

**PROMOTING PERSONAL GROWTH
SELF-DISCOVERY ACTIVITIES**

PERSONAL GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

INTRODUCTION

Personal Guidance and Support: the Main Goals of a Mentor

Your main goals as a mentor are to provide personal guidance, encouragement, and emotional support for your student. You can only guide and support a student if you have a strong, close relationship with him or her--a relationship based upon mutual trust and respect. No manual, textbook, or expert can provide a blueprint to tell you exactly how to do these things because every mentoring relationship is unique.

Mentors build close relationships with their students by meeting with them on a regular basis; this provides students with a feeling of stability. By showing up every week, by acknowledging your student's feelings and concerns, by listening to his/her problems, by being honest, and by continually showing that you care, you can become a very powerful, positive influence in the life of your mentee.

Helping Students Realize Their Potential

As you begin to know your student better, you will also come to realize that he or she wants to learn about being an adult and what it takes to be successful in the adult world. This section contains activities intended to promote students' normal personal growth and development in simple, fun ways.

Research studies have shown that one of the quickest ways for mentors to form close relationships with their students is by means of activities. These activities will enable you to learn more about your student and to share your experience and knowledge with him/her. When mentors and students share their interests, values, and personal experiences, they begin to forge a bond of mutual trust and respect.

The purpose of these modules is to help mentors and students build a close relationship. These activities provide a fun way to become acquainted and identify common interests. As students share their likes, dislikes, and opinions with mentors, they will gradually begin to feel comfortable discussing more personal issues and problems with them.

MODULE 1: SETTING REALISTIC GOALS (ACTIVITIES 1-8)

This group of activities is intended to enable students to establish realistic short- and long-term goals. It is very easy for students to set long-term goals, but too often they lose sight of the fact that achieving short-term goals is the only way to attain the long-term ones. Young people often tend to set unrealistic goals because they do not understand the "baby steps" principle: every great achievement requires thousands of smaller ones.

Mentors can use this module to teach students basic organizational skills and to focus on transforming their dreams into practical goals. Your main objective as a mentor is to convince your student of the importance of short-term goals: "What are you going to do today, tomorrow, and next week to get closer to your goal?" Goal-setting activities are good ways for students and mentors to begin to develop plans and to think about the future.

MODULE 2: EXPLORING PERSONAL INTERESTS (ACTIVITIES 9-13)

These activities will enable mentors to learn more about their students by helping them identify their interests, their opinions on a wide range of topics, and their likes and dislikes. One of the best ways to connect with young people is to talk about things that interest them. This module will give you many good ideas for communicating with your student.

The module activities also provide mentors with a great opportunity not only to get to know their students better, but also to acquire a real sense of their needs, dreams, and personal attitudes. As you complete these activities, you will have many chances to share your opinions and insights with your student.

MODULE 3: BUILDING POSITIVE VALUES (ACTIVITIES 14-22)

This set of activities is designed to focus students' attention on the positive values that will make them successful and happy in life. Young people need to learn the basic principles of personal and social responsibility, the tactics of emotional control, and the importance of personal integrity if they are to fare well in school and in adult life; however, positive values are not easy to "teach" in the conventional sense.

As a mentor, you are a role model for your student. You will have many opportunities in this module to talk about the importance of values in your life and how the right set of values can play a deciding role in your student's life. You do not have to "preach" your own set of values, but you can point out the values that have been important to you in a non-judgmental manner. Your main goal here is merely to get your student to start thinking about the values that will serve as a guide for decision-making for the rest of his or her life.

MODULE 4: SELF-DISCOVERY (ACTIVITIES 23-31)

The final group of activities are fun ways for students to discover new and exciting things about themselves. Many students have a negative self-image that can become a self-fulfilling prophecy: "I am doing the best I can; I am just not that good at things." They may feel that they do not have many positive qualities. These activities are intended to help raise students' self-esteem by focusing upon their positive qualities and aspirations.

This module is a great way for mentors to raise the bar of expectations for students. Too often students do not see themselves in a positive light and therefore give up on their dreams. This module is intended to help mentors keep these dreams alive by encouraging students to believe in themselves.

MODULE 1: GOAL-SETTING

Activity #1: The Mentor-Student Agreement

- 1. This activity is a great way for mentors and students to reach a common understanding about what they want and expect from the mentoring relationship.
- 2. This form will also serve as a good self-discovery activity for both you and your student.
- 3. Ask your student to help you complete each of these sections.

What do we want to accomplish together?

What will we do to accomplish this goal?

Mentor:

Student:

How will we let each other know if we must miss our appointment?

I will do my best to complete the terms of this agreement.

Mentor's Signature

Date

Student's Signature

Date

Activity #2: Creating a Weekly Journal

1. Mentors and students can use this sheet on a weekly basis to monitor their progress.
2. Use of this tool on a regular basis can be an effective way to keep students on track.

Weekly Journal for Students and Mentors

Student	Mentor
Goals I Have Achieved This Week:	Goals I Have Achieved This Week:
Goals for Next Week:	Goals for Next Week:
Things I Need to Work On:	Things I Need to Work On:

Activity #3: Weekly Reaction Sheet

1. This worksheet can be used on a weekly basis to keep students focused on their short-term goals.
2. Make copies of this page and ask your student if he/she would like to fill it out.
3. Use the answers as the basis for further discussion on goals and ways to improve.

1. What was the high point of the week?

2. Whom did you get to know better this week?

3. What was the major thing you learned about yourself this week?

4. Did you institute any major changes in your life this week?

5. How could this week have been better?

6. What did you procrastinate about this week?

7. Identify three decisions or choices you made this week.

8. What were the results of these choices?

9. Did you make any plans this week for future events?

10. Unfinished Business

Activity #4: My Vision of Success

1. Ask your student to answer these questions.
2. Accentuate the positive aspects of each answer.
3. This worksheet is a good tool to help mentors discover how their students view themselves and the world.
4. What does your student consider "success" and "failure"?
5. What things does he/she fear most?
6. These are very important questions because they enable you to see things from the perspective of your student.
7. Talking about the meanings of success and failure is a great way to get your student focused on the future.

Please finish each sentence.

1. My greatest success:

2. A failure:

3. Something I did that helped someone:

4. Something I've done that I'm proud of:

5. Something I've learned from failure:

6. Something I didn't like doing:

7. The funniest thing I ever did:

8. Something I did that took courage:

9. Something I'm afraid of:

10. Something I'd really like to learn:

Activity #5: Imagining the Future

1. Getting young people to focus on their dreams is another great way to get them to think positively about their futures.
2. Ask your student to complete this worksheet.
3. Help your student think about ways to transform dreams into plans.

Tell about your dream for the future.

Tell what must be done to make this dream a reality.

Why will your dream become a reality?
