

“I Love You Because” Heartstorming

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Some Thoughts:

- Try to find a quiet time and space to complete this process. It might take anywhere from 10-30 minutes.
- Be gentle: this can be a challenging activity for some people. It's OK, that is part of the process.
- Remember the only 2 rules: 1) No recognizable faces. 2) You must write the phrase “I Love You Because . . .” and then your reason.
- This is a great group activity. Don't be shy about inviting a friend or five to do this with you!

Envisioning Your Love

1. Get a pen and paper and simply write down a list, in no particular order, of the people that you love.
2. Pick two that you're inspired to create an ILYB image for. Pick one that you'd like to work on first.
3. Close your eyes, envision that person in front of you, and imagine that you are loving them as fully as you have ever done. Maybe they are doing something you love them for, maybe they just are standing there, maybe you see a favorite photo of them in your mind.
4. Imagine gently telling them all the reasons you love them. Maybe there are many, maybe just a few, maybe none come to mind and you are just with your love for them. Also imagine their delighted reaction as you express your love in whatever form you're comfortable with.
5. Slowly, open your eyes, take your pen and write or draw. It doesn't matter what. Maybe you had an image come to you: sketch that. Maybe lots of words came, write them down. Did you envision a place where you were telling them these things? It doesn't matter, but something probably came to you. This is not your final image, but simply the start of the process.
6. Pick the other person from your list and repeat steps 3-6.

Bringing Your Vision to Reality

- You might want to let this heartstorming session sit for a while. But don't neglect it for long! You may well lose the fire if you don't create your photo within a week.
- Once you have your idea, share it with a trusted friend or two. Tell them what you plan on creating. This will encourage you to actually go complete it!
- No vision is too small: if you end up writing your expression on a piece of paper and taking a photo of that you will have created something important.

- Some visions are too big! You may have big plans and want to hire a plane to write your phrase in the sky. That's great if this is within your budget and you have the time – but for most of us this is too ambitious. A good motto here is “Don't let perfect be the enemy of good.” This means just go do it and don't imagine that you'll create something perfect. Whatever you create will be valuable.

Technical Section

- Make sure your photo isn't too small. Images under 950 pixels on the long edge won't show up well on the web site. Larger is always better! Set your camera or phone to take the highest quality photo.
- Getting closer to the words you've written is better (literally and metaphorically!). Try to have the words big in the photo so that they are easy to read from a distance.
- I discourage Photoshop in the images. There is something rewarding in actually writing the text somewhere and taking a picture of it.
- Once you've created your image and are ready to share it go to www.ilyb.org!

Go forth and photograph! Express your love today!

With Love,

Alexander Warnow