Art Activity: My Past & Future Hands

This activity uses a strengths-based framework to support the young person around **recognizing their ability to create and re-create** themselves. It's a tool that can empower young people to realize that while they may not necessarily have control over the things that happen to them, change and growth are still possible. Envisioning what the young person wants their future to be like can be ground and motivating. We provide a general materials list below as an activity starting point, but modifications may be useful depending on the setting and circumstances.

Materials

- 1 sheet of paper, preferably cardstock, construction paper, or cardboard
- Markers/pens
- Color pencils/crayons (the more options for the young person, the better!)
- Pencil

Directions

1. Using the paper, have the young person trace their hands using the pencil.
2. Have the young person write "My Past Hands Hold…" over the left hand, and "My Future Hands Hold…" over the right hand.
3. Ask the young person to fill in the left hand to illustrate their past/what they have overcome (they can start by making a brainstorm list or can jump into the drawing). You can guide this thinking by asking things such as what does it look like, what does it feel like, who exists there, what kinds of things are a part of it?
4. Repeat the third step for the right hand, this time prompting the young person to imagine their future. You can guide this with questions such as what color is it, what does it feel like, who do they want to be there, what do they hope is a part of it?
5. Once the project is complete, check in with a young person and debrief the experience. What was it like for them? What surprised them? What did they like? How did they feel before and how do they feel now?