, or will, experience and learn, in each one of these “Worlds?”

I invite you to download the “**What Are All the Different Groups You Belong To**” worksheet. Take your time filling the worksheet out. Feel free to change it to better meet your needs. Read Mike’s “**Navigating Our Many Worlds**” for inspiration.

When you are done, take time to reflect on all the personal connections you have created in your life so far. Then sit alone, or with another trusted person, or a small group of trusted friends to talk about what you learned and feel as you reflect or talk about all the different groups you belong(ed) too. Here are four prompts to start your reflection:

**1: Share one thing that surprised you after writing about “What Are All the Different Groups You Belong To.”**

**2: Talk or write about one or two of your family, friends, or co-workers that you were very close to at the time and haven’t talked to or heard from them for many years. What happened?**

**3: What purpose do each of these groups serve in your life?**

(i.e., Family to love, support, care for, and encourage you in childhood and beyond. School/Peer to develop social connections and educational learning, etc. (see “Navigating Our Many Worlds.”))

**4: Looking at your list what do you notice about the types of groups and people you are involved with?**

(i.e., have you tended to be in groups/communities/friendships with family, high school groups, religious/spiritual community groups, post high school educational friends, co-worker groups, sports/arts/reading/etc. groups, don’t want or need to be part of groups, political/social justice groups, volunteer groups, exercise/fitness groups, etc. or you have developed a balance of many diverse groups and people).