



# Making Identity Visible: A creative direct work tool

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## INTRODUCTION

*The purpose of this tool* is to provide practitioners with a direct work practice activity to explore identity through the lens of creativity and the arts. This tool enables discussion and exploration of a key concept in social work practice: the development of identity. The Professional Capability Framework highlights the integral connection of identity with equality and diversity in practice. How is identity developed, formed, and influenced? And how, as social work practitioners, does understanding of our own identity impact relational ways of working with those that we work with.

Artist Abraham Cruzvillegas offers us the idea of ‘transparent identity’ where he proposes that our identity is self-built. He explores the idea that throughout our lives we change through incorporating experiences and influences that we have encountered, that we have lived. Cruzvillegas provides the metaphor of building and construction, that our identity mirrors that of a building, a form that takes shape based on our lived experiences that continues to grow and develop as we do.

Cruzvillegas builds on this idea in his artwork *Autoconstrucción*. This artwork takes the form of a short film. You can see the film [here](#).

“we go a long, long path to become ourselves. I am still constructing myself, I just want to understand who I am and where I come from...”

## ACTIVITY

After watching the short film, consider the ‘building blocks’ of your identity. As Cruzvillegas does, consider important moments and experiences and try and construct an object, collage from cut-out magazines, a video or sound recording on your phone to show to someone else the energy of that experience, that moment that has become part of who you are.

This activity can be replicated with children, young people, and adults, to explore the concept of identity and reflect on the significance of identity within direct practice.



## REFLECTION

**What part of your identity is most transparent in the artwork you created?**

**How might you incorporate ideas from this activity into your practice?**

**What aspects of your own identity would you like to learn more about?**



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