MENTORING THE FUTURE
COMMUNITY AND YOUTH ORGANIZATION CURRICULUM
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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 support *your* efforts to support youth, lighten your workload, make your job more satisfying, and improve the culture of your organization. Drawing equally on the latest research and timeless wisdom, our aim is to aid *you* in bringing Whole Person Development Practices to your organization and community based programming. The objectives of this curriculum are 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. We know our scientifically validated approach will be a boon to the healthy functioning of organizations and the communities they serve, supporting administrators and staff to achieve goals already in place and to set new ones. The curriculum's KEY objectives are as follows:

- To introduce concepts of Whole Person Development at the organizational, interpersonal, and personal levels.
- To reduce individuals' emotional duress and improve the wellbeing of communities as a whole through creative dialog and practices tied to self and community initiation.
- To reduce overall organizational stress by making staff and clients less reactive and more accountable.
- To foster positive personal and social identity development by grounding participants in healthy relationships with themselves and others.
- To provide healthy and productive formative experiences that allow youth to believe in and practice their ability to make informed decisions as well as learning and acting on their most positive values.
- To provide additional avenues for strengthening trust, rapport, and support between staff, the families they serve, and the communities they live in.
- To support efforts to make staff and clients served feel heard so they in turn can make the space to hear others.
- To deepen culturally specific knowledge validating clients' life experiences.

Note: To provide feedback on how this toolkit is working for you or to partner with us to get this work into youth development and community organizations worldwide please sign up at http://www.warriorfilms.org/contact/ or contact Ishtar Kramer: 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. For benchmarks of individual growth, again we refer you to the *SEARCH Institute's 40 Developmental Assets for Adolescents*, which you can find in the supplemental documents section of this curriculum. By helping a young person transition into his/her wholeness and maturity we aim to simultaneously improve the culture of your youth development organization or community group, and to support your community as a whole. 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.

A **Rite of Passage** is the ceremonially recognized passing of an individual from one state to another. It's important to conceptualize the transition from adolescence into adulthood as a Rite of Passage. 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 title. Initiates step into a new role with new privileges and responsibilities recognized and celebrated by their community.

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. There is no meaningful initiation. 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 support the rite of passage of adolescents into young adulthood that draws from all of its many existing variations.

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 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. Severence 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 vital 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 within the community. The understanding that each person achieves – that meaningful life necessitates the giving away of our gifts through acts of service – guarantees the community's diversity, resilience, and cohesion.

Historically, rites of passage were always culturally and geographically specific. Typically, the community'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 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 requires to fully realize their greatest 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 bedrock 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: The Ever Forward Club

What Can I Do as an Organization?

As a community or youth organization you are already working within a specific geographic area, serving a unique client population. The ways and means of bringing WPD into your workplace, into the strategies you use to serve your clients, will vary greatly. But we know the basic tenets of deep, guided relationships and community-invested initiation will only benefit you in your work.

Here are short and long-term ideas that can be implemented by your organization. Some can be utilized with the extended community with an eye toward building community engagement. We deeply encourage you to make use of the resource section of this curriculum and seek out some of the work already being done that's available to you within, in conjunction with, or outside your organizational environment.

Short Term Ideas:

- Film viewing with core members or your organization, followed by discussion, aided by question prompts at the back of the curriculum.
- Film viewing with your entire organization, followed by discussion, aided by question prompts at the back of the curriculum.
- Hosting a film viewing for members of the community, followed by discussion, aided by question prompts at the back of the curriculum and/or guest appearances by local representatives of mentorship and initiation organizations. Objective: think through additional ways, beyond those listed here, how materials can be implemented.
- Model mentoring – ask who's mentoring whom among administration, management, and direct care staff. Encourage all concerned to seek out mentors and mentees, whether within organizational boundaries or outside. It will mean a lot to your staff and your served demographic to know adults are also mentoring and being mentored.
- Team building activities such as storytelling, sharing, and developing trust between peers, management, and administration. [Please review for instance the YES! manual referenced in the external resource section of this curriculum].
- Organization Culture Mapping: Use the form in the external resource section to take inventory of the culture of your organization. This can be done in as little as 20 minutes. It does a great job of opening up perspectives and deepening awareness around exclusion and behavior.
- Organizational or cohort driven Johari Window Exercise: This rapport-building tool is used in much the same fashion as the culture map, pinpointing differences between individual and group perceptions vs. reality. This can be vitally effective to strengthen relationships between colleagues, or between direct care staff and the clients they serve. Find template and directions in the external resource 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 increasingly practiced across the nation as a way to foster more productive and effective communities in and out of organizational settings. See

the supplemental documents section for a very basic primer on circle and effective groups as well as links to programs that specialize in ways to bring this to your organization or community.

- 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, or something else… the more time you spend outdoors in natural surroundings the better for everyone.

Image Courtesy of: Youth Mentoring Connection

Long Term Ideas:

- Creating Norms within your organization that build in concepts and language surrounding the ideas of Whole Person Development as well as inclusive practices/rituals. For instance, what would happen if you started the day as an organization with a specific song or class pledge?
- Institute Organizational Emotional Literacy. Often emotions are the last thing that people think of when they think of work. Yet as *human* beings we are *feeling* beings. Emotions play a significant role in the way an organization communicates internally as well as to the outside world. It is essential to well-functioning organizations that practices of healthy and straightforward emotional expression are institutionalized. Consider how to bring safe emotional expression into your organization's culture.   Explore addressing the topics of power, the manners of praise, criticism, and feedback, personal/professional relationship boundaries and office romances. See the Emotional Literacy exercise in the external resource section of the curriculum.
- Weekly group processing of organizational cohorts. For instance, pairing specific staff members together to build emotionally open communication into the organization's common culture.

- Offering information to staff on the history, theory, and practice of healthy initiation.
- Bringing Whole Person Development into conversations at the administrative and management levels on organizational culture building, transmission, and maintenance. How does your organization frame and manage the following?
    - When and how are changes in workplace culture addressed and implemented?
    - When and how is an employee quitting, being fired, injured, or dying addressed? Are there rituals around transition to provide closure?
    - When and how are staff groomed for advancement, and how is advancement in general addressed and realized?
    - When and how are promotions addressed and enacted?
    - When and how is praise delivered and received?

Both Images Courtesy of: Rite of Passage - Journeys

- Make time to facilitate a staff retreat. Even if only a group meal at someone's house with a 'no digital device' rule. It's not the numbers of attendees or even the programming that is important as much as real relationship building outside of the work environment. Still, it's good to plan your events. Consider utilizing the YES! Guide to planning and facilitating events and team-building exercises that is referenced in the external resources section of this curriculum.
- Consider rites of passage programs for staff. People that work together can extend community building practices outside the workplace. Strengthening those relationships through setting and realizing collective goals, sharing new hurdles and tests, will not only benefit the organization but the lives of all individuals concerned. See external resource directory for rop programs.
- Organize Annual Initiation Day in which staff celebrate their cultural heritage(s), openly share knowledge unique to their traditions, and speak of their own journeys towards mature adulthood.

- Take inventory of employee skills and interests outside the workplace. Create opportunities within the scope of the workplace for them to teach and learn from each other. Include clients if possible, perhaps using a job fair model. This will not only increase staff and staff/client rapport, it will also foster meaningful, often unforeseen connections and collaborations that promote greater efficiency.

Both Images Courtesy of: The Stepping Stones Project

Youth Organization Specific:

- Bring the ideas of Whole Person Development into the work you do with youth at the individual, family, and community levels. For instance, bring cultural or identity exploration into 1 on 1 direct care. Or use mentorship to frame your organization's community outreach. What can your direct care staff learn from the demographic you're serving? What skills can you harness to empower them in their work with you?
- Facilitate internships where students receive academic credit for doing service learning. Consider partnering with a local community college or university so college age students (perhaps juniors) mentor high school students through community work, service learning, etc.
- Use role definition and re-definition to build rapport with youth served. A new nickname or sacred talismanic name can be an incredibly powerful tool. Develop something personalized to an individual that carries with it an acknowledgement of trust and expectation. Explore how individualization - deepening a youth's understanding of his/her roles - can intensify their

investment in your mutual activities. You might also try this with coworkers, colleagues, and direct reports.

- Seek out local or national programs that specialize in mentorship or rites of passage to see how the ideas of Whole Person Development can translate into your organization. This might mean working in tandem with a wilderness or mentorship program, or seeking consultation on council practices. This is where a wide variety of variance and individualization will come into play. The cross-pollination of knowledge and services will benefit both your organization and the community you serve.
- Invite one or more youths to sit on your board of directors and/or steering committee. This initiative has met with incredible success in Expeditionary Learning schools across the nation. Youth representation in decision-making processes empowers them to take ownership of their education's overall direction. Having a 'seat at the table' can often be the very thing that thrusts a youth into ownership of his/her maturity.
- Empower youths and interns to teach weekly classes in meditation, re-centering, digital detox, or movement. Alternately, they can simply hold space for others to practice on their own.

Image Courtesy of: Make Trybe School of Transformative Design

What Can I Do: Testing vs. Hazing

Whether conscious or not, there are usually forms of testing of newcomers within organizations. Most organizations have implicit or explicit pecking orders. Whether it's routine teasing of 'the new guy', or the ways we learn to work our way 'up the ladder,' these systems can get in the way of collaboration and inhibit creation of the most productive team(s) possible within your organization.

The point is not to do away with testing or with motivating colleagues to achieve success. 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. 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 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 and 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. Consider Oriki Theater in Mountain View, California. They initiate and mentor 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. Consider replicating that structure within your own organization or partnering with an outside group.

- **Encourage Open Communication / Articulate That Silence is Tacit Approval**
  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 abuse 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 also supporting bonding. You can find more info in the supplemental document section of this curriculum.

Image Courtesy of: Alchemy Inc.

External Resources by Category:
Here are some programs providing service. Many of these groups also bring their area of practice into educational and institutional settings.

Mentorship
- The National Mentoring Partnership
- The Boys and Girls Clubs
- Young Life
- The Ever Forward Club
- The ManKind Project
- Youth Mentoring Connection
- Stepping Stones Project
- Boys to Men
- Big Brothers/Big Sisters

Rites of Passage Programming and 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

Council Practice/Emotionally Literate Environments:
- The Ojai Foundation: Council In Schools
- Center for Restorative Justice and Peace
- Making Caring Common Project [Also Excellent Resource for Capstone Projects]
- The Peace Alliance
- The World Cafe

Group/Team-building Activities:
- YES! Connect, Inspire, & Collaborate
- Teampedia
- Therapeutic Recreation Directory
- Future Project

Discussion Prompts:
- What is adulthood, how do you know when you get there?
- What are some of the effects of not having intentional life transitions in your community?
- What do you think make some experiences life changing and others mundane?
- What are the differences, both positive and negative, between advice from a peer and advice from an elder?
- 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?
- What does initiation mean, what does an initiated life look like?
- 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?
- Where does technology fit into how you explore and express your identity?
- How can healthy initiation act as a preventative measure against physical and sexual assault?

Suggested Reading:

Non-Fiction
- The Power of Myth by Joseph Campbell
- 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
- World as Lover, World as Self by Joanna Macy
- Nature and the Human Soul by Bill Plotkin
- Fire in the Belly by Sam Keen
- Awakening the Hero's Within by Carol S. Pearson
- How I Learned to Snap by Kirk Read
- Moon Mother, Moon Daughter by Janet Lucy and Terri Allison
- The Wonder Of Girls' by Michael Gurian
- Reviving Ophelia by Mary Pipher
- Women Who Run With the Wolves by Clarissa Pinkola Estes
- Free Your Mind by Ellen Bass/Kate Kaufman
- GLBTQ: The Survival Guide for Queer and Questioning Teens by Kelly Huegel
- The Cathedral Within by Bill Shore
- The Majesty of Calmness by William George Jordan
- 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
- Way of the Peaceful Warrior by Dan Millman
- Adversity Advantage by Erik Weihenmayer
- Man's Search For Meaning by Viktor Frankl
- Betwixt and Between edited by Mahdi, Foster, Little
- Framing Youth by Mike A. Males
- Book of the Vision Quest by Stephen Foster
- Quest: A Guide for Creating Your Own Vision Quest by Denise and Meadow Linn
- The Thundering Years: Rituals and Sacred Wisdom for Teens by Julie Tall Johnson
- Into the Wild by Jon Krakauer
- History of Young People in the West: Ancient and Medieval Rites of Passage by Giovanni Levi

Fiction

- The Transformation by Juliana Spahr
- The Alchemist by Paulo Coelho
- The Perks of Being a Wallflower by Stephen Chbosky
- Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance by Robert M. Pirsig
- Small Damages by Beth Kephart
- Whirlgig by Paul Fleischman
- The Odyssey by Homer
- Passing by Samaria by Sharon Ewell Foster
- Keeping the Moon by Sarah Dessen
- All The Right Stuff by Walter Dean Myers
- Wonder by R.J Palacio'
- Sabriel by Garth Nix
- Hearts in Atlantis by Stephen King
- The Secret Life of Bees by Sue Monk Kidd
- Still Alice by Lisa Genova
- The Lovely Bones by Alice Sebold
- Possessing the Secret of Joy by Alice Walker
- Colors of the Mountain by Da Chen
- The Handmaid's Tale by Margaret Atwood
- The Outsiders by S.E. Hinton
- Siddhartha by Hermann Hesse
- To Kill a Mockingbird by Harper Lee
- Song of Solomon by Toni Morrison
- Whale Rider by Witi Ihimaera
- The Catcher in the Rye by J.D. Salinger
- David Copperfield by Charles Dickens
- Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man by James Joyce
- Angela's Ashes by Frank McCourt
- The Giver by Lois Lowry
- The Joy Luck Club by Amy Tan
- Crazy Horse Electric Game by Chris Crutcher
- Will's Garden by Lee Maracle
- Grace Beside Me by Sue McPherson
- The Girl Who Grew a Galaxy by Cherie Dimaline
- Thunder Through My Veins by Gregory Scofield

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

Exercise

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 be 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, Individualized Milestones and Capstone Projects

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):

- **S**imple – Keep your goal statement simple and to the point.
- **M**easurable – Make sure it's measurable. Ex.: I will practice piano 6 times a week for 20 minutes each time.
- **A**chievable – 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!
- **R**elevant – Make sure your goal has direct relevance to your overall sense of mission or life purpose – the big Life Plan that guides you.
- **T**ime 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:

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 that's so. Every group whether voluntary or mandatory has culture, habits and behaviors driven by *stated* values that bump 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. Through group conversation make those un-discussable things discussable. You'll foster equality, transparency, accountability, and better communication. Ultimately, you can utilize this tool to strengthen relationships in whatever culture you find yourself.

Observations 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?			
Drivers What Drives Our Behaviors? Who Controls What? What Are The Taboos? What Cannot Be Discussed? What Are The Rewards? Are There Other Contributing Factors?			
Stated Values What Do We Say We Value?			
Acted Values What Values Would Others Not in Our Culture Say We Represent? What Values Are Demonstrated By Our Behavior?			
Reasons: 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: The Cycle Of Growth – Role-playing

In oral cultures a story isn't locked into place by the written word. A story tends to take on the characteristics of the person who's telling it and the places in which it's told. It can also grow and change with the land and the people as they move through time. In this sense we want to remind you to let your story be open ended, and to acknowledge that any story without pitfalls isn't as interesting. In fact it could be said that one of the crucial pieces of coming into adulthood is acknowledging failure as a natural part of maturity. Journalist John Carroll wrote an essay for the PBS series "This I believe." In it he talks about his own experiences with failure:

"Failure is how we learn. I have been told of an African phrase describing a good cook as "she who has broken many pots." If you've ever spent enough time in the kitchen to have broken a lot of pots, you probably know a fair amount about cooking. I once had a late dinner with a group of chefs, and they spent time comparing knife wounds and burn scars. They knew how much credibility their failures gave them. I earn my living by writing a daily newspaper column. Each week I am aware that one column is going to be the worst one of the week. I don't set out to write it; I try my best every day. Still, every week, one column is inferior to the others, sometimes spectacularly so. I have learned to cherish that column. A successful column means I am treading on familiar ground, going with the tricks that work. Often in my inferior columns, I am trying to pull off something I've never done before; something I'm not even sure can be done."

There are days you don't want to get out of bed, days when you feel lost and unsure of yourself. But those days are just as important as the ones in which we feel full of confidence and potency. Below you can see the stages we all go through on the way towards choosing and then integrating change into our lives. You will learn that failure, or relapse, is just as much a natural part of this process as the change itself. We must come to a place where we're not only okay with failure but welcome the opportunities that present themselves with it. **The stages in the cycle of growth are:**

- **Precontemplation:** You have no recognition of the issue, it belongs to someone else. You're unwilling to approach change because you don't see the need to.

- **Contemplation:** Beginning to see that your patterns affect your results. Behavior leads to consequence, yet there are still two defined outcomes and you are debating which is right for you.

- **Preparation:** Recognize that you want and need to change. Realization that control over one's life is achieved through adjusting your thinking and behavior patterns.

- **Action:** Taking control of your life. Fostering the discipline to solve problems and accomplish goals. Looking at all possible destinations, and acting on the one that is right for you and consistent with your values.

- **Maintenance:** After making the change and finding success, you find and develop the systems that will help hold you accountable and that remain consistent with the changes you've made.

- **Relapse:** Full return to the old behavior. This is not inevitable, but is likely and should not be seen as failure. Often people will relapse several times before they finally succeed in making permanent changes to new behaviors.

- **Permanent Exit:** A step back from patterns of behavior where you take what you've learned both from making the change and regressing to create goals based on achievable ends.

Exercise

Role-play can be an extremely fun and effective way to visualize and act out how you would deal with a given situation wherever you may be in life. Below are example scenarios that we've found common among adolescents and young adults.

1. Script out a scenario using one of the templates or create your own as it pertains to your life.
2. Establish the narrative and flesh out the characters.
3. Act it out; don't be afraid to improvise.
4. Debrief and follow up discussion.

- **Leave Me Alone! [*Negative Thinking/2-3 People*]:** You want to be alone but a friend, or family member wants to be with you. How do you set and communicate healthy boundaries in a way that allows for space but also leaves others feeling close to you?

- **What am I Missing Out On?** *[Aligning Your Thinking/Individual]*: You feel like you are going crazy, because either the world is too crazy, or, worse, it's too boring. You're at home on a weekend night and you know there are so many things going on and you're afraid if you don't get out you'll miss out on 'that one perfect' experience. Is this actually correct? What are you really missing out on? Is there something deeper you're looking for? If so, what?

- **Why Don't You Trust Me! [Developing *Empathy/2-3 People*]:** You want to go out but your parents don't want you to; you're starting to get angry and a fight is brewing. You know you have the self-control to stay out of trouble, and you wonder why they can't trust you. Can you step out of your head by shifting your perspective and think about why they might be worried? Can there be compromise? What would that look like? What do you do to maintain your level of health, accept who your parents are, and self-advocate more effectively?

- **Party Pressure [*Peer Pressure/Individual*]:** You're at a party. Will you try to stay sober? What triggers will affect your decision? How are your friends and their expectations going to play into your decision-making? What can you learn about the level of health in your relationships based on your interactions?

- **Stuck in the Middle [*Navigating Dilemmas/3 People*]:** You happen upon two of your good friends having a serious fight. Both feel they are in the right. Both feel they might end the friendship. Do you step in? Do you walk away? If you step in how do you not take sides? If you do what are the pros/cons and consequences of your decision?

- **Truth Serum *[Transparent Communication/2 to 3 People]:*** You've done something that you know isn't good, something that if you keep to yourself will fester. But you don't want to talk about it with the people closest to you, whether your parents, siblings, or friends. Tell it to your present cohort. What does the conversation look like? Taking a risk to speak your truth relieves you of carrying a burdensome judgment or emotional charge. The old maxim is correct: the truth will set you free. Option #2: Someone did something that hurt you. You've told yourself it isn't important enough to talk over with them. Or you're afraid to vocalize it because it might put your relationship in jeopardy. But doing so will not only take an enormous weight off your chest, it opens the door to more sharing and intimacy for both of you. It's counter-intuitive, but the fact is that doing so will likely *strengthen* your relationship.

- **The Same but Different [*Dealing with Change/2 People*]:** Your relationship [*of any kind*] is just not the same as it was. You've changed. They haven't. How do you decide whether this relationship will serve your long-term well-being? If you choose to keep the relationship, what changes need to be made between both of you? What do you do about it?

- **Digital Detox *[Facing Addiction/Individual up to 3 People]:*** Take a sabbatical from your smartphone and social media. Maybe it's for an hour. If you're more adventurous try it for or a day, week or month. How does it feel different to you if you've been told you have to by a parent? Maybe you've had your cyber privileges taken away. Why does *choosing* to do it feel different from *having to* when they're the exact same action? Maybe you choose to do it together with a group of friends. If so, what will you do instead? How will you communicate? Will you write letters? Use landlines? How does virtual community compare with real community? What are the pros and cons of each?

- **Text from the Ex [*Facing Reality/Individual*]:** You've recently ended a relationship because your ex-boyfriend or girlfriend was emotionally abusive. You doubt that they're good for your emotional health. You get a text from your ex that says: "I'm sorry I want to make things better." What do you do?

- **The Deep End [*Dealing with Anxiety/3 People*]:** Think about the most uncomfortable situation you can imagine being in. The situation must contain at least two other people beside yourself. Act out the situation three times. The first time act as if you are the person you'd ideally like to be. The next time, act as if you are the person you'd least like to be. The third time act it out from the perspective of the person in between who may still struggle with being the person they'd like to be but who no longer is the person they don't want to be.

Supplemental Documents: Sitting In Circle
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.

Supplemental Documents: 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 as well as 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.