Gap Year Planning Checklist

This checklist can help you start planning a gap year.

☐ **Step 1: Brainstorm and write down all the reasons you want to take a gap year.**

For help thinking of reasons, consider these questions:

1. **Who am I?** Think of interests you want to explore, your personality strengths (adaptable, outgoing etc.), and your values (learning new things, helping others, etc.).
2. **What is important to me?** Think about what is important for you to get out of your gap year, such as learning a new skill, becoming aware of interests, having a different experience, meeting new people etc.
3. **What do I want in my life?** Brainstorm what you know you want and think about how a gap year could help on your path. You don’t have to know everything about what you want in life because having new experiences develops values and interests. Consider some of the things you do know, e.g. travel, learn a new language, or go to post-secondary.

☐ **Step 2: To be sure that a gap year is right for you, think about the potential benefits and any concerns you have:**

Write down all the pros and cons you can come up with for taking a gap year. What are your main concerns? You can then research to determine if your concerns are realistic.

☐ **Step 3: From the list you brainstormed in Step 1, identify a couple of key goals for your gap year.**

These goals should be clear and realistic. Once your goals have been identified, you need to plan for how you will accomplish them.

**Resources to Achieve Your Goals**

- **General Resources**: Information and organizations that facilitate gap years.
- **Interests and Skills**: Resources and support for Canadians taking a gap year, including webinars and consultations for advice on planning.
- **Travel**: Information to help you plan your trip, and organizations that organize volunteer and work travel programs.
- **Work and Save Money**: Resources to find a job and information to help you budget your money.