



## What Lies Between: Creating Continuums

While we often think in categories and gain useful information from that way of engaging with the world, categorical thinking can also be limiting. When we begin to think along a continuum, we see both ends and can then see what lies between. With this broader way of considering our experience, we move out of all-or-nothing thinking and enter the expansive world of both/and. When we see a moment held in a larger perspective, our stories about ourselves and the world are shaped in a new way.

The basic steps for creating a continuum can be applied to any experience you want to explore.

Draw a line and mark the two ends. While you may choose to use a horizontal or vertical line, continuums also emerge with curves and corners. Let your nervous system guide you in the shape and style.

For continuums where there are moment of changes from one state to another, it's important to mark those points.

Name each end (and the points of change if you've marked those). Take time with this. Often the words we come up with are not what we first had in mind.

With the line drawn and ends, and any points of change, named begin to explore the space between. Move slowly along the continuum in small increments stopping to name each place, feel the autonomic experience, and listen to the story.

## From Solitude to Social

We are social beings who also need times of solitude. When anchored in the ventral state both experiences deepen our ability to anchor in safety. On one end of experience, at the edge of solitude lies loneliness; on the other end, just beyond safe and social, is the place of overwhelm that comes from a world that is too social. This continuum helps us get to know the ways we are nourished when we are alone and with others and identify the moment we move from being filled by those experiences to feeling drained.

Draw your line (let your nervous system show you the shape) and name the social and solitude ends.

Mark the point where you move from solitude to lonely and name that place.  
Mark the place where you move from social to too social and name that place.

Move between solitude and social stopping to mark points along the way.  
Get to know this part of the continuum. What are the qualities of feeling safe in solitude and in social connection?

Move from solitude to lonely and notice how you recognize the change.  
What happens in your body and brain?

Move from social to too social and notice how you recognize the change.  
What happens in your body and brain?

Where are you in this moment? Are you content in this place? Experiment with making small moves along your continuum and see what happens.