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Art as Guide to the Dark Path

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The insights in this paper are grounded on the premise that personal creativity is an essential aspect of finding meaning in a landscape where constantly shifting boundaries and signposts call into question our sense of personal orientation. As a child I spent much of my time drawing, painting, and reading. It was not until I became more clearly aware of the art and literature of other cultures (with a particular and rather late focus on the Greeks), however, that I began to articulate what I had always, on some level, felt and know about art. On some profound level I (presumably like many of my students) felt lost. My grade school education grounded me in a system of belief and gave me a map to a world that was, at least in theory, full of wondrous possibility, but the path I set out on was somehow not mine. Yet through the creation of a personal narrative, art began to provide a means to move forward. A premise of this paper is that reflective teachers will be aware that, for many students, the path ahead is often unclear, and that creative engagement offers a positive approach to personal re-orientation.