



# Love Letters to Myself

*Westwood Elementary*

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# Background Leading to this Inquiry

Sometimes our stories do not quite go as we plan and how we respond to the sudden plot twist is rooted in our daily perspective.

**I would love to introduce you to the bravest little boy I have ever met.**

**Archie Alexander**







## *Purpose of My Inquiry*

*As a harmonizer who strives to  
provide empathy & support to  
others, I do not provide this for  
myself. Therefore, the purpose of  
my action research is to be more  
intentional in acknowledging the  
good surrounding me to channel  
my grief to **joy**.*





# *My Wondering*

*Therefore, I wonder if I focus on  
the positives in my life through  
love letters to myself if I will find  
more internal harmony.*



# My Actions...

- Journal

- Reflect & look for patterns in my days

- Create more opportunity from patterns





# Data Collection



## Journaling

Letters to myself which include:

- Daily reflections
- Scripture
- Song lyrics
- Devotional challenges
- Self-Care Moments



## Impactful Music

Music that feeds my soul:

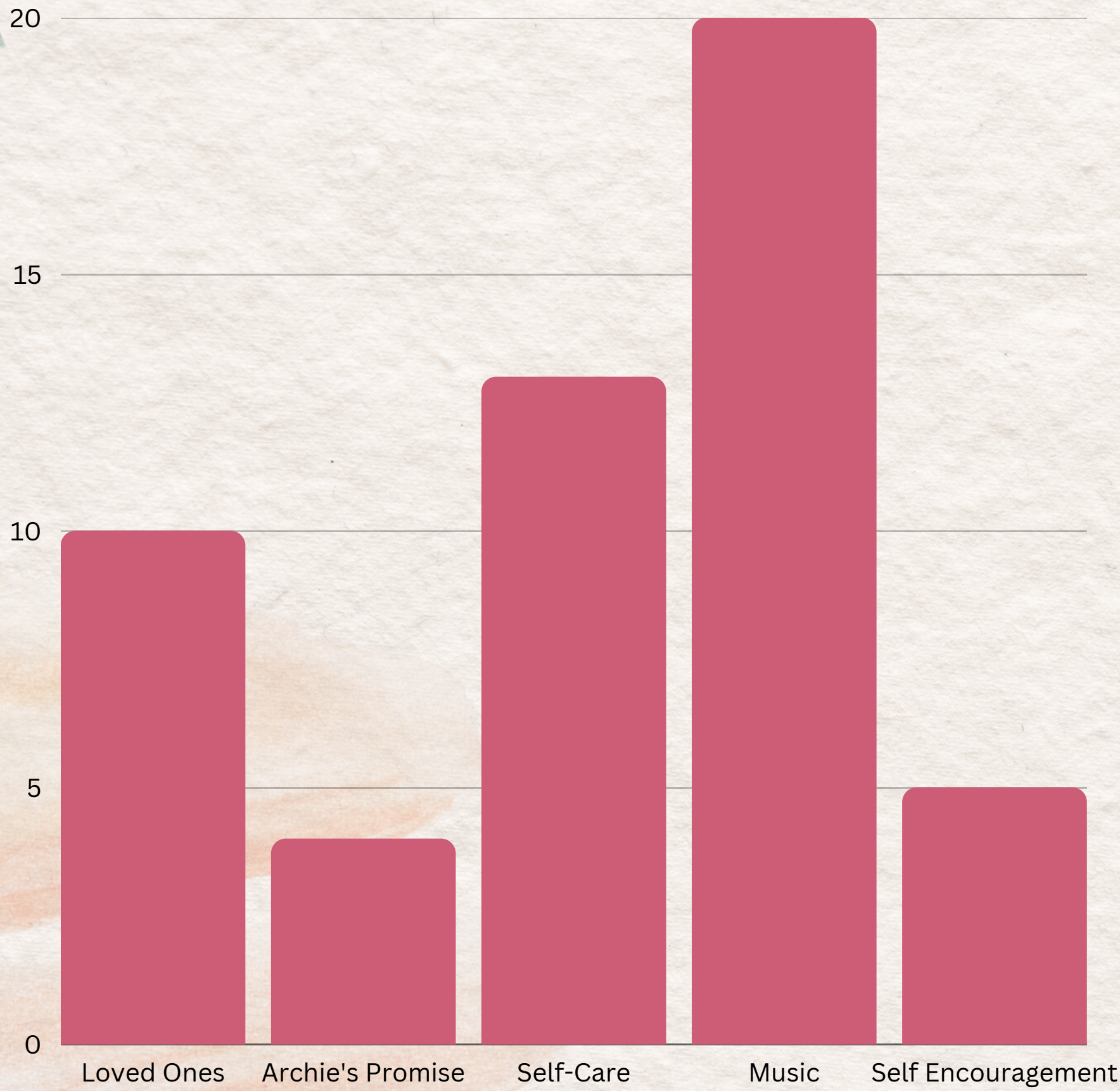
- Playlist for personal growth
- Playlist for the new year
- Playlist for the brave boy





# My Data

## Journaling





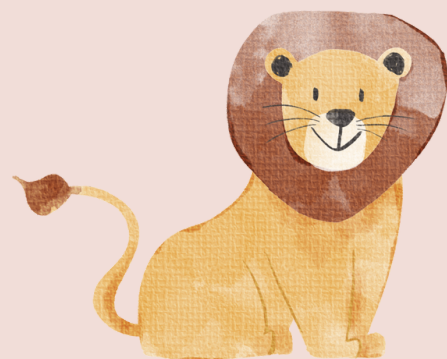
2-16-23

Dearest Kelley,

TODAY WAS A BEAUTIFUL DAY! ♡  
IT WAS ARCHIE'S PROMISE night at  
the basketball game. Can I just say  
that our community shows up and loves  
hard?! I am so proud of you... I am proud  
of you on the darkest of days to choose to  
speak Archie's name and to support one  
another / others who feel a grief such  
as you now know!




2-1-2023  
..You don't have to hide the parts of  
you that ache  
I choose you as you are a million  
times  
'Cause I am not ashamed of you  
I won't walk away from you...  
  
I Will Carry You  
Ellie Holcomb ♡  
  
Kelley,  
What a day. You truly are becoming  
more resilient each and every day!  
You have so much to be proud of.  
Continue to stand up for yourself  
and know you are this and have so  
much worth! I love you.  
Love, Yourself  
Kelley



Rollin': Blessing  
Offer 1-18-23  
Too many turns on the roller  
coaster  
Too many spins on the carousel  
I'm falling off, yeah, I'm hanging  
anybody with a heart can tell  
...  
I can't save myself but here you  
come  
Always ready and I don't know  
how  
Always steady as the solid ground  
...  
All I've got when I've been  
broken  
You're the top at my lowest.  
...  
Umino 11.







# My Data

## Playlist

Over the course of my action research, I began adding lyrics to my journaling and it allowed me to ground myself in a different way. I created playlists based off of the music that spoke to me and then incorporated into my letters.

Songs Added: 20

Most Played Song: New Today by Micah Tyler



music





I've been hard on myself lately  
Every morning I feel the weight, mmm  
When it's hard to just get out of bed  
Tell my heart, 'cause sometimes I forget

That Your mercies are new today  
Your mercies are new today, oh  
I can rest on Your shoulders  
There is grace to start over  
Your mercies are new today, oh  
Your mercies are new today

Help me rise like the morning sun  
Help me see that Your work's not done, oh-oh  
When I'm less, than what I want to be  
Lord, I need You, to keep reminding me

Your mercies are new today (Your mercies are new today)  
Your mercies are new today, oh-oh (Your mercies are new)  
I can rest on Your shoulders  
There is grace to start over  
Your mercies are new today, oh







# *My Discoveries*

*Throughout this process, I have  
discovered there is beauty in  
honoring yourself. I have so much  
good in my life and when I have  
more internal harmony I give myself  
permission to grow in other  
phases/areas.*



# Where Am I Heading Next

As I continue the journey of healing and working towards internal harmony, I plan to:

- continue writing love letters to myself.
  - I hope they will be treasures to my children some day.
- identify ways I can be more intentional with helping others find what they need.
  - I hope to carry my findings over to the staff in order to provide more individualized support.







## *Love Letters to Myself*

**Principal Name:** Kelley Cox

**School Name:** Westwood Elementary

**Principal's Email Contact:** kcox@ncweb.me

### **Background Leading to My Inquiry (Slide 2)**

In April of 2021, my husband and I welcomed our son, Archie. He lived for four days. Our family made those four days as full of life as we could as we soaked up each minute with Archie. Following Archie's passing, it was incredibly difficult for me to return not only to work but to serving others. I began to learn that sometimes our stories do not quite go as we plan and how we respond to the sudden plot twist or change is rooted in our daily perspective.

I was only seeing my day to day as glass half empty. I focused on the negatives at home. I focused on the negatives at work. And I most certainly focused on the negatives within myself. I realized I needed to challenge myself to shift my perspective, seek true joy, and work towards peace in all capacities of my days.

### **The Purpose of My Inquiry (Slide 3)**

Therefore, the purpose of my action inquiry was to be more intentional in acknowledging the good surrounding me to channel my grief to joy. As a harmonizer (phase and base identified in the PCM) who strives to always provide empathy and support to others, I realized I did not provide this gift of grace to myself.

### **My Wondering (Slide 4)**

With this purpose, I wondered if I focused on the positives in my life through love letters to myself if I would find more internal harmony.

### **My Actions (Slide 5)**

To begin, I bought myself a new journal. I wanted this journal to speak to me and be something I treasured. It was not anything special, a \$9.99 Rae Dunn find at TJ Maxx, but it was exactly what I wanted and needed.

Then I started writing. I wrote to myself at the end of my day, something that I wanted to remember. At first it was a little odd to write *Dear Kelley*, and then find a balance of either writing in first person or third, but after some time it became natural to write to myself.

I highlighted positives and found myself telling myself "I love you" at the end of each entry which brought great joy in and of itself. I began to reflect and look for patterns in my days. Identifying what brought me joy and gave me the opportunity to find more time to fill my time with those things.



I also found myself journaling more about music and how the songs/lyrics spoke to me.

### **Data Collection (Slide 6)**

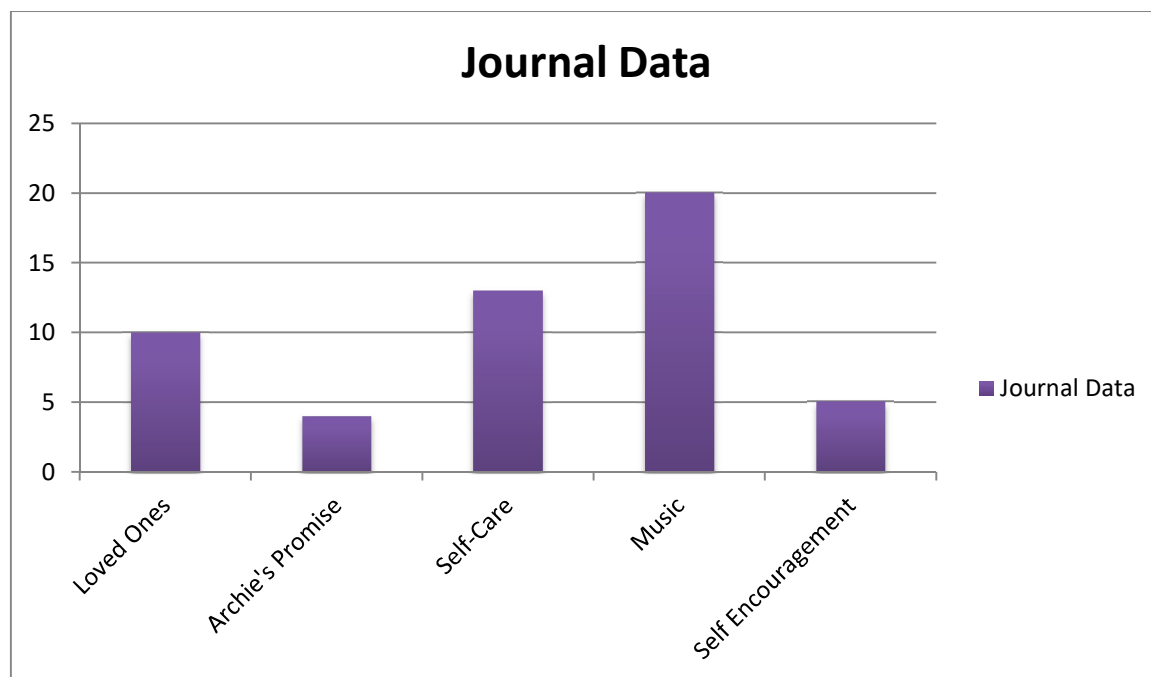
My data collection was done in two ways.

The first was through the journaling. The letters to myself included daily reflections, scripture, song lyrics, devotional challenges, and moments of self-care.

The second form of data collection came through music. I began to make playlists for different areas of my life: playlist for personal growth, a playlist for the new year, a playlist for my brave boy, Archie.

### **My Data (Slides 7-10)**

The graph below shows journal entries categorized.



Over the course of my action research, I began adding lyrics to my journaling and it allowed me to ground myself in a different way. I created playlists based off of the music that spoke to me and then incorporated the music into my letters.

Songs Added: 20

Most Played Song: New Today by Micah Tyler



## **My Discoveries (Slide 11)**

Throughout this process, I have discovered there is beauty in honoring yourself. I have so much good in my life and when I have more internal harmony I give myself permission to grow in other phases/areas.

- **Learning Statement One:**
  - Discovering internal harmony was a profound and transformative journey that led to a state of balance, peace, and alignment within me. It was/is a process of self-exploration, reflection, and self-awareness that allowed me to connect with my deepest desires, values, and beliefs. I learned to listen to my intuition, trust my inner voice, and cultivate self-compassion.
- **Learning Statement Two:**
  - Growing more aware of what brings me joy is an empowering and enriching process. With increased self-awareness, I am able to identify the activities, experiences, and relationships that truly resonate with me on a deep level. I become attuned to the moments and the pursuits that ignite my passion and fill me with a genuine sense of fulfillment. This heightened awareness enables me to prioritize my own happiness and make conscious choices that align with my true desires. As I continue to explore and embrace what brings me joy, I open myself up to new opportunities, challenges, and growth.
- **Learning Statement Three:**
  - After growing in a focused area, I am eager to help others grow in areas specific to them. Through example, my goal is to have others trust the process of recognizing and respecting their individual strengths, interests, and goals, and providing the necessary guidance and support to facilitate their personal development. By actively listening and understanding their unique needs, I will tailor my approach to cater to their specific areas of growth. Whether it's providing mentorship, offering constructive feedback, or creating a nurturing environment for learning, my focus is on empowering my staff to discover their own potential and reach their desired outcomes.

## **Where I Am Heading Next (Slide 12)**

Continuing to write love letters to myself is a powerful practice that fosters self-acceptance, self-compassion, and self-growth. By expressing kind words, appreciation, and encouragement to myself, I cultivate a positive self-image and strengthen my relationship with my innermost self. This practice reminds me of my inherent worth and allows me to acknowledge my achievements, strengths, and potential. Furthermore, by helping others be intentional with identifying and challenging themselves to grow, I will help foster a supportive community within our school. By encouraging one another to step out of our comfort zones, embrace new opportunities, and strive for personal growth, we inspire a culture of continuous improvement and empowerment. Together, we can uplift each other, celebrate our progress, and collectively contribute to making our school the best it can be. By fostering a nurturing environment for growth and personal development, we create an atmosphere that promotes academic success, positive relationships, and a sense of belonging for all.