**ABOUT THE BOOK OF ME**

The Book Of Me began in 1982 as a seventh grade English assignment of ten sections. I rediscovered my original yellow and orange folder six years later and decided it would be fun to tackle them again. Who knew I’d be doing it year after year since.

For the first couple of years, I completed my Book as that 7th grade assignment. Over the course of six years, I tweaked the content to reflect that of a young adult rather than a child. That version was self-published in 2008 under the title: “The Book of Me. A Yearly Reflection Of My Life.” Although I have added text to address our current world in the past ten years, this version retains the essence of that 1982 assignment in it’s simple and seemingly trivial questions, lists and situations. 2020 will mark my 33rd volume of The Book Of Me.

Before you get started, I ask one thing: Commit to writing one complete Book Of Me. After that, it’s totally up to you whether you retrace this path annually or never again. Either way. You’ll have a valuable place-keeper of who you are, what you feel and where you’re going from the date of this first Book of Me.

-A Arlandson

St. Paul, MN

September, 2019

**Guidelines**

Your Book Of Me is meant to be a conversation with yourself. It is about you, written by you and should be viewed by you and you alone. The Book of Me sections are meant to reflect and recount the who, what, why and when of a **complete** year. When you decide to start your Book of Me is up to you, but honor that start date by keeping it the same every year. The following aren’t so much rules, but rather guidelines I have discovered over the years that may help you complete your book of me.

Give Yourself A Deadline

But be realistic about it. I give myself a full month to complete my Book. Getting older and having work and life to attend to, I haven’t been able to finish it in a few days like I used to.

Get Comfortable

Find a quiet private place to write your Book of Me. Your best answers will come if you are able to work on it alone or with little distraction.

Answer The Questions In Order

It’s going to be tough but try not to skip around when writing you Book. Write from beginning to end.

Don’t Read Your Book

Once you have completed one section your curiosity is going to scream for you to go back and read it. That desire is natural—try not to give in. Don’t allow your inner-editor to take over tempting you to change some of your answers, as you may lose focus on the sections you still need to complete. Once you’ve completed a section, don’t review, don’t rewrite. One of the best things bout The Book of Me is going back to reading what you wrote the following year.

Don’t Share Your Book

The core of the Book of Me is YOU. No matter how well you write your Book, no one else will experience it with the same clarity as you. The Book of Me is written by you and for you. Try not to write with a sense of anticipation, worrying what someone else might read what you’ve written. The freeing power of The Book of Me resides in the knowledge that you are the only person who will ever read it.

How You Write

Write in whatever way is the most comfortable for you. In the past, I have used a typewriter, word processer and computer. Now, I take great pleasure in handwriting by Book. For me, there’s a hand to mind connection that opens by the very act of moving the pen across the page.

Saving Your Book of Me

In my early years, I decorated binders that contained my Books. Now they reside in a non-descript binder. Considering you want your Book of Me to remain private, it makes sense to keep the collection unnoticeable as possible.

Enjoy The Book of Me!

**The Book Of Me** *by A. Arlandson*

**LIKES/DISLIKES**

**You sense the world through your physical body. Make your list for each category as long as you like. Be specific.**

Taste… See… Hear… Touch…

**PERSONALITY**

**The first Book of Me may have very simple but they will become more comples over the years.**

What animal describes you best and why? What car? What month? What song? What article of clothing?

**MY FAVORITE**

**Make a list of your favorite things. Keep in mind that your answers should reflect on the past year. Although you may think of several answers to each category, try to limit yourself to just one.**

Song Animal

Songwriter Person

Group Actor/Actress

Sport Writer

Athlete Book

Instrument Day Of Year

Thing To Do Color

Social Media

**IF I HAD BEEN THERE**

**These questions ask how you react in situations bot real and far-fetched. Be honest.**

1. There’s a fight between two of your great friends. What do you do?
2. You’re waiting in a long line that’s moving slowly and someone cuts in front of you. What do you do?
3. How would you spend 10,000,000 (tax free)?
4. Someone steals from you and you find out. What is your next step?
5. You’re swimming in a public pool… you go off the high dive and your suit falls off. What do you do when you resurface?
6. Your favorite celebrity or personality shows up unexpectedly at your front door. What do you do?
7. Your great great grandparent. Ultimate hero, favorite fictional character or some form of divinity comes to your house for dinner. What would you talk about?

 **IN THE COURSE OF A DAY**

**Most of us don’t give a second thought to our daily routines. Here’s your chance to discover some things that you may or may not know about your days. Include your work, school and weekends to your calculations.**

What you, When you, Do you…

* Time you get up
* Eat in the morning
* Spend the morning
* Hours on your phone
* Hours on social media
* Hours of TV
* Money Spent/Daily expenses
* Describe your typical afternoon
* When do you usually eat dinner
* How you spend your evenings
* Your nightly routine before bed
* How long I sleep
* Do you remember your dreams?

**ASSOCIATION**

**Write down the impression that each scenario brings to your mind. It could be a person, a place or a conversation. Whatever it is. Remember that it should only reflect the past year. Your immediate answer may be just a few words. Try to explain your associations in detail.**

* A Siren In the Distance
* Heavy, Sweet perfume
* A lemon without sugar
* Burnt toast
* A musty smell
* Coffee bubbling on the stove

**STARTING POINTS**

**This is by far the most difficult and intense part of The Book of Me. Take your time.**

PEOPLE

Parents. Sibling, Best Friend, Spouse, Teacher… whomever it is, list that people that have affected you and not both positively and negatively. Write a sentence or two about them. Be as specific as you can.

PLACES

Describe the places where you like to go, where you’d like to go, where you spend the most time, places you dislike, spend the most time.

SPECIAL MEMORIES

Write about all the things that have stood out and touched you this past year.

UNSPECIAL MEMORIES

Write about the events you’d rather forget.

CONVERSATIONS

Detail the who what, when and why of your most memorable conversations this past year.

DARES AND ADVENTURES
Recount the places you never thought you’d go, people you thought you’d never meet, things you thought you could never do.

MISTAKES

You may have stepped left when you should have went right. It’s easy to see the better path from the vantage point of experience. Here’s a place to write about what you would have done differently this year.

WORRIES

What’s kept you awake? What’s added some lines to your firhead? List here what you have been worried about and why.

INSPIRATIONS

Who has been inspirational in your life the past year> What have they done, ad why it has made an impression on you.

WINS

What doors have opened for you the past year/ What unexpected joys came into your life that weren’t there before?

LOSSES

What or who is no longer a part of your life?

EMOTIONS

A retrospective of how you’ve felt, generally, this past year

**QUESTIONS**

Am I/ Will I? Should I? Could I? What happened to? I wonder? Whatever your questions, list those that have stayed with you the past year.

\*you may want to review them before you start your next Book of Me if only to note how many of them remain unanswered.

**INSPIRATIONS**

Who has been key in my life?

**GOALS**

List five goals for the next time you write your Book Of Me

**SUMMARY**

A paragraph or two about you the past year. Have you accomplished the goals you set last year?