

Activity Idea

Queer Vision Board

Recommended for adults and teens

Why start the New Year with resolutions when you can start it with a vision! Mental practices like visualization, journaling, and meditation can increase your confidence, motivation, and performance. The LGBTQ community is at a higher risk for experiencing mental health conditions like anxiety disorders and depression. Activities such as vision boarding can help you practice mindfulness and self-actualization.

Vision boards are used to help you put on paper some goals toward the direction you want your life to go. Do you want to start a podcast, like Cameron Esposito's *Queery*? Do you want to learn to channel your inner Janelle Monáe and try for a MTV Video Music Award? Try vision boarding!

A vision board can accomplish a few things. It can help with relaxation through an art practice like collage, as well as mindfulness by helping you connect with your inner goals. Start out fresh in 2021 and create a vision board to actualize some new hobbies, career moves, personal goals, and fun for the new year. There is no right or wrong way to create a vision board. This project will be a unique reflection of your inner self and your own individuality.

Materials Needed

- Paper, cardstock or cardboard for the base of the vision board
- Scissors
- Glue
- Assorted magazines, old books, photographs and colorful paper to cut and paste onto the board



Directions

Step 1: Decide what you want your vision board to be about. Listed at the end of this activity are some potential topics for vision boards. But keep in mind these questions as you create: What do I want? What do I need? What do I value? Make a list of the items that answer these questions.



Step 2: Gather your supplies. Old magazines, books and colorful paper are good items to use to create your vision board, but even lightweight 3D objects like coins, keys, and shells can be used to accent your vision board. Just remember you want to be able to permanently affix them to your board, so make sure you choose items you don't mind gluing down.

Step 3: Page through the magazines, books, and paper. Keep your list of vision board questions handy. Find colors that appeal to you, words that feel powerful, and images that resonate. Cut them out from the pages and start a pile of clippings that reflect your feelings about the future.

Step 4: Arrange your clippings on the base of your board. This base should be made up of cardstock, cardboard, or heavy paper. Start laying out your words, colors, and photos. Move things around as you see fit. Images can overlap—you can create new words out of letters cut from bigger words. Create gradients of color, going from light to dark. There are no limits to what you can make.

Step 5: Turn over your board and write down some concrete goals you can aim for in the next month. Ask yourself what you can do to make progress in achieving your goals. Make sure these goals are SMART (**S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**chievable, **R**elevant, and **T**ime sensitive).

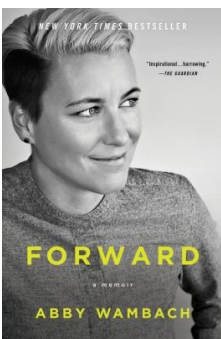
Step 6: Take a moment to look at your goals and see if you can start on them in the next few days after finishing your board. Put your board up in a place where you can see it every day to re-energize yourself when you start to lose focus on what you want.

Vision Board Potential Topic Ideas

- What are your priorities for 2021?
- Recap all the major things that you have done in the previous year. See if you can reframe the negative things that happened into ways you have grown.
- What places have you always wanted to visit? What goals can you set to begin planning for these trips?
- What energy do you want to bring into 2021?
- What queer leaders and/or queer historical figures are you hoping to learn from, follow, and research in 2021?
- In what ways can you create a home space that is warm and welcoming for friends and chosen family?
- What does your best life in 2021 look like?
- What parts of your identity would you like to affirm and uplift this year? How can you affirm your friends' and family's identities and choices moving forward?
- Make this a virtual group project! Get your friends together virtually and create vision boards together to create solidarity and accountability for the coming year.

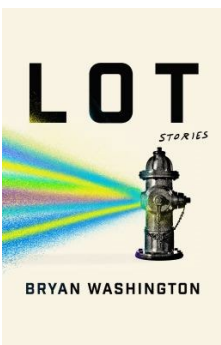
Need some more inspiration? Check out the books below for some awesome suggestions on memoirs and nonfiction books written by and about queer folks to get you in the mood for growth and self-reflection.

Books



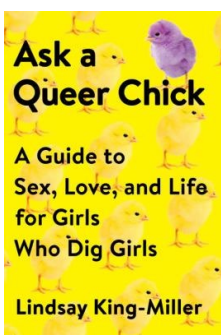
***Forward* by Abby Wambach**

In *Forward*, soccer star Abby Wambach shares the inspiring story of how she rose to become one of the greatest players of all time. Wambach gives details on both successes and failures throughout her life and soccer career in this engaging memoir. Catalog Link: <https://tinyurl.com/ydzddb9b>



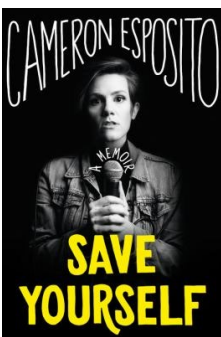
***Lot* by Bryan Washington**

NPR's Michael Schaub describes Bryan Washington as "a keen observer of human nature; his characters are flawed but not irredeemable, and he writes about them with a compassion that's never condescending." Coming of age in his family's Houston restaurant, a mixed-heritage teen navigates bullying, his newly discovered sexual orientation, and the ripple effects of a disadvantaged community in *Lot*. Catalog Link: <https://tinyurl.com/ycdqdsbh>



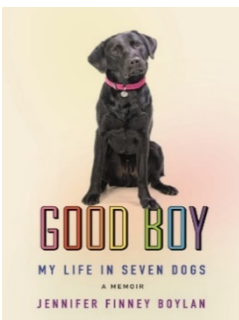
***Ask a Queer Chick* by Lindsay King-Miller**

Seasoned advice columnist and queer chick Lindsay King Miller cuts through all of the bizarre conditioning imparted by parents, romantic comedies, and The L Word to help queer readers live authentic, safe, happy, sexy lives. Catalog Link: <https://tinyurl.com/ydyao8fh>



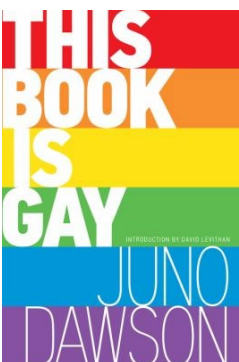
***Save Yourself* by Cameron Esposito**

Cameron Esposito offers funny and insightful essays about everything from coming out (at a Catholic college where being gay can get you expelled) to how joining the circus can help you become a better comic (so much nudity) to accepting yourself for who you are--even if you're an awkward tween with an eyepatch (which Cameron was). Catalog Link: <https://tinyurl.com/y82l7qbd>



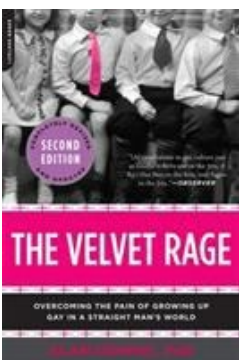
***Good Boy: My Life in Seven Dogs* by Jennifer Finney Boylan**

In *Good Boy*, Boylan explores what should be the simplest topic in the world, but never is: finding and giving love. *Good Boy* is a universal account of a remarkable story: showing how a young boy became a middle-aged woman-accompanied at seven crucial moments of growth and transformation by seven memorable dogs. Catalog Link: <https://tinyurl.com/yd3umxb9>



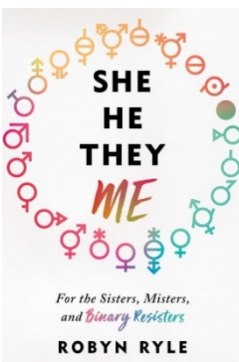
***This Book is Gay* by Juno Dawson**

Inside you'll find the answers to all the questions you ever wanted to ask: from sex to politics, hooking up to stereotypes, coming out and more. This candid, funny, and uncensored exploration of sexuality and what it's like to grow up LGBT also includes real stories from people across the gender and sexual spectrums, not to mention hilarious illustrations. Catalog Link: <https://tinyurl.com/ycd4vm8>



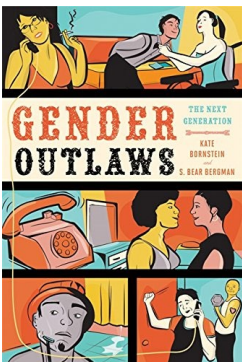
***The Velvet Rage: Overcoming the Pain of Growing Up Gay in a Straight Man's World* by Alan Downs**

Building on the collected psychological research and the author's own experience of the past twenty years, *The Velvet Rage* will help gay men profoundly understand their dichotomous extremes. Explaining the psychological underpinnings of the forces at play in their lives, it also offers helpful strategies to stop the insidious cycle of avoidance and rage. Empowering and validating, *The Velvet Rage* will influence the public discourse on gay culture and positively change the lives of gay men who read it. Catalog Link: <https://tinyurl.com/y9unxo9p>



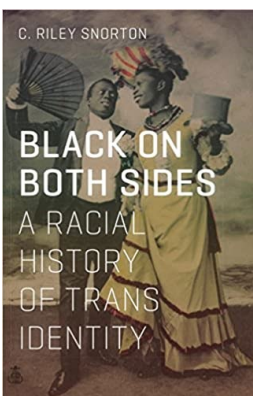
***He/she/they/me* by Robyn Ryle on OverDrive**

This choose your own adventure style book lets the reader discover and learn about how their gender is shaped by their culture and community. Readers can choose different paths each time, opting for one that conforms to their own choices, or one that they might want to read more about. Catalog Link: <https://tinyurl.com/heshetheyme>



***Gender Outlaws: The Next Generation* edited by Kate Bornstein and S. Bear Bergman on Overdrive**

This book is a follow-up to the canonical Kate Bornstein book, *Gender outlaws*. In *Gender outlaws: the next generation*, the editors present the stories and lived experiences of people of varying genders, races, classes, and ethnicities. Catalog Link: <https://tinyurl.com/genderoutlaws>



***Black on Both Sides: A Racial History of Trans Identity* by C. Riley Snorton**

Snorton tackles a lot in this book, discussing how trans identities and black identities have intersected throughout history. A new approach to history is offered, and new solutions and language are suggested. Catalog Link: <https://tinyurl.com/blackonbothsides>



***Fairest* by Meredith Talusan**

This memoir follows Meredith from the start of her life, from being socialized as a boy in a rural part of the Philippines, to coming out as a trans woman later in life, attending Harvard, and becoming an artist and an activist. Catalog Link: <https://tinyurl.com/yb7nu7oz>