

*MENTORING THE FUTURE* COLLEGE / UNIVERSITY CURRICULUM  
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FOR WARRIOR FILMS



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## Introduction and Outcomes

The intention of this curriculum is to build upon the short film - *Rites of Passage: Mentoring the Future* - with information, ideas, prompts, and resources that will deepen students' learning and enrich their campus experience, make your job more satisfying, and improve the culture of your campus. Drawing equally on the latest research and traditional wisdom, our aim is to aid *you* in bringing Whole Person Development Practices to your university, in ways that are effective and engaging. The core direction of this work is based on the *SEARCH Institute's 40 Developmental Assets for Adolescents*, which you can find in the supplemental documents section of this curriculum.

We know that there is never enough time in the day with countless demands already placed on your time and scheduling. However we know our approach will be a boon to the healthy functioning of classrooms and college communities, supporting administrators and staff to achieve goals already in place and to set new ones. The curriculum's KEY objectives are as follows:

- To advance knowledge, discussion, and activities related to Whole Person Development at the college and university level.
- To aid in the development of healthy initiatory practices across sub-institutional boundaries while simultaneously undermining harmful behaviors and traditions such as hazing in Greek Life.
- To reduce drop-out rates and improve academic achievement of students through better goal-setting, resourcefulness, and discipline.
- To aid in students' self-esteem, self-respect, and agency.
- To foster positive personal and social identity development by grounding students in healthy relationships with themselves and others.
- To provide healthy and productive formative experiences that allow students to believe in and practice their ability to make informed decisions as well as learning about and acting on their most positive values.
- To aid university personnel at all levels, professional and civil staff, to implement Whole Person Development strategies.
- To provide additional avenues for strengthening trust, rapport, and support among students, faculty, and staff, along with families and neighboring communities.
- To help students feel heard so they can make the space to hear and communicate openly with others be those peers, parents, or institutional staff.
- To deepen students' culturally specific knowledge, thereby validating their life experiences.
- To help students articulate, address, and achieve long-term goals beyond their college years.

**Note:** To provide feedback on how this toolkit is working for you or to partner with us to get this work into the hands of college and university faculty and staff worldwide, please sign up at <http://www.warriorfilms.org/contact/> or contact Ishtar Kramer: [Ishtar@warriorfilms.org](mailto:Ishtar@warriorfilms.org), (415) 812-5456.

## What is Whole Person Development [WPD]?

This project utilizes Whole Person Development as its theoretical foundation, including social and emotional learning. We refer to Rites of Passage and Engaged Mentorship and think of them as two halves of one whole – both are essential elements in assisting young people in maturing. We also use the term initiation synonymously with rite of passage. By helping a young person transition into his/her wholeness and maturity we aim to simultaneously improve the culture of the classroom, school and community.

It's important to conceptualize a young person's transition into and through college as a **Rite of Passage**. A Rite of Passage is the ceremonially recognized passing of an individual from one state to another. Other rites of passage include transitioning from childhood through puberty to adolescence, from young adulthood to middle age, from late middle age to eldership, and from eldership to death. In so doing the individual's societal role is changed and transformed. This change is often reflected in a shift in their title. They step into a new role with new privileges and responsibilities recognized and celebrated by their community. For further elaboration on the concept of undergraduate education as the ground for rites of passage we refer you to David Blumenkrantz and Marc Goldstein's short essay appended here.

In Western culture we commonly refer to the ability to vote or get a driver's license as rites of passage. While these may invoke the spirit of a Rite of Passage they lack the enduring transformational impact of a fully integrated experience. Most commonly (but not necessarily), rites of passage are rooted in the natural world, to firmly ground the initiate in a deep sense of PLACE, and to connect their sense of self to a much larger context. Our aim with this curriculum is to speak to and support the rite of passage of adolescents into young adulthood that draws from all of its many variations. It's just as important to offer maturing adults in post secondary education rites of passage as it is for teens in high school.

Arnold van Gennep first used the term in his book *Les Rites de Passage*, published in 1909, in which he surveyed cultural passages and recognized that they each consisted of three distinct phases:

- **Severance/Separation:** Being removed from all that we know, including the mental/emotional constructs we hold on to; shedding what no longer serves us as we move into the unknown, sometimes by choice but often through the force or will of our communities or life circumstances. Severance is also key to understanding death as a normal part of the human life cycle.
- **Threshold/In Between:** This is the space in which we acknowledge being alone in an unfamiliar place, in which we are tested, having to rely on our own faculties and resources in overcoming adversity, often referred to as 'trials' or "ordeals." This is as much about proving to our community that we are ready as it is about proving to ourselves that we are capable, so that we can develop resilience for future life challenges. That said, an important part of this phase is the fear and real possibility of failure; otherwise what we learn or experience won't have a life changing impact, helping us face our future fears.

- **Incorporation/Return:** When the transformation is complete, it is time for us to return to our community as someone new. This re-integration can be difficult and is aided by acknowledging how integral others are to the process. When celebrated and recognized for the transition by our family, friends, and elders we begin to ground and integrate the new changes. We are recognized for the unique gifts we each carry and welcomed to take our new place among the community. The understanding that each person achieves – that meaningful life necessitates the giving away of those gifts through acts of service – guarantees the community's diversity, resilience, and cohesion.

Historically, rites of passage were always culturally and geographically specific. Ideally, a young person's cultural or ethnic heritage is brought forward and the young person is made aware of how she/he fits into this continuity. The ultimate effectiveness of any rite of passage depends on the needs of the individual and by extension the needs of their communities. Through this process the young learn the values of the community, the adults become exemplars of those values, and the elders discern their merits.



Image Courtesy of: Youth Mentoring Connection



The second essential element of Whole Person Development is **Engaged Mentorship**. Mentorship is required before, during, and after any rite of passage. Most commonly today, Mentorship is associated only with profession. Whole Person Development is about creating opportunities for mentorship across the entire life spectrum and in areas far outside of job skills related to character and values. As young people realign their focus from family to peer relationships in their formative years, mentors work in collaboration with their mentees' educational, work, and family environments. A good mentor pushes young people out of their comfort zone, past their perceived boundaries and into the realm of the unknown, building the adult "scaffolding" that Temple University Professor Laurence Steinberg recognizes as necessary for young peoples' maturation. Engaged mentors point out strengths and weaknesses of character to their mentees, helping align their perceptions with reality. They provide the pathway forward that each young person needs to fully meet their great potential as human beings.

Mentors, functioning as extra-family guides, must always keep the mentees' best interests at heart. The mentors utilize all of their own life experience to back up their support and direction. Tradition tells us they can only take someone as far as they themselves have traveled. They provide a bedrock of support for the young person, assuring them that they are there for them, that they are not alone. It may not take an entire village to raise a young person but it absolutely requires a good mentor.

Together Rites of Passage and Engaged Mentorship provide the framework adolescents require and the ongoing support structures they need to knit the many different parts of their lives together into a cohesive whole.



Image Courtesy of: Youth Mentoring Connection

## **What Can I Do: Admissions Advisor**

As advisors you are the most visible gateway across the threshold into university life. You set the tone by which prospective students and their families both prepare for and enter into the post secondary culture. Here are a few ideas to bring Whole Person Development into your working life.

### *Short Term Ideas*

- Host a viewing and discussion of *Mentoring the Future* at a high school you are visiting, aided by question prompts at the back of the curriculum framing college as a rite of passage.
- Frame conversations with parents on how to handle separation by utilizing Whole Person Development concepts. This context should help both with family dynamics and the family's relationship to the institution. Bring separation anxiety and examples of potential dysfunction into the conversation, along with concomitant solutions. Consider referencing the essay by Michael G. Thompson in the external resource section.

### *Long Term Ideas:*

- Work in alignment with admissions and student affairs to flesh out and ceremonialize severance of parents from their freshmen youth. The University of Chicago O-Week parting ceremony acknowledges the necessary emotional conflict brought up in the separation process and supports both parties to make the transition successfully.
- Work with secondary school counselors on framing college as a rite of passage through language, dialog and internal programing. For instance, encourage them to use the term "rites of passage" when speaking with students, and to build the ideas of initiation and mentorship into things like career day, college credit courses, and counseling services.
- Work with students and families to define very clear starting and stopping points for the admissions process. If not careful, it can become an ill-defined, on-going process that causes conflict between parents and youth and between parents and advisors. Make sure they know all that's required of them, what the deadlines are, and what exactly determines the finish line.
- Encourage second and third year students you know to speak to potential students on behalf of the college, especially as guides for campus tours. Encourage them to offer their services as mentors. as well as incentivizing admission within the frame of reference of WPD.
- Utilizing WPD concepts, collaborate with student affairs and the campus multicultural center to create support networks specifically for students transitioning into new environments.
- Work with parents to create trial separations with their youth to prepare them for life *after* on-campus living. This could mean having the youth take up housing at a friend's or family member's house for a week or two during the summer to practice healthy distancing.

### **What Can I Do: Multicultural Center / Student Affairs**

In most colleges or universities where both exist the Student Affairs Department and Multicultural Centers are distinctly separate entities. From the lens of WPD each needs to work from an integrated approach to develop healthy avenues for socialization and initiation of the campus community. Historically, programs dealing with rites of passage implemented at the post-secondary level have been targeted as a way to foster support and connection among minority populations. But all students need culturally specific identity development. They need to know where they come from to know who they are. But young people also need to learn about their differences *together*. WPD espouses bringing minority and non-minority cultures into relationship through education and dialog in order to create true multicultural inclusion. This dialog softens tacit cultural barriers while confronting issues such as appropriation, exclusion, and the isms of oppression. Here are some ideas on bringing WPD to your institution to aid in creating a webbed and inclusive campus climate.

#### *Short Term Ideas:*

- Host a viewing of *Mentoring the Future* with core staff of Student Affairs and/or Multicultural Center followed by discussion, aided by question prompts at the back of the curriculum.
- Host a campus wide viewing of "*Mentoring the Future*," followed by discussion, aided by question prompts at the back of the curriculum and/or gathering with local representatives of mentorship and youth initiation organizations.
- Host a Campus Culture Mapping: Use the form in the external resource section to take inventory of the culture(s) on your campus. This opens student perspectives, deepening awareness around exclusion and privilege while jumpstarting dialog around collaboration and inclusion.
- Building on the Campus Culture Mapping, host a series of dialogs on the signs of oppression: What kinds of jokes and actions can be viewed as oppressive behavior? When students share their first-hand experiences it creates lasting awareness.
- Discuss how initiation can figure into individual student lives. How does cultural appropriation show up? Can it be transformed into sovereign exchange or diffusion? Clear distinctions have to be made between students learning by and being informed through other cultural traditions and using language or taking action that mocks or makes fun of other cultures, however indirectly or unconsciously.
- Model mentoring. Ask who's mentoring whom among staff. Encourage all concerned to seek out mentors and mentees, whether on or off campus. It will mean a lot to students to know "the adults in charge" are themselves mentoring and being mentored.
- In-house Johari Window: Used in much the same fashion as culture maps, pinpointing differences between individual and group perceptions and actual realities. This can be vitally effective to strengthen relationships between colleagues. Find template and directions in the external resource section of the curriculum.





Jesuit universities like University of San Francisco adopt missions that are inclusive of social justice as do small private colleges like Antioch and Reed.

- Utilize student care teams to work on cross-cultural diffusion and campus cross-cultural protocols. Develop ways to be mindful of inadvertent privilege. Many multicultural centers already have these types of practices in place. But it's far more useful to bring as many non-minority students into this conversation as possible. Comprise the teams with students from multiple class years and from as many ethnic, sexual orientation, gender, socio-economic, religious, and political backgrounds as possible.
- Consider rites of passage programs for administrators and staff. See external resource directory for examples.
- Integrate a Yearly Rite of Passage Experience/Transition Event Into the first or final year, ideally in summer. This can be done by seeking outside consultation and support through organizations like The Center for the Advancement of Youth, Family, and Community Services, the Make Trybe School, etc. See external directory for complete list.



Both Images Courtesy of: Make Trybe School of Transformative Design

### **What Can I Do: Residential Assistant**

Residential Assistants can be the glue that keeps first year communities alive and flourishing. Although often quite underutilized, when assistants' roles are fully realized they can provide cornerstones for keeping students engaged and invested in their educational, personal, and social development. Here are some ways to bring WPD into the dorm.

#### *Short term Ideas:*

- Dorm floor viewing of “*Mentoring the Future*,” followed by discussion, aided by question prompts at the back of the curriculum and/or gathering with local representatives of mentorship and youth initiation organizations.
- Dorm floor viewing of “The Power of Myth” - the interview series between Joseph Campbell and Bill Moyers - followed by discussion possibilities as above.
- Dorm floor discussion on coming of age and first year experiences with reference to tools such as SMART goals, which can be found in the supplemental documents.
- Dorm floor Johari Window Exercise – tool used in much the same fashion as culture map, specifically to find the differences between individual and group perception vs. reality. This can be vitally effective to build relationships between roommates and floor mates but more importantly between the RA and their charges. Find template and directions in the supplemental documents section of the curriculum.
- Sitting in Circle: Used as both a tool for restorative justice and to foster more open communication, sitting in circle or ‘council’ is being practiced more and more across the nation as a way to foster more empathetic and effective communities. See the supplemental documents section for a very basic primer on circles and effective groups as well as links to programs that specialize in ways to bring this to your school or dorm.
- Encourage students to utilize ‘office hours’ to deepen relationships with their professors.
- Make time for nature-based experiences. Take time together in nearby woods, prairies, deserts, lakes, mountains... whatever’s available. Whether it’s a picnic lunch, a boating trip, a daylong hike, a weekend camping trip, etc... the more time you spend outdoors the better for everyone.

#### *Long Term Ideas:*

- Establish a culture of ‘check-ins’ with each of your residents. Encourage them to buddy up outside of their dorm to hold each other emotionally, socially, and academically accountable.
- For any of the activities above, encourage former dorm residents, whether second, third, or fourth year students, to attend, participate, or even co-lead.
- Create new norms for the floor’s Standard Operating Procedures that build in new concepts and language as well as new practices and rituals. You might consider beginning a floor meeting with a specific song or group-penned floor pledge, like a mission statement.
- Invite a respected community elder to sit in on floor meetings and regularly visit with your floor members.

### **What Can I Do: Testing vs. Hazing**

Whether in Greek Life, sports programs, or any group in which membership is earned, there is the opportunity for crossing the line between testing and hazing. In recent years hazing has come to the forefront of mainstream culture and changes are being made. In March, 2014 Sigma Alpha Epsilon, the fraternity with the deadliest track record in American history, abolished pledging for new members in an attempt to reinvent both its image and practices.

The point is not to do away with testing. Initiation is an important element for any group identity. The point is to contextualize it properly so people understand why they're going through what they're going through. It's also necessary to insure that it's safe, contained, and focused on the ultimate well-being of individuals and the group. The presence of wise elders is always the best guarantor of these values.

New programs and information are being developed all the time. Whatever path you take in addressing this issue, here are a few ideas from the lens of WPD that can aid in your efforts.

- **Cultivate Positive Initiated Leaders**

The foundation of truly effective groups is members who believe in the culture. Find and cultivate leaders who've either been initiated in pro-social ways in their lives or provide opportunities for them to do so before taking on leadership. Building a core team that views the path to membership through inclusion and social justice values is the first step to reforming any culture.

- **Define Testing or Initiation as Separate From Hazing**

Both leadership and new members must be able to distinguish pro-social initiation from anti-social initiation. Encourage sharing of examples of initiation that went bad and turned into hazing or abuse, whether the results were the loss of potential members, crimes committed, interpersonal rifts, or physical, mental, and emotional damage to one or more human beings.

- **Provide Positive Alternatives That Test but Don't Break**

Make sure leaders know the difference between testing and breaking. The purpose of most hazing activities is to make up for meaningful pro-social, initiatory experiences. Healthy initiation promotes cooperation and interdependence. Hazing actually corrodes team-building, promoting cliques and hierarchies. To truly build trust and group bonding there are a great many alternatives to hazing that produce shared trials while undermining demeaning behavior: rope courses, backcountry trips, laser tag, paintball courses, taiko drumming, marathons, or undertaking group service initiatives. Reference the external resource section at the back of this curriculum.

- **Build Mentorship Into Your Institutional Structure**

As new members come they should be paired with senior members. It should be made clear that the responsibility of success is shared between them. It is up to both the mentor and

mentee to engage in the new members' process of learning and incorporating into the group, club, or team. It's important however to have checks and balances so both parties understand there are support structures to help when the relationship doesn't work. Oriki Theater in Mountain View, California initiates and mentors African-American teen boys from East Palo Alto. They do it partly through support from fraternities at San Jose State University. When initiates pledge to those fraternities they commit to providing mentorship to those teens for the duration of their college years.

- **Encourage Open Communication. Make It Clear That Silence Means Condoning**

Leaders must commit not only to disallowing hazing of any kind, they must commit to speaking out and stopping it if necessary. New members should feel safe and encouraged to come to leadership immediately if they anticipate or experience it. Not saying something is tantamount to giving the oppression the permission to flourish. There should also be an institutional Ombudsman or "shadow watcher" for circumstances when leadership themselves are the issue. Implementing circle or council practices is another extremely effective way to achieve openness of communication while encouraging bonding. You can find more info in the supplemental document section of this curriculum.



Image Courtesy of: Alchemy Inc.

## **What Can I Do: Initiation as Sexual Assault Prevention**

Preventing sexual assault is one of the few ways that the subject of sexuality is commonly brought into campus life today. Though a hugely important issue, it's a shame given all the other entrees also available into meaningful discussion about sexuality. The key is to be proactive as much or more than reactive. Of fundamental importance is holding space to explore healthy personal and interpersonal practices. The more your institution can build off sex education your students were afforded in high school, the more it will reinforce a culture of healthy sexuality, overall student achievement, and aid in preventing sexual misconduct on and off campus.

WPD holds transparency and openness as paramount values. Whether the topic is emotional, verbal, or sexual abuse, free and open information and dialog regarding natural curiosities, taboos, and desires will build respect and mindfulness in maturing youth. One of the most common features of rites of passage for many college-aged youth is sexual exploration. Without guidance or dialog this natural threshold can often manifest dysfunctionally.

We encourage you to create situations in which peers are guided by campus counselors, advisors, or mentors to explore healthy and responsible sexual literacy. Consider a viewing of Al Vernacchio's TED talk entitled '*Sex Needs a New Metaphor.*' He promotes moving away from a winner/loser dynamic regarding sex and towards a collaborative model of sexual interaction among youth.

Here are a few discussion topics to support the emergence of healthy sexuality and intimacy:

- Gender Identity, expectation, and inequality; the straightjackets of both gender roles.
- The common assumptions that are but should never be made.
- Sexual awakening as a rite of passage.
- Appreciating sexuality as a vehicle for spirituality and raising consciousness.
- Seeking mentors or trusted peers to rely on for sexual advice, accountability, and support.
- Sexual and physical insecurities and fears.
- Developing and enforcing physical and emotional boundaries and safe words.
- Clearly defining consent and requiring it for every step of sexual interaction.
- Experience with assault or abuse.
- Understanding and defining red flags or danger signs in relationships.
- Awareness and history with STD's and normalizing testing.
- Understanding male and female responsibilities and options for birth control.
- Making sure you have access to a OBGYN or primary care doctor that you trust.
- Becoming familiar with turn-ons and offs and clearly articulating what you want and don't want.
- Appreciating individual differences and preferences.
- Differentiating online from face to face courtships and relationships.
- Dealing with social pressures and anxieties.
- Normalizing sexuality conversation and articulating fantasies to avoid suppression or maladaptation.



- Understanding the ecology of sexual relationships and all their variations, including monogamy, polyamory, bisexuality, etc.
- Coming to clear agreements on relationships: what it means, how it is respected, what constitutes cheating, etc.
- Jealousy, obsession, and reactive behavior in and outside of relationships.
- The different love languages. The differences in expressions of love and affection.
- The regular practice of check-ins. Encouraging strong and honest intimate communication.



Image Courtesy of: Youth Mentoring Connection

**External Resources by Category:**

Here are some examples of colleges and universities doing *WPD* work as well as programs providing service, and a reading list of relevant material.

**Rites of Passage / Ceremony Examples at the Post-Secondary Level**

- Rutgers College: Rites of Passage Ceremony
- College of Charleston: Nia Rite of Passage Celebration
- University of Chicago: O-Week, Parting Ceremony
- University of Albany: Orientation Ceremony
- UCLA: Shape Project
- University of Santa Cruz [Kresge College]: Common Ground Center
- Keene State College: 2010 Rites of Passage Experience Program in association with The Center for the Advancement of Youth, Family, and Community Services
- Lane Community College: Rites of Passage Summer Bridge Program
- Hobart and William Smith College: Mandala Ceremonial Rite
- Delta Sigma Theta, St. Louis Alumnae: Ariay Rites of Passage Program

**Rites of Passage Consultation**

- The Passageworks Institute
- The Center for the Advancement of Youth, Family, and Community Services
- The National Rites of Passage Institute
- Make Trybe School of Transformative Design

**Mentorship**

- Student Mentor.org
- Campus Compact
- The National Mentoring Partnership
- Young Life
- The ManKind Project
- College Mentors for Kids

**Hazing Prevention**

- Hazing Prevention.org
- National Hazing Prevention Week
- Stop Hazing
- Team Captains Network

**Rape Prevention:**

- SAFER: Students Active For Ending Rape
- RPE: Rape Prevention and Education
- NSVRC: National Sexual Violence Resource Center

- RAINN: Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network

**Council Practice/Emotionally Literate Environments:**

- Center for Restorative Justice and Peace
- Making Caring Common Project
- Calling the Circle Foundation
- The World Café

**Group Rapport Building Activities:**

- YES! Connect, Inspire, & Collaborate
- Teampedia
- Therapeutic Recreation Directory

**Discussion Prompts:**

- What does initiation mean, what does an initiated life look like?
- What are the markers or ceremonies that tell us when we get there?
- What is the axis point between tradition and self-expression?
- For those unfamiliar with their cultural heritage, how does cultural exchange show up in your journey to establish meaningful rituals and traditions in your life? How do you avoid appropriation, or deal with it when it happens? Is culture owned?
- What are some of the effects of not having intentional life transitions in western culture?
- Is post-secondary education one of the most important rites of passages there is? Why or why not?
- What do you think makes some experiences life changing and others mundane?
- Where does technology fit into how you explore and express your identity? Your sexuality?
- What are differences, both positive and negative, of advice from a peer vs. advice from an elder?
- What part does mentorship play in a flourishing life?
- How can healthy initiation act as a preventive measure against physical and sexual assault?
- What does the notion “the unexamined life isn’t worth living” mean to you?
- Who are the Elders in your community? How are they involved in the community?
- What do you bring to your community? How are your gifts received, utilized, and recognized?

**Suggested Reading Post Secondary Specific:**

- College Admission: A Failed Rite Of Passage by Michael G. Thompson
- Advising by Faculty or Advising Systems: The Use of Rites and Ceremonies by Howard C. Kramer
- Students’ Intent to Persist by Gaetano Adamo
- Perspectives in Postsecondary Education Programs and Student Support Interventions by R. Denise Myers
- Stress Test: Why the College Admissions Process Is So Nerve-Wracking by William H. Chace
- Seeing College as a Rite of Passage: What Might Be Possible by David G. Blumenkrantz and Marc B. Goldstein

- The Student Affairs Educator's Role in the Prevention of Heterosexism on Campus by Elizabeth A. Trayler
- Campus Climate for Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender People by Susan R. Rankin

#### **Suggested Reading Misc:**

- The Power of Myth or The Hero With a Thousand Faces by Joseph Campbell
- The Heroine's Journey by Maureen Murdock
- Crossroads: The Quest for Contemporary Rites of Passage by Louise Mahdi, Nancy Christopher, and Michael Meade
- Iron John by Robert Bly
- World as Lover, World as Self by Joanna Macy
- Nature and the Human Soul by Bill Plotkin
- Culture, Self, and Meaning by Victor De Munck
- The Way of Council by Jack Zimmerman and Virginia Coyle
- Secrets of the Talking Jaguar by Martin Prechtel
- Moon Mother, Moon Daughter by Janet Lucy and Terri Allison
- The Soul of Education by Rachel Kessler
- Reviving Ophelia by Mary Pipher
- Becoming Animal by David Abrams
- Women Who Run With the Wolves by Clarissa Pinkola Estes
- Ritual: Power, Healing and Community by Malidoma Patrice Some
- The Cathedral Within by Bill Shore
- The Majesty of Calmness by William George Jordan
- The Four Agreements by Don Miguel Ruiz
- Fear: Essential Wisdom for Getting Through the Storm by Thích Nhất Hạnh
- Of Water and the Spirit by Malidoma Some
- The Four-Fold Way by Angeles Arrien
- African Initiations: Rites of Passage Through the Eyes of an Initiate by Shakmah Winddrum
- Way of the Peaceful Warrior by Dan Millman
- Man's Search For Meaning by Viktor Frankl
- Betwixt and Between edited by Mahdi, Foster, Little
- Book of the Vision Quest or Roaring of the Sacred River by Stephen Foster
- Quest: A Guide for Creating Your Own Vision Quest by Denise and Meadow Linn
- The Three Marriages by David Whyte
- Hamlet's Mill by Giorgio de Santillana and Hertha von Dechend
- Shop Class as Soulcraft: An Inquiry into the Value of Work by Matthew B. Crawford
- History of Young People in the West: Ancient and Medieval Rites of Passage by Giovanni Levi

## Supplemental Documents: 40 Developmental Assets for Adolescents

Search Institute has identified the following building blocks of healthy development—known as Developmental Assets—that help young children grow up healthy, caring, and responsible.

### EXTERNAL ASSETS

#### SUPPORT

1. **Family support**—Family life provides high levels of love and support.
2. **Positive family communication**—Young person and her or his parent(s) communicate positively, and young person is willing to seek advice and counsel from parents.
3. **Other adult relationships**—Young person receives support from three or more nonparent adults.
4. **Caring neighborhood**—Young person experiences caring neighbors.
5. **Caring school climate**—School provides a caring, encouraging environment.
6. **Parent involvement in schooling**—Parent(s) are actively involved in helping young person succeed in school.

#### EMPOWERMENT

7. **Community values youth**—Young person perceives that adults in the community value youth.
8. **Youth as resources**—Young people are given useful roles in the community.
9. **Service to others**—Young person serves in the community one hour or more per week.
10. **Safety**—Young person feels safe at home, school, and in the neighborhood.

#### BOUNDARIES AND EXPECTATIONS

11. **Family boundaries**—Family has clear rules and consequences and monitors the young person's whereabouts.
12. **School boundaries**—School provides clear rules and consequences.
13. **Neighborhood boundaries**—Neighbors take responsibility for monitoring young people's behavior.
14. **Adult role models**—Parent(s) and other adults model positive, responsible behavior.
15. **Positive peer influence**—Young person's best friends model responsible behavior.
16. **High expectations**—Both parent(s) and teachers encourage the young person to do well.

#### CONSTRUCTIVE USE OF TIME

17. **Creative activities**—Young person spends three or more hours per week in lessons or practice in music, theater, or other arts.
18. **Youth programs**—Young person spends three or more hours per week in sports, clubs, or organizations at school and/or in the community.
19. **Religious community**—Young person spends one or more hours per week in activities in a religious institution.
20. **Time at home**—Young person is out with friends “with nothing special to do” two or fewer nights per week.

## INTERNAL ASSETS

### COMMITMENT TO LEARNING

- 21. **Achievement Motivation**—Young person is motivated to do well in school.
- 22. **School Engagement**—Young person is actively engaged in learning.
- 23. **Homework**—Young person reports doing at least one hour of homework every school day.
- 24. **Bonding to school**—Young person cares about her or his school.
- 25. **Reading for Pleasure**—Young person reads for pleasure three or more hours per week.

### POSITIVE VALUES

- 26. **Caring**—Young person places high value on helping other people.
- 27. **Equality and social justice**—Young person places high value on promoting equality and reducing hunger and poverty.
- 28. **Integrity**—Young person acts on convictions and stands up for her or his beliefs.
- 29. **Honesty**—Young person “tells the truth even when it is not easy.”
- 30. **Responsibility**—Young person accepts and takes personal responsibility.
- 31. **Restraint**—Young person believes it is important not to be sexually active or to use alcohol or other drugs.

### SOCIAL COMPETENCIES

- 32. **Planning and decision-making**—Young person knows how to plan ahead and make choices.
- 33. **Interpersonal Competence**—Young person has empathy, sensitivity, and friendship skills.
- 34. **Cultural Competence**—Young person has knowledge of and comfort with people of different cultural/racial/ethnic backgrounds.
- 35. **Resistance skills**—Young person can resist negative peer pressure and dangerous situations.
- 36. **Peaceful conflict resolution**—Young person seeks to resolve conflict nonviolently.

### POSITIVE IDENTITY

- 37. **Personal power**—Young person feels he or she has control over “things that happen to me.”
- 38. **Self-esteem**—Young person reports having a high self-esteem.
- 39. **Sense of purpose**—Young person reports that “my life has a purpose.”
- 40. **Positive view of personal future**—Young person is optimistic about her or his personal future.
- 41. **Positive Cultural Identity**—Young person feels comfortable with and proud of her/his identity, including but not limited to disabilities, ethnicity, faith/religion, family status, gender, language and sexual orientation. \*

\* Project Cornerstone established this asset for Silicon Valley as a result of local community input. Learn more here <http://www.projectcornerstone.org/html/developmentalassets.html>



### **Supplemental Documents: Core vs. Constructed Identity Mapping**

In thinking about the different aspects of the self, one cannot ignore how those are informed by environment and relationships. Along the journey towards who you choose to become you will endure many struggles. In doing so it's important and helpful to acknowledge the discernible difference between two aspects of your identity:

- Core identity, which is naturally present within you and is rooted in your instincts and intuitions or feelings.
- Constructed identity, which is a result of observations, choices and interactions both with yourself and others.

A good way to understand this is to think about how people used to inherit the trades of their parents. Your core identity may want to paint portraits but if your parent was a blacksmith your constructed identity dictates that you should take up the anvil. Or, you may love one thing but it might not be something your group of friends likes or that is culturally accepted in your family or community. The most common reason we live through constructed identities is because of others' expectations of us. We convince ourselves there's no other choice.

It's common knowledge that the way you act around your best friend is not the way you act around your grandma, just as the person you are at work is not the same as the person you are on a date or when you're alone. Have you ever asked yourself what the meeting place is between these selves, the axis point between your real and constructed identities? The point at which all your different selves connect?

As we age we begin to learn that our identity is not static. It doesn't necessarily lead to a single predetermined fate but opens up to many possibilities. Buddhists would say that there is no fundamental self, that who we are is simply determined in every moment by the choices we make. They claim that there is no such thing as immutable or fixed identity. We'll just say that who we become as healthy adults consists of the gray area between our core and constructed identity. "Truth" can have many different perspectives, that of your own perception and beliefs, and those you've learned from others. For instance, when you connect a sunny day to being happy or a rainy day to being sad is this because you feel that way instinctually or because you were raised to believe it? It is important to routinely reassess who we are. By looking into what we've done and learned in the past we discover who we are. We learn where we're headed and where we want to go. The exercise below is designed to give you some insight into how to be your core self more often and to align the identities or masks that you wear along with it.

**Exercise:**

1. Think about your core identity. What are some things you feel make up the foundation of you?
2. Can you tell the difference between the way you think and act when alone or when around others? Describe some of the differences.
3. Which things make you the most comfortable, and why?
4. What are some expectations that others have of you, and what are some you have of yourself?
5. Think about your constructed identity. What are some character traits you feel are shaped by the relationships and expectations described above?
6. Does what you want or need change when you are around certain people? Who are these people and why do you think your wants/needs change?
7. Fill out the table below with the aspects of your two identities. Place any that show up in both columns in the middle.
8. Journal some ideas on how to merge the two in your daily life. How can you set goals that achieve a compromise between who you are and others' expectations of you?
9. Do you feel you know when to place less focus on those expectations as opposed to when to consider their value, and why?

Core Identity Traits	Crossover	Constructed Identity Traits

## Supplemental Documents: Healthy Assertion

**Passive Communication:** Passive communication is typically used when a person wants to avoid confrontation. A passive person is indirect and usually so vague that the person receiving the communication is left to decipher the message being sent. A passive communicator does not tend to his or her own needs but rather allows others to choose and make decisions for them. Passive communication can be verbal or nonverbal. Here are some examples: eye rolling, not making eye contact, saying “whatever,” answering “fine” when things really aren’t fine, lying, withdrawing, not returning phone calls or texts, giving the silent treatment, isolating yourself, saying you will do one thing but not following through [*saying you will clean your room before you go out but not doing it at all*].

**Aggressive Communication:** Aggressive communication typically involves placing your needs above others. It can entail being so brutally honest that you don’t consider the feelings of others; in fact, you want to control other people. The message can be overly demanding so that the person receiving the message is intimidated or scared. There is usually no negotiation with aggressive communication [*“It’s my way or the highway.”*]. Just as with any other form of communication, aggressive communication can be verbal or nonverbal. Examples include: yelling/screaming, posturing in an intimidating way [*clenching fists, puffing out your chest and standing over someone*], breaking or throwing things, lying, threatening [*“If you don’t let me do this, I’ll...”*].

**Passive-Aggressive Communication:** Passive-aggressive communication is a combination of the two different styles. It usually involves not being direct with communication, but wanting to be in control at the same time. For example, using Facebook to write a comment on someone’s page that can be taken as an insult but stating you didn’t mean it to be an insult. Sarcasm can often be seen as passive or aggressive. Usually it is both.

**Assertive Communication:** Assertive communication involves taking your needs AND others’ needs into consideration. In order to assertively communicate you need to be direct but sensitive and caring with your honesty. It lets us express positive and negative thoughts and feelings in an open, honest and direct way. Assertive communication also allows us to take responsibility for our actions without blaming or judging others. Examples of assertive communication include: making eye contact, using a voice that is not so quiet but not too loud, talking about your feelings, using “I statements” [*because using “you statements” can communicate blame or judgment*], being honest, compromising.

### Exercise:

1. What is the most effective way to communicate and why?
2. Do you or someone in your family communicate in a passive manner? How so? Provide specific examples to illustrate how this form of communication is used.
3. Do you or someone in your family communicate in an aggressive manner? How so? Provide specific examples to illustrate how this form of communication is used.
4. We all communicate on both sides of the spectrum [*passive and aggressive*], but what is your tendency? Do you usually communicate on the passive or aggressive side more often? Provide two specific examples.
5. Using the two examples from question #4, write how you would have communicated if you were using assertive communication.

### Supplemental Documents: Emotional Literacy

Understanding how you feel in and of itself can be extremely challenging. The ability to identify, interpret and then describe our emotions is one of the most important aspects of self-exploration. The more you're able to locate specific feelings and tie them to physical sensations in the body the more emotionally literate you'll become. *[I feel a tightness in my stomach, a knot... it feels like sadness.]* To accurately articulate the way we feel is how we learn to effectively advocate for what we want, how we relieve stress, how we communicate and empathize with others, how we overcome challenges and defuse conflict. Emotional intelligence can seem natural to some and completely foreign to others. Just as in most things the more you do it the better you get at it. It's very important to take the time to truly be aware of how you're feeling and what is at the root of those feelings. This leads to emotional literacy – the ability to “read” not only your own feelings but those of others. Below you will see a list of “feeling” words. Take the time to look at these and think about which you identify the most with on a regular basis.

#### Pleasant Feelings:

Accepted	Adequate	Adventurous	Bold
Brilliant	Calm	Caring	Cheered
Comfortable	Confident	Content	Daring
Eager	Elated	Encouraged	Energetic
Excited	Fascinated	Free	Full
Glad	Great	Gutsy	Happy
High	Hopeful	Humble	Joyful
Important	Lovely	Overjoyed	Efficacious
Peppy	Playful	Pleased	Proud
Refreshed	Relaxed	Relieved	Satisfied
Secure	Surprised	Sympathetic	Tranquil
Understood	Warm	Wonderful	Zany

**Unpleasant Feelings:**

Afraid	Angry	Anxious	Ashamed
Bashful	Bored	Cautious	Cheated
Concerned	Defeated	Defiant	Disappointed
Discouraged	Disheartened	Down	Embarrassed
Envious	Fearful	Foolish	Guilty
Hateful	Hesitant	Hopeless	Hurt
Impatient	Irritated	Jealous	Letdown
Lonely	Miserable	Nervous	Pained
Overwhelmed	Possessive	Provoked	Pushed
Rejected	Regretful	Resentful	Shy
Stupid	Suspicious	Uncomfortable	Tired
Uneasy	Unhappy	Unloved	Indecisive

**Identify:**

- 1 Pick a few of the words listed above [*pleasant and unpleasant*]. When do you feel these?
- 2 How do you identify these [*talking it out, journaling, relating it to something else, etc.*]?

**Interpret:**

- 1 What are the surface causes [*ones that immediately come up in your mind*] for these?
- 2 What do you think the root causes [*underlying reason*] might be? Do they differ from the surface causes, if so how?

**Express:**

- 1 When you feel these, are you able to openly express them? What are boundaries that might keep you from doing so both that you place there and those based on outside expectations.
- 2 Describe a few ways in which you can fully and productively express your emotions.
- 3 Describe a few ways your family, friends, and educators can best support you and hold you accountable in being emotionally literate.

### **Supplemental Documents: Johari Window – Comparing Perception to Reality**

Our perception can often be greatly influenced by how we view ourselves in our environment, as well as by how others view us and how we think they view us, etc. In 1955, psychologists Joseph Luft and Harry Ingham developed a system to explore this. Taken from a combination of their two first names, they dubbed it the Johari window. It's made up of four distinct boxes each signifying a type of knowledge, be it personal or social. Below is a diagram of the window. To properly use the window read the description of each of the "areas", create a list of your own Johari adjectives and then follow the exercise directions. This process is incredibly valuable for aligning your perception with that of your environment and finding strengths, weaknesses and blind spots so that we can better learn how to accept who we are, who we want to be and how to align the two.

- **Open Area:** This is the area in your life that you have shared with others such as your experiences, opinions, feelings, behavior, skills, or problems. This is the element of yourself that you freely divulge to others. This is the public part of your life.
- **Blind Area:** This is the part of yourself that others see about you that you are not aware of. The way that things go from being in the blind area to the open area is through feedback.
- **Hidden Area:** This is the part of yourself that you are aware of but you don't want to let others know about. The way that things go from being in the blind area to being in the open area is through disclosure.
- **Unknown Area:** This area includes information that neither you nor others know about yourself. This is the mystery in your life, which perhaps comes into awareness through revelation.

**Find the diagram at:** <http://galleryhip.com/johari-window-model.html>

#### **Exercise:**

1. Make a list of adjectives or find one here: <http://www.grammaruntied.com/?p=1175>
2. Identify a minimum of six that you possess
3. Ask two or three people to pick out four to six that they believe you possess.
4. Begin filling in Johari areas on in the box.
5. Things that are on YOUR list and ANOTHER'S list go in the "open" box.
6. Things that are on YOUR list and NOT ON ANOTHER'S list go in the "hidden" box.
7. Things that are on ANOTHER'S list and not on YOUR list go in the "blind" box.
8. In looking at the three completed boxes you can begin filling in the "UNKNOWN" box with qualities you may have based on what connections you draw from conversation with your peers and self-reflection.
9. What qualities currently in the "hidden" box might you want to share with others?
10. What qualities currently in the "blind" box might you feel ready to claim?
11. What qualities in the "unknown" box do you feel ready to explore?



### Supplemental Documents: The Power of Gift in Mentorship

When experimenting with different roles, we tend to be most effective when we have help. The curiosity of childhood when exposed to experience can either turn into confusion or focus depending on what tools and guidance the child has along his or her path. It's often true that someone can only take you as far as they themselves have been, while learning new things about themselves in doing so. In fact, both learning and teaching are brought together in collaboration between the student and teacher. To offer guidance is itself a gift, which serves both members mutually. As you incorporate experiences from any new experience into your life it becomes more and more apparent that each time you offer to others what you've learned, old and new pieces of your journey will present themselves to you. Lewis Hyde in his book on the nature of giving describes how the gift itself can be the agent of change:

*"It is also the case that a gift may be the actual agent of change, the bearer of new life. In the simplest examples, gifts carry identity with them, and to accept the gift amounts to incorporating the new identity. It is as if such a gift passes through the body and leaves us altered. The gift is not merely the witness or guardian to new life, but the creator. "Teachings" are my primary example here. I do not mean schoolbook lessons, I mean those infrequent lessons in living that alter, or even save, our lives."*

Many indigenous cultures believed that the act of giving was animistic, in other words they viewed the gift as **alive**. They described it as something that was always in motion, the way a gift moved was described as circular, much like the ripples caused when a stone was thrown onto the surface of a pond. In the Pacific Northwest, a chief would engage in *potlatch*, giving away everything he owned as a sign of his wealth and power. Since he had more to give away, and the power to get more, the gifts carried real weight. What remains true is that gifts have to be truly given, not given in anticipation of a repayment, while being conscious of how the gift affects others. For instance, when a youth came back from seeking a vision they were reminded that the "gift of vision" did not simply belong to them alone, but to their community as a whole. Elders deciphered it and gave council on how to best incorporate it among those they loved. This was in fact how they **defined their role**. To become a healthy adult is to acknowledge your own work and to venture towards giving back those things you've learned along the way so you can be reminded not only that you **DO** know them, and **CAN** do them but so others might in turn learn the same through you.

### Exercise

1. Describe a time when you learned something different about what you knew by teaching or giving it to others.
2. What experiences have you had with mentorship in your life, both positive and negative?
3. What are qualities needed for a good mentor?
4. What part does mentorship play in community?
5. Do you believe that gifts are important parts of being in a community, and why or why not?
6. Do you think the act of giving can be the source of change? Describe an experience when you've seen or felt this.

## Supplemental Documents: SMART Goals and Purpose

Being mindful is the foundation of Whole Person Development, and growing out of mindfulness is how we actually act on and follow through with our values. To successfully achieve goals we must first make them and then follow through with them maintaining what we have achieved; this is how we allow ourselves to grow. One of the best ways to do this is to practice goal setting with your youth. However goals should be **SMART** (originally developed by Peter Drucker but modified here):

- **Simple** – Keep your goal statement simple and to the point.
- **Measurable** – Make sure it's measurable. Ex.: I will practice piano 6 times a week for 20 minutes each time.
- **Achievable** – Don't aim too high. Too many of us are overly ambitious, especially at the beginning. Make sure you can reach your goal without too much stress and strain. Set yourself up for victory!
- **Relevant** – Make sure your goal has direct relevance to your overall sense of mission or life purpose – the big Life Plan that guides you.
- **Time Bound** – Make sure you have an end date and time. You need to know where the finish line is!

There are five distinct parts to a **SMART** goal, and they are:

### 1. OUTCOME [*What do I want?*]

This is something that is:

- Stated in the positive - I want to achieve [ x ] instead of I don't want to fail at [ x ].
- Within my control - Changing myself instead of trying to change others
- Something real - What can I realistically achieve instead of setting myself up for failure
- Ecological - Something that fits into my life/environment positively

### 2. EVIDENCE [*How will I know I have achieved it?*]

This is something that:

- I will see [ x ]
- I will hear [ x ]
- I will feel [ x ]

### 3. OBSTACLES [*What might stand in my way?*]

This is something that is:

- Rational - Something that I will realistically have to deal with
- Foreseeable - Something I can actually predict with some certainty
- Detailed - Something I can articulate enough to plan for

### 4. PLAN [*What is my strategy?*]

This involves:

- Who - Who can help me?
- What - What will I need to achieve my goal?
- Where - Where will I find who and what I need?
- When - When will I need to utilize what I've found?
- How - How will I pool all my resources together into a manageable plan to achieve my goal?  
What will my plan look like? How will I execute it?

## 5. RESULT [*What did I do?*]

This is something in which I must be:

- **Honest.** If I didn't achieve my goal, then I must admit this and make the adjustment needed to properly do so. If I did then I will likewise congratulate myself and continue down the path I have constructed.

### Exercise

1. Brainstorm something that you want to achieve. You should be able to close your eyes and clearly visualize yourself achieving this goal. What are you willing to do to achieve this goal; what would you risk and sacrifice for its success? As you choose something you want to work for, fill out each of the five stages and see what you come up with. With each one you complete the next will be easier.
2. Finding Your Life Purpose  
*"Don't ask what the world needs. Ask what makes you come alive and go do that. Because what the world needs is people who've come alive."* -Howard Thurman

This is designed to help students begin to identify what might be their life purpose. To know it more fully they may need to experience a transformative rites of passage. But this can get them thinking.

To start, it's essential that each person become aware of that which most fulfills them. It can be anything: making paper airplanes, fixing cars, studying beetles, figuring out long math equations, building irrigation canals, cutting hair, telling stories, riding bicycles, flying kites, reading, writing, painting, singing, dancing... literally anything, and it certainly doesn't have to be connected to anything "artistic." Whatever you feel intrinsically passionate about is the soul's way of guiding you to your life purpose. There are little road signs along the way that clue you in to being on the right course. The first is "this is fun!"

So what are you most passionate about? What are your unique gifts? They need not be the same. The important thing is to identify your strongest directional "pull," name a career direction based on it, and then just keep doing it. Know that whatever that aspiration is won't necessarily last. In fact, most likely it will change. But it's important to identify it now and follow it, like a guiding star, and see where it takes you. Take some time and journal what you find.

### Supplemental Documents: Culture Mapping

One of the most important things we can do is understand where we are, who we are, and why. Every group whether voluntary or mandatory has a culture, habits and behaviors driven by stated values that meet up against acted values. This is a tool adapted from a project by David Gray, a business consultant and collaborative expert.

Take some time to fill out this chart in order through group conversation to make those un-discussable things discussable to foster equality, transparency, accountability, better communication and ultimately relationships in whatever culture you find yourself a part of.

<b>Observations</b> Who Are We? How Do We Behave Together? How Do We Co-Exist/Collaborate? Are All Our Members Equally Represented? Are Our Practices Ours, Where Do They Come From, Are We Allowed To Use Them? If Not, Why Not? What Kind of Place Are We In?			
<b>Drivers</b> What Drives Our Behaviors? Who Controls What? What Are The Taboos? What Cannot Be Discussed? What Are The Rewards? Are There Other Contributing Factors?			
<b>Stated Values</b> What Do We Say We Value?			
<b>Acted Values</b> What Values Would Others Not in Our Culture Say We Represent? What Values Are Demonstrated By Our Behavior?			
<b>Reasons:</b> Why Are These Our Values? What Do We Think They Help Us Achieve? Why Choose These Values Over Others? Where Do Tradition, Self Expression, And Innovation Meet For US? What is Important to Keep or Discard?			

### **Supplemental Documents: Sitting In Circle and Holding Effective Groups**

Sitting in circle can change perspectives, allow for deep connections and set things right when the integrity of a community is challenged by harmful or disruptive behaviors. Circle or council practices cultivate a culture in which everyone feels that they have a place, that they belong, in which every member knows that they are seen, heard, and respected.

The basic framework is self explanatory, form a circle so that everyone can see everyone else's face and thus eyes. The space you're in will directly affect the type of circle you have. If you can, arrange the room or space free of barriers between the members of the circle or in the center. Then you will need to find or point out a 'talking piece.'

A talking piece is used to identify who has the ability to speak during circle. It can be anything that is easily passed from one student to another. The more soothing or even interesting the better, preferably something with character, a story. The piece will rest in the center until someone is called to or called upon by the facilitator to speak, when they are finished they place it back in the center or hand it to whomever has acknowledged that they have something to add.

An important part of circle is to acknowledge that what is shared in circle stays in circle, to possibly as class or group develop a code of behavior for it. There needs to be explicit beginning or endings, preferably with consistent ritual actions such as clapping or bowing so that everyone is very clear that it has begun or ended. A hypothetical circle might look like this:

- Opening Gesture
- Check in: Everyone has the opportunity to speak in clockwise or counter clockwise rotation
- Forum: Open space in which anyone that feels called can bring issues or ideas to the circle
- Acknowledgement: Members of the circle can publicly acknowledge each other or positive things that they have been a part of recently
- Closing Gesture

***It is highly recommended that anyone who wishes to hold circle in any fashion, test it out informally first, or even better to seek training through some of the organizations pioneering this work such as the Ojai Foundation or the Center for Restorative Justice.***

### **Holding Effective Groups**

Groups are one of the most effective ways in which to convey information and create emotional reflection and or/catharsis. Doing so can be an art whether in teaching, facilitating or participating. Here are some basic guideposts on how to be effective at achieving participation and also what to expect from a student who is looking to lead a group. Here some tips for leading effective groups:

**1. Prepare:** Ask yourself these foundational questions to better prepare to lead or help a student lead an effective group.

- Are the necessary resources available and on hand?
- Is the learning environment conducive to learning/ I.e. is it safe physically and emotionally?
- What are the group dynamics?
- Is the content conducive to maintaining or building esteem?
- Am I accounting for all possible values and beliefs?
- Are the learning objectives and expectations clearly communicated?
- Is there a proper balance of intellectual and emotional content?
- Is the way I will frame the subject matter relevant/interesting?

**2. Connect:** Build rapport. People who feel connected are much more willing to devote time and energy into a group. This can be as simple as using icebreakers like:

- Basic Introductions
- Sharing of Descriptive Adjectives
- Where They're From

**3. Engage:** Cultivate interest in your topic. There is no learning without engagement. Begin with a bang by starting with one of the following:

- Evocative Quotation or Statistic
- An Anecdote
- A Paradox

**4. Focus:** Formulate clear objectives for the group and have an agenda already prepared that you can refer to if needed. People crave clarity.

**5. Offer a Constellation:** Present across learning modalities e.g. visual, auditory, kinesthetic, etc.

**6. Involve:** Involve as many people as you can in the group discussion. Effective methods might be:

- Small group work
- Debate
- Role-play

**7. Share:** Offer others ownership of where the group will go, be able to be flexible if need be, remember just because its not going according to plan doesn't mean its not going where it should.

**8. Structure** is key, the structure of an effective group usually contains:

- **Safe Space:** The group should take place somewhere where it is unlikely to be interrupted.
- **Opening:** Participants could agree to participate, say their names, hold a moment of silence, clap, bow, etc.
- **Instruction:** Introduce the topic or activity and role model expected behaviors. It can be helpful to explain why the topic was chosen.
- **Participation:** Promote group participation by asking specific participants if they would like to share if only a few are talking. If participants refuse, respect that choice.
- **Focus:** Keep everyone on the topic of conversation or on task.
- **Debrief:** The group should end by providing some sort of summary e.g. what did the conversation/activity tell us, what can we take away, etc.
- **Closing/Transition:** Participants should hold another moment of silence, etc. It's good to have a plan for what's next, if the group was on an emotionally heavy topic it's often good to end by doing something physical like a game, or even simple stretching and try to not hold groups directly before or after mealtimes.



## Supplemental Documents: Seeing College as a Rite of Passage: *What Might Be Possible*

by David G. Blumenkrantz, Marc B. Goldstein. In Hanson, Chad. (2014) [In Search of Self: Exploring Student Identity Development: New Directions for Higher Education](#), Number 166 June 2014 Jossey-Bass.

College is a community of diversity. Whatever else college may be to such a diverse citizenry—students, staff, faculty, administration, and parents—it is a place where young people come of age. It is a place where intentional rites of passage can be of service to a student's identity and social development, with additional benefits for the college community as well as the larger society. While many have acknowledged this to be true (Chang, 2012; Fleischer, 2010; Olkon & Smith, 2013), few institutions have fully capitalized on the natural power of college as a place of initiation. Intentionally designed rite-of-passage experiences can powerfully impact students and the greater college environment. Below, we will briefly explore what a rite of passage is (and is not), the importance and benefits of such experiences, and some practical strategies for integrating rites of passage into the campus setting.

### Rites and Wrongs of Passage

Unlike other major transitions, such as marriage and funerals, cultural and secular rituals in America do not effectively assist a child's transition to adulthood (Gavazzi & Blumenkrantz, 1993; Quinn, Newfield, & Protinsky, 1985; Roberts, 1983). The lack of clearly established rites of passage in America is partly due to the ambiguity about when one becomes an adult. Moreover, the ages at which youth receive certain adult privileges, such as the right to vote or right to drink, are rather arbitrary and are not related to any actual competencies or maturity on the part of the individuals who gain those privileges. In the absence of formal lines of demarcation between childhood and adulthood, youth experiment with behaviors, which they perceive as adult behaviors, in their attempt to reach adulthood. Without purposeful rite-of-passage strategies that promote a positive transition toward adulthood, health-compromising behaviors, such as binge drinking (Commission on Substance Abuse at Colleges and Universities [CASA], 1994), hazing (Adams, 2010), and inappropriate sexual relations (McGolerick, 2010) are some of the ways emerging adults initiate themselves.

Indeed, the phrase *rite of passage* was endowed with specific meaning by its originator, anthropologist Arnold van Gennep—a meaning that went beyond merely a “first” or otherwise special experience for the individual. Van Gennep searched for common features across the panorama of cultural practices that exist in our species. His classic work (1909/1960), *The Rites of Passage*, identified one such commonality: the presence of community-centered rites of passage to mark important life transitions found in nearly all cultures. While the manifestations of these rites of passage vary across societies, van Gennep argued that they all contain an underlying sequence of three stages: separation, transition (liminality), and incorporation. We will discuss these briefly as they pertain to one critical life transition: emergence into adulthood within the context of college.

Separation according to van Gennep (1909/1960) referred to a change from the normal routine of daily life. Historically, in the case of youth, it was often a biological marker, that is, the onset of puberty. At

this point, the message from family and community to adolescents was, in essence: "From this point on you must be on a journey to adulthood. You must leave (separate from) this place of childhood behind, separate from childish things, and move into adulthood for the health and benefit of yourself, your family, community, and nature." The transition to college, especially when a child leaves home, is clearly a stage of separation that spawns anxiety over the uncertainty of the new experience, that is, college. It is the place of "betwixt and between" (Turner, 1969) that forces change to occur.

During this transitory phase, there is considerable uncertainty and mystery; young people were in a place of liminality where social status was lost or unclear while they underwent instruction in the skills, values, and ethics needed for both individual and community survival (van Gennep, 1909/1960). This stage was marked by periods of extreme stress or "ordeals" that help to compel the adolescent to experience the full range of human emotions and potential. College clearly provides all these features; there is the uncertainty of new places, people, and expectations; the ordeal of mastering difficult cognitive material and stressful exams; and the instruction and support (academic and personal) to help the neophyte weather the transition.

One cannot remain in a place of ambiguity or confusion for long. From these emotionally charged and compelling experiences, adolescents grow, mature, and move into the third phase: incorporation (van Gennep, 1909/1960). Now they incorporate these lessons into life, and the lessons serve to guide and inform them of the community's expectation for living well and affirm them as emerging adults ready to be integrated into the healthy functioning of the local society. This third stage includes a public ritual experience (e.g., a graduation ceremony) in which the community affirms and sanctions the youth's new status.

While there may be some debate among scholars (see Lincoln, 1981) regarding the generalizability of van Gennep's tripartite structure (separation, liminality, and incorporation), there is little disagreement about the societal importance of publically sanctioned rites of passage and the implications of their absence (e.g., Blumenkrantz, 1992; Campbell & Moyers, 1988; Mahdi, Foster, & Little, 1987; Meade, 1993). Indeed, the absence of rites of passage for today's youth, families, and communities has extraordinary consequences—mostly negative—to which the above authors would attest. The rite-of-passage process not only guides the individual's transition to a new status, but, more importantly, it reaffirms and celebrates society's values. Rite-of-passage experiences are integral parts of community life. They initiate individuals into the roles and responsibilities of their new status. These public events are cause for social gathering and renewal, reinforcing the importance of these statuses, and the values accompanying them (Blumenkrantz, 1996).

The decline of communally sanctioned rite-of-passage experiences to support the transition from childhood to adulthood has spawned the growth of contemporary programs to fill this gap (Benjamin, 2011). Most such programs engage participants from a weekend to several weeks in settings away from one's home. While such retreats undoubtedly provide personal growth for participants and enhance bonding with their cohort, we believe that such experiences do little to foster the sense of connection, bonding, or obligation participants have to the social setting to which they return and live. Indeed, it is

this absence of a place-based grounding that reflects a fundamental dilemma in many contemporary applications of rites of passage. Such programs are seen principally as an experience for the individual participant rather than for the community. Thus, rite-of-passage experiences as offered by practitioners are viewed as programs to be purchased for personal growth.

In contrast to this program orientation, we prefer a systems perspective favored by some evolutionary biologists (Wilson, 2012) who suggest that the community is the central unit of human organization. With this orientation, rites of passage were first and foremost designed to foster and strengthen the bonds of the local human ecology, insuring their resilience and adaptability, and serving the survival of our species.

### **Rites of Passage and Higher Education**

Given the geographic mobility in contemporary society, college is a natural place for prosocial, community-sanctioned initiation, and rites of passage toward adulthood to occur. For four or more years, colleges and universities represent a diverse setting in which young people are heavily invested. Moreover, colleges generally possess more autonomy than secondary schools to shape their environments in creative ways to benefit their constituents: students, staff, faculty, and the larger society. Creating rite-of-passage experiences can be achieved through a step-by-step change process that engages multiple constituencies within the college or university. It begins by reframing college as a place of initiation, where young people come of age and upper-division students and adults are trained as elders and participate in the initiatory process to guide and support a student's healthy growth and development. In what follows, we present a contemporary definition of rites of passage, followed by a blueprint identifying the primary elements of an architectural structure for building rites of passage. First, a contemporary definition:

*The degree to which a series of activities are a rite of passage is directly proportional to a community's acceptance and participation in the activities and youth's perception and belief in the activities as fulfilling their conscious and unconscious needs for transformative experiences. That is, a modern day rite of passage is achieved when parents (and/or their surrogates) and the community create and participate in experiences, which are perceived to be transformative by youth and in fact offer them increased status within the community and facilitate their healthy transition through adolescence. Equally important, the celebration of a rite of passage is renewing for the entire community. A youth's public expression of and commitment to a community's values and beliefs reinforces expectations for behaviors for the entire community. A child's coming of age presents an opportunity for the whole community to examine, adapt and re-commit themselves to their social and cultural heritage. (Blumenkrantz, 1996, p. 21)*

This collective involvement in creating and sustaining these essential processes is the way to strengthen the social bonds of the group. Rites of passage are rich with history and tradition that speak to our most basic human understanding, both within the unconscious and conscious mind, and as such can be effective at motivating and mobilizing a community into action on behalf of its youth. They have specific

elements that when integrated through collaborative conversations can strengthen a sense of community.

### College as a Place of Initiation

As noted above, college life provides experiences consistent with the phases of a rite of passage. What is missing is the lack of consistency and intentionality on the part of the college to focus these rite-of-passage experiences for the full development of their students. It is largely left up to the students to “understand” their college experience within their own development as a rite of passage and “put the pieces together.” What would we be doing if we reframed college as a place of initiation?

Convening conversations around questions that matter related to welcoming everyone into the social fabric of the college campus is a first step. The conversations are intentionally guided by a series of questions that begin to uncover how rites of passage can be integrated into campus life using elements of the architectural structure for youth and community development through rites of passage as a framework (Blumenkrantz & Goldstein, 2010). The first seven elements guide an exploration into the present situation (i.e., how we welcome people to the college) and open the possibility that things may need to change. They reflect the “separation” phase of rites of passage. Below are sample questions, but the best questions come from the stakeholders within institutions:

1. *What is the story?* What is the mission and vision of our institution? In what way do mission and vision address the social, psychological, and emotional development of our members that support their own individual growth and the creation of a culture of caring and connection? What conditions and/or activities presently exist within the college setting that are already aligned with rites of passage (e.g., first-year experience programs, fraternities or sororities, clubs, and athletics)? Where are there access points to begin conversations about how we orient or initiate students to the values and ethics of the college or university in ways that serve to strengthen the communal bonds among everyone in the college environs?
2. *What are the values and ethics in the story?* How have values and ethics shaped our attitudes that inform and guide the decisions we make about what we do? If the institutional mission speaks of personal development and connection with the community, who is responsible for this function? Is it left up to one department—student life—or is it seriously integrated into the actions of the whole college?
3. *Is a paradigm shift necessary?* As we explore the present situation or the story that is our college’s mission, how can we begin to accept the possibility that changing views—a paradigm shift—might be necessary? If we reframed the college as a place of initiation, what would we do differently? What changes might be possible, for students, staff, faculty, and administrators if this became the question that defined the college paradigm? Challenging and changing longstanding paradigms is tough work, particularly in the tradition-bound world of the academy. But it is the discussion of these fundamental questions that will let us see new possibilities and generate the energy to move toward change.
4. *Does the college foster relationships necessary for rite-of passage program success?* Where do the conditions presently exist for the formation of positive relationships that are sustained during a person’s membership in our community? How are our residence halls, athletic departments, fraternities and sororities, individual disciplines/departments presently organized to

build meaningful and lasting relationships that support initiating students into our college ecology?

5. *How can we make use of community “elders”?* Where might mentors, upper-class students, and “elders” naturally assist new members of the community? What can we do to intentionally prepare segments of the college to initiate incoming members in ways that strengthen bonds and create a culture of caring? How are faculty, staff, and other adults welcomed into the community that gives them a sense of connection and commitment?
6. *How can we assure that welcoming happens in the home community?* How do we define our community? Who are its members? What are their roles and responsibilities, especially as they relate to welcoming and initiating new members? Do the various subcommunities of our campus—for example, academics, student life, and administration—initiate students in ways that do not present conflicting messages or values? What is the relationship of our college with the larger community, region, nature, and the world?
7. *What are behaviors between all members of our community that exhibit respect and responsibility?* What forums within our college or university could be refocused on active deliberation and commitment to these behaviors? What programs already exist that convey values and ethics for our students in ways that deepen their commitment to both our campus and the larger community and are expressed through service?
8. *How can rites of passage create expectations for socially appropriate behaviors?* What programs already exist that convey values and ethics for our students in ways that deepen their commitment to both our campus and the larger community and are expressed through service?

Table 9.1 summarizes the early sequence of processes that colleges might work through as they transform themselves into initiatory settings. Our preliminary efforts to initiate such changes in college settings have suggested that the biggest challenge is getting the various campus constituencies to think more broadly about their ultimate purpose. The silo mentality (Holden & Goldstein, 2010; Upton, 2010) on campuses is re-inforced by an organizational structure that divides us by disciplines and obscures our recognition that we all must contribute, in a coherent way, to the full development of the next generation. Such development must go beyond intellectual prowess and incorporate the values and responsibilities needed for the successful continuity of our species. As we enter an era where students and society have begun to question the value of going to college, we believe that efforts to reconceptualize college as a place of initiation and focused personal development may provide the benefits needed by students and society.

**Table 9.1. Transforming College Into a Place of Initiation and Rite of Passage (ROP)<sup>a</sup>**

<i>Components</i>	<i>Element—Activities</i>	<i>Target Population</i>	<i>Outcomes</i>
Reframing college experience as a rite of passage. Increase understanding of history, practice, and consequences of the absences of ROP.	Bring diverse constituencies together to engage in a process of discovery where conditions already exist for ROP experiences (first-year experience) and strategic planning to formulate ongoing health promotion strategies that incorporate rites of passage. Small and large group discussions, lecture, and experiences.	Administrators, key faculty, student life coordinators, resident advisors, Greek societies, sports, student services, and so forth. May include community participation in rite-of-passage experiences.	Increase understanding of rites of passage as foundation for further discussion, visioning, and development of college Rite Of Passage Experience®. Shift <i>frame</i> for college as a place of initiation.
Assess present teaching and use of rites of passage. Where do conditions already exist?	Survey campus for academic links to rites of passage within curriculum; how sports, clubs, Greek organizations, and so forth welcome and orient new members.	Faculty, Greek organizations, clubs, sports, and so forth. May also engage community at large in process of assessment if expanded rites of passage are possible.	Identification of assets in place that can support application in multiple settings of rites of passage.
What are the central values and ethics needing transmission, and how to put these into rite-of-passage strategies?	Survey students, faculty, and staff about the core values and ethics that are central to the college/university's mission. How are they presently being transmitted in ways that lead to committed behavior for the good of the individual, college, and wider community?	College community	Identify the central values and ethics of the college community. Create strategies for more potent orientation that leads to students and the entire community enacting these core values and ethics in their behaviors.

(Continued)

**Table 9.1. Continued**

<i>Components</i>	<i>Element—Activities</i>	<i>Target Population</i>	<i>Outcomes</i>
Build capacity for college community to become “elders” in the college rite of passage.	Training including rite-of-passage college curriculum and existing strategies such as: the Rite Of Passage Experience <sup>®</sup> (ROPE <sup>®</sup> ) sessions.	Upper-class and graduate student, faculty, administrators, student services, resident life and others. May include community school representatives.	Build personnel infrastructure to support rites of passage within multiple and diverse settings within the college and community. Build mentoring system.
Trained “elders” become “leadership team” and vision how best to begin and institutionalize rites of passage across campus.	Strategic planning among leadership team and key university administration and staff. All participate in training cited above.	Upper-class and graduate students, faculty, administration, student services, resident life, and others. May include community school representatives.	Establishes strategic planning process and “leadership team,” members of which become “expert” elders that guide installation of college ROPE <sup>®</sup> .
Trained “elders” begin to institute college rites of passage, such as college ROPE <sup>®</sup> at identified settings across campus.	Expansion of rites of passage college course, Rite Of Passage Experience <sup>®</sup> , and other rites of passage activities. Train mentors.	Resident advisors provide rite-of-passage experiences to students, incorporated into first-year experience.	College ROP implementation to promote health and decrease health-compromising behaviors. Deploy mentors.
Parent Rite Of Passage Experience <sup>®</sup> —ROPE <sup>®</sup>	Parent focus on “letting go well” and how parents can support their students’ adjustment to and success in college.	Parents—setting to be determined by leadership team.	Parents are involved in appropriate ways to support their child. Overall increase in support of the college experience.

<sup>a</sup>For more description of these processes see [www.rope.org](http://www.rope.org). The Rite of Passage Experience<sup>®</sup> and ROPE<sup>®</sup> are copyrighted (1981, 1988) and federally registered trademarks of David Blumenkrantz licensed to The Center for the Advancement of Youth, Family, and Community Services, Inc.

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