Making a “Feelings Collage”

1. Find a stiff piece of cardboard about 6 x 8 inches. Anything will do because you are going to cover it up. You will also need a glue stick, scissors which can cut fine shapes and a pile of old magazines. (Some libraries sell stacks of old magazines for less than $1.)

2. Spend half an hour looking through magazines with no particular agenda except to react to the pictures you see. Whenever you have any strong feeling about one of the pictures, tear it out and set it aside. You should end up with about ten pictures.

3. Spend time looking slowly through the pictures you have torn out. Which ones relate to the particular feeling or incident that you are chronicling? Cut out parts of images which seem particularly relevant. For example, cut a woman’s figure out of a landscape and see if you have a different feeling about her once she is freed from her context. You will not use all the images you set aside for this particular collage – probably only 3 to 8 images.

4. You now have the raw material to begin your collage. Spend some time with your cardboard and your pictures, trying them together in different ways. If, at this point, you seem to be missing a particular element, go back through your magazines and see if you can find what you need.

5. Now you are ready to start pasting things down. First, you will need a background for the collage. You will probably be happiest with the result if you can find one or two images to supply the background for everything else. Using the glue stick, paste the background down first, and then cut around the edges of the cardboard.

6. When you feel certain about the placement of each element, go ahead and paste it onto your picture.

7. When you are done, give your picture a name. Write it on the back along with the date and your name, if you like.