Mentor Reflection: Worksheet 1

Deepening Understanding of Purpose

MENTOR

To enhance your understanding of purpose, read each of the following scenarios and note examples of people exploring purpose. When a scenario is missing one or more components of purpose, see if you can identify the component(s) missing, and how this example could be adapted to align with the definition of purpose. See the next page for answers and explanation.

Core components of purpose:

- Long-term aspiration
- Engagement in related behavior
- Intention to contribute toward others

1. A blogger plans to write a book about social media and democracy.

- Which components of purpose are represented and how?
- Which if any components of purpose are missing?
- How could this scenario be refined to represent someone's exploration of purpose?

2. A thirteen-year-old who loves thinking of innovative ways to do things is constantly immersed in all sorts of building projects. She is good at creative problem solving and says she wants to become an engineer that uses recycled building materials to solve a lack of affordable housing in her community.

- Which components of purpose are represented and how?
- Which if any components of purpose are missing?
- How could this scenario be refined to represent someone's exploration of purpose?

3. A ninety-eight-year-old woman is the last person in her community to speak her native language. As a community storyteller, she is completing a lifelong goal of writing a children's book in her native language.

- Which components of purpose are represented and how?
- Which if any components of purpose are missing?
- How could this scenario be refined to represent someone's exploration of purpose?

4. A child who enjoys singing at church choir wants to become the first female pastor at the church.

- Which components of purpose are represented and how?
- Which if any components of purpose are missing?
- How could this scenario be refined to represent someone's exploration of purpose?

5. A man from a community with limited resources has a dream of building his own home.

- Which components of purpose are represented and how?
- Which if any components of purpose are missing?
- How could this scenario be refined to represent someone's exploration of purpose?

ANSWERS from Worksheet 1:

In example 1, the person's long-term aspiration involves publishing a book, and their related behavior involves writing. While we can infer how this book topic (democracy) might benefit others, the example is not explicit regarding how this person intends to contribute toward others.

Scenarios 2 and 3 offer examples of individuals exploring purpose.

In example 4, we know the child wants to become a pastor, that's her long-term aspiration. We can infer that supporting a faith-based community relates to an intention to help others. However, what's not clear is the engagement in related behavior component. It is not as clear how singing in choir connects to her long-term aspiration and intention to contribute to others.

In example 5, here again we are given no context regarding how the person's goal benefits others.

Unpacking Your Purpose Journey

MENTOR

Meaning and purpose are connected but important to distinguish. Something is meaningful when we experience personal satisfaction or enjoyment from it. Something is purposeful when it is personally meaningful, beneficial to others, and includes a distant, far-reaching intention.[a] The following worksheet can help you reflect on your own exploration of purpose.

Think back on important junctures throughout your life, and see if you can identify how aspects of purpose and identity have unfolded for you. Start by pinpointing three to four transition phases, or turning points in your life. In the space below, write or draw your responses to these questions. For each phase, try to reflect on the following:

- What was going on for you?
- What was important to you?
- Who was important to you?
- What did you enjoy?
- What were your values and why?
- Who/what made you feel valued/important, and why?

When you're finished, see if you can identify ways you've engaged a specific intention and/or participated in specific pursuits that might relate to your own exploration of purpose.

Now, consider how components of purpose (commitment, goal-direction, meaning, and contribution to others) evolved for you over time. If you can think of an intention that motivates you, includes a goal with direction, demonstrates commitment, is personally meaningful, and contributes to others, congratulations—you identified an area of purpose!

Commitment – investment of time, energy, and resources

Personally meaningful – comes from within, self-guided or directed

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Goal-directedness – forward-aiming, long-term goal (achievable or not)

Beyond the self – some sort of contribution to others, beyond the self

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[a]Bronk, K. (2014). *Purpose in life: A critical component of optimal youth development*. Dordrecht: Springer.

Using the multifaceted aspects of purpose featured below, identify ways you have or have not been supported to engage your own sense of purpose.

[b]Adapted from Liang., B. (2017). Proceedings from The Summer Institute on Youth Mentoring (2017): *Youth Purpose.* Multifaceted Aspects of Purpose, Figure 1: Model of Youth Purpose. Portland, Oregon.

Is Mentoring My Purpose?

MENTOR

Sharing your time, energy, and support with a young person may be an expression of your purpose if it involves a long-term goal that is both meaningful to you and in contribution to others. Use the reflection questions and space on the next page to reflect on mentoring as an exploration of purpose. Mentoring may relate to your sense of purpose, if you enjoy it, and overall if a young person finds your efforts supportive including affirming who they are.

See the Volunteer Functions Inventory[c,d] below to build understanding of your own motivations to mentor. Using this framework, try to reflect honestly on what inspires you to mentor, recognizing that our motivations can shift and we all have a range or sometimes multiple reasons we are inspired to mentor young people. Building authentic awareness of what motivates us to mentor can help us pay attention to how our own expectations show up and influence our engagement with young people. Read through the framework and see if you can identify a primary category that most closely relates to your motivation to be a mentor. If you are primarily motivated to mentor based on values or enhancement, consider using the following reflection questions to help you think through how being a mentor might relate to your own sense of purpose.

Function	Description	Example
Values	Desire to demonstrate one's humanitarianism and empathy by getting involved.	"I hear so much about the hard lives these kids have and feel I should do what I can to help."
Career	Enhancing career options or exploring a new vocation.	"I'm considering getting into education and want to see how I get along with children."
Understanding	Desire to better understand society and individuals.	"I know I've lived a sheltered life, so I want to know what these kids are dealing with."
Enhancement	Desire to feel better about oneself or feel needed by others.	"I get such a good feeling when I am helping others."
Protective	Using mentoring to avoid or work through personal issues.	"I want to give a child the role model I never had growing up."
Social	Mentoring to meet the expectations of, or get approval from, others.	"Two of my good friends are mentors and say I'd be good at it."

[c] Clary, Snyder, Ridge, Copeland, Stukas, Haugen, & Miene. (1998). Understanding and assessing the motivations of volunteers: A functional approach. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology,* 74(6), 1516–1530.
[d] Garringer, M. (2006). ***Volunteer Motivation and Mentor Recruitment***. Portland, OR: Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, National Mentoring Center

Mentor Reflection: Worksheet 3

1. How comfortable do you feel with a young person or group of young people while mentoring?

a. How much of yourself do you bring to, or allow to show up in, your interactions with youth?

b. What helps you know you are being authentic or present in your interactions with young people?

c. Who observes, supports, and affirms your interactions with young people?

2. How do you feel before, during, or after your engagement with young people?

a. When someone asks you about your overall experience supporting or mentoring a young person, what's your initial response?

b. To what degree do you enjoy the experience of building interpersonal connections with young people?

3. How do you know that your efforts are beneficial or experienced as helpful?

a. Why do you mentor?

b. What helps you understand your efforts are in support of young people?

4. How do you build interpersonal connections with young people?

a. What helps you know you're doing this?

Positionality and Purpose*

MENTOR

Now that you've surfaced opportunities to explore purpose throughout your life, let's consider how your identities—your background, characteristics, and assumptions—relate to your exploration and experiences of purpose. Use the following social categories to reflect on aspects of your own identity. Try to note how you identify yourself within each of the following social categories. If you aren't sure what a category represents, skip it.

Age: _____

Ability (physical, emotional, developmental): _____

Gender: _____

Ethnicity: _____

First Language: _____

National Origin: _____

Sexual Orientation: _____

Sex: _____

Race: _____

Religious or Spiritual Affiliation: _____

Socioeconomic Status: _____

Other Social Categories of Importance to You: _____

Now **circle** the identity categories that you think about least often, and **underline** those that you think about most often. Typically, the circled areas that we do not pay much attention to (or even recognize) represent aspects of our identity where we have more power relative to others. Part of the beauty and challenge inherent in youth mentoring relates to intersecting layers of power implicated in youth and adult relationships.

Power unfolds in many overlapping and evolving ways. In societies categories like those listed above are socially and culturally organized. And in relationships people tend to interact with one another based on these typically unspoken, constrained patterns. After thinking about your own purpose journey, consider how the underlined aspects of your identity relate to your exploration of purpose.

[e]Schoem, D. and Hurtado, S. (2001). *Intergroup Dialogue: Deliberative Democracy in School, College, Community and Workplace.*

Mentor Reflection: Worksheet 5

Understanding Cultural Responsivity Competencies for Engaging with Young People

MENTOR

(Adapted from State of Washington Core Competencies for Child & Youth Development Professionals)

The following rubric is adapted from the core competencies for youth-serving professionals in the State of Washington. The questions are divided into five levels representing an increasing level of competency. You can use this scoring guide to determine your overall responsivity competencies, as well as your score in each level.

SCORING GUIDE

For each of the questions below, enter your score. If you answer:

- Little to no experience = **0 points**
- Some = **1 point**
- Building = **2 points**
- Practice frequently = **3 points**

	Circle the word below that best indicates how much experience you have with the following:					Score (guide follows)
LEVEL 1	1. Developing awareness of my own cultural beliefs and practices	Little to no experience	Some	Building	Practice frequently	
	2. Seeking new knowledge regarding cultural beliefs and practices	Little to no experience	Some	Building	Practice frequently	
	3. Demonstrating genuine caring and respect for individual young people	Little to no experience	Some	Building	Practice frequently	
	4. Demonstrating fairness and consistency when interacting with young people	Little to no experience	Some	Building	Practice frequently	
	5. Following program guidelines that include respect and use of nondiscriminatory language	Little to no experience	Some	Building	Practice frequently	
	6. Providing an inclusive, welcoming, and respectful environment for all children, youth, and families	Little to no experience	Some	Building	Practice frequently	
LEVEL 2	7. Valuing cultural differences that may affect the ways in which young people express individual creativity	Little to no experience	Some	Building	Practice frequently	

[1]School's Out Washington. (2010). *State Core Competencies for Child and Youth Development Professionals.* Seattle, WA: Author. Available online at: https://cdn.shopify.com/s/files/1/0515/3189/files/CoreComptenciesSchool_FINAL.pdf?22758334916173628897

	Circle the word below that best indicates how much experience you have with the following:					Score (guide follows)
LEVEL 2	8. Providing opportunities for families to share cultural backgrounds, beliefs, and practices	Little to no experience	Some	Building	Practice frequently	
	9. Identifying culturally specific organizations as resources for myself, colleagues, young people, and families	Little to no experience	Some	Building	Practice frequently	
	10. Creating a safe environment for young people to explore their own identities, including cultural beliefs and practices	Little to no experience	Some	Building	Practice frequently	
	11. Using resources that demonstrate acceptance of all races, ethnicities, genders, cultures, families, languages, and physical and mental disabilities	Little to no experience	Some	Building	Practice frequently	
	12. Demonstrating awareness of and sensitivity to different cultural values and expectations	Little to no experience	Some	Building	Practice frequently	
	13. Familiarizing myself with a variety of world cultures, along with associated music, art, literature, and trends	Little to no experience	Some	Building	Practice frequently	
	14. Integrating international content, issues, and perspectives into events and activities	Little to no experience	Some	Building	Practice frequently	
LEVEL 3	15. Practicing deepening my own understanding of privilege and oppression	Little to no experience	Some	Building	Practice frequently	
	16. Thinking critically about culturally complex situations and engaging in dialogue about privilege and oppression	Little to no experience	Some	Building	Practice frequently	
	17. Working to increase my understanding of different cultural groups, including my own cultural identities, beliefs, practices, and biases	Little to no experience	Some	Building	Practice frequently	
	18. Recognizing cultural and environmental factors and the effects those factors can have on behavior and development	Little to no experience	Some	Building	Practice frequently	
	19. Partnering with all families by developing reciprocal relationships to support healthy development of children and youth	Little to no experience	Some	Building	Practice frequently	
	20. Creating an environment where individual children and youth take pride in their cultural identities, beliefs, and practices, and value those of their peers	Little to no experience	Some	Building	Practice frequently	
	21. Designing learning opportunities that are reflective of cultures in the community and expose young people to a community's cultural diversity	Little to no experience	Some	Building	Practice frequently	
	22. Building relationships with culturally specific organizations and other relevant community partners	Little to no experience	Some	Building	Practice frequently	

	Circle the word below that best indicates how much experience you have with the following:					Score (guide follows)
LEVEL 4	23. Building and utilizing skills to challenge oppressive behavior, assumptions, and stereotypes as they surface among young people and within an organization	Little to no experience	Some	Building	Practice frequently	
	24. Developing understanding of my role and empathy for the struggle of others in creating systems change	Little to no experience	Some	Building	Practice frequently	
	25. Understanding how privilege and oppression impact interactions with children, youth, and families, and communities	Little to no experience	Some	Building	Practice frequently	
	26. Identifying and addressing factors that create feelings of exclusion among young people	Little to no experience	Some	Building	Practice frequently	
	27. Engaging young people in genuine ways and integrating their perspective into decision-making	Little to no experience	Some	Building	Practice frequently	
	28. Advocating for social equity and serving as an example and mentor to others regarding cultural responsivity	Little to no experience	Some	Building	Practice frequently	
	29. Analyzing organizational culture, policies, procedures, and implementing changes that foster more equitable, and culturally relevant and responsive practices	Little to no experience	Some	Building	Practice frequently	
LEVEL 5	30. Seeking new knowledge and approaches related to inclusion, culture, and equity	Little to no experience	Some	Building	Practice frequently	
	31. Partnering with children, youth and families to support them as advocates, decision-makers, and leaders	Little to no experience	Some	Building	Practice frequently	
	32. Advocating for ongoing training and deepened analysis of systems related to equity, privilege, and oppression for all program participants	Little to no experience	Some	Building	Practice frequently	
	33. Involving myself in collaborative action and advocacy strategies that transform local and national systems toward social equity	Little to no experience	Some	Building	Practice frequently	
					OVERALL SCORE:	

For each of the questions above, please tally your score:

Level 1 (questions 1-6)

Question 1 = _____

Question 2 = _____

Question 3 = _____

Question 4 = _____

Question 5 = _____

Question 6 = _____

Your total points for Level 1: _____/18

Level 2 (questions 7-14)

Question 7 = _____

Question 8 = _____

Question 9 = _____

Question 10 = _____

Question 11 = _____

Question 12 = _____

Your total points for Level 2: _____/24

Level 3 (questions 15-22)

Question 15 = _____

Question 16 = _____

Question 17 = _____

Question 18 = _____

Question 19 = _____

Question 20 = _____

Question 21 = _____

Question 22 = _____

Your total points for Level 3: _____/24

Level 4 (questions 23-29)

Question 23 = _____

Question 24 = _____

Question 25 = _____

Question 26 = _____

Question 27 = _____

Question 28 = _____

Question 29 = _____

Your total points for Level 4: _____/21

Level 5 (questions 30-33)

Question 30 = _____

Question 31 = _____

Question 32 = _____

Question 33 = _____

Your total points for Level 5: _____/12

Your total score (add all 5 levels together): _____

Interpreting your score:

- **99–74 points** = Indicates experience utilizing cultural responsivity practices, typically reflective of a strong intercultural mindset
- **73–66 points** = Indicates experience utilizing cultural responsivity practices, typically reflective of a moderate intercultural mindset with some monocultural tendencies
- **65–41 points** = Indicates experience utilizing some cultural responsivity practices, typically reflective of a moderate monocultural mindset with some intercultural tendencies
- **40–0 points** = Indicates experience utilizing little to no culturally responsivity practices, typically reflective of a strong monocultural mindset with little to no intercultural tendencies

Supportive Communication Skills to Nurture Trust in Relationships

MENTOR

Open-ended questions help us gather more information and learn about a person's feelings and perspective. They also help us avoid one-way communication ruts. As a relationship-building tool, open-ended questions help us practice and demonstrate openness to others. In this way, open-ended questions are an important communication tool to build youth voice, and mutual respect. Open-ended questions draw clarification and cannot be answered with a yes or no response. They help us build rapport when we communicate genuine curiosity and nonjudgment. In this way, open-ended questions are not value-laden. A question, even if open-ended, loses its rapport building benefit when it reveals a position, value, or judgment. For example, a question like the one below, while open-ended, communicates a judgment or position, and reveals that the adult is not seeking to understand the circumstances that led to the young person's absence but presumes to already know the answer.

"Why didn't you go to class yesterday like you were supposed to?"

Alternative examples include:

- How are you doing?
- What do you think?
- How'd that go for you?
- Why do you think it happened that way?

Active Listening is another important communication skill that helps us better understand the content and context of what a person is saying by paying attention to both verbal and nonverbal cues. Practicing active listening involves focusing on, hearing, and respecting a desire to understand someone else. When we listen actively, we are not thinking ahead about how to respond, or how we feel. Active listening requires paying attention to meaning beneath words.

Skills to Use:

- Eye Contact (if appropriate for a young person's cultural values)
- Open Body Language (relaxed posture, leaning forward, positive gestures, appropriate facial expressions, head nod)
- Verbal Cues (oh, ah, hmm, oh, sure, yes)

Verbal and Nonverbal Cues to Avoid

- Body Language (slouching, turning away, appearing disinterested, pointing a finger)
- Timing (speaking too slow or too fast)
- Facial Expression (smiling, squirming, raising eyebrows, gritting teeth)
- Tone of Voice (shouting, whispering, whining, proclaiming, sneering)
- Choice of Words (speaking sharply, accusatively, pretentiously, over-emotionally)

Try practicing the above-mentioned supportive communication in the following activity with a partner (preferably someone you are interested in building rapport with). This activity is adapted from a conflict-resolution activity offered in *Diasporas in Dialogue* edited by Barbara Tint (2017).

[e]Schoem, D. and Hurtado, S. (2001). *Intergroup Dialogue: Deliberative Democracy in School, College, Community and Workplace.*

Practicing Listening in Different Ways[9]*

Activity

- Find a partner
- Choose who will share first
  - Each person will get a chance to talk
- The first person will have two minutes to talk about (something interesting that has happened to you in the past year)
  - The other partner is responsible for listening
  - Speaker speaks on topic for two minutes
  - Listener listens for the whole two minutes without speaking or giving any verbal communication; their job is to convey they're listening through nonverbal communication
  - After two minutes both partners should thank one another for listening and speaking respectively. Then the other person will have a chance to speak for their story on the same topic. The second person can share from wherever they like, they don't have to address the same themes that their partner did.

Debrief

- What was it like to have someone listen to you in that way?
- Was it easy, difficult, why?
- Comfortable, uncomfortable, why?
- What did you notice about the story you told, when you knew the other person was just going to listen and not interrupt?
- To what extent did you catch yourself wanting to ask questions, or thinking about what you were going to say?
- What are the lessons from this that we can take into our role as a mentor?
- How do we show that we are listening?

Listening Continued

- Continue sharing your stories from where you and your partner left off.
  - This time, when one person is done with their two minutes of sharing, it will be the listener's job to paraphrase back the key points they heard before they comment on anything or say anything in response.
- Have participants swap roles

Debrief

- What was your experience as both a storyteller and listener?
- What was it like to hear your partner paraphrase your story for you?
- Why would this be important to a role as a mentor?

* This listening activity can be repurposed to use directly with youth. Before doing so, read the full section on "Laying the Foundation for Purpose Exploration." Be sure to pay attention to the level of rapport you maintain with a young person, as well as how to adapt this activity to meet their comprehension and learning style(s).

[9] Adapted from Tint, B., Chirimwami, V., & Sarkis, C. (2014). Diasporas in Dialogue: Lessons from Reconciliation Efforts in African Refugee Communities. Conflict Resolution Quarterly, 32(2), 177–202.

Interrupting Adultism

MENTOR

1. To reflect on your experiences of adultism, either with a friend or on your own, try answering the following questions:
   - Where have you heard of or interacted with the concept of adultism?
   - Reflecting on your answer above, why do you think that's the case?
   - What does adultism make you think of?
   - How does this concept relate to the role of a mentor?
   - Who's immune from adultism?
   - How do we recognize adultism within ourselves?

2. To consider the prevalence of adultism, on a separate sheet of paper, quickly brainstorm a list of activities that adults are inclined toward doing, or are always better at, than young people.
   - How did that go for you?
   - To what extent were you able to generate a list of activities that adults "do better" than young people?

If this was easy, then like most adults in the United States, you have been socialized to believe young people are inferior to adults.

3. Try and put yourself back in the mindset of your twelve-year-old self, how did it feel to be treated as inferior to adults?
   - We do not have to perpetuate adultism, because we experienced it.
   - Challenge yourself to take the list you generated for item 2, and with someone you trust, try to reframe how or why young people are just as capable as adults, maybe more so, in each area identified

If this feels uncomfortable or difficult, that's understandable. Challenging deeply established social patterns is uncomfortable, often painful, and vitally important.

When it gets to be too much, try to remember what it was like to be a young person and how it felt to experience a lack of power. This kind of systemic oppression experienced by young people is never-ending, which means as supportive adults our commitment to interrupting adultism must also be unyielding.

Sometimes people confuse adultism with teaching young people to respect their elders. As indigenous teachers and leaders remind us, we teach young people to be respectful by modeling respect.

Elaborated on by Brendtro, Brokenleg and Van Bockern (2002),

> ***"Adults may believe they are acting in the best interests of the child, but there is a quality of paternalism that borders on oppression. Human service professionals have a long history of patronizing, infantilizing, or dehumanizing the very persons they are pledged to serve. While they may not be aware of their basic disrespect, young persons are."***[h]

The gift of mentoring is that it offers young people opportunities to engage with supportive adults in de-professionalized and more power-neutral interactions than they might experience with other adults. Part of the advantage of your role as a mentor relates to your ability to believe in a young person, maintain high expectations for their capacity, and offer empathy and respect in ways they may not experience from i nteractions with other adults that require a greater "professionalized" distance (teacher, doctor, therapist, case worker, etc.).

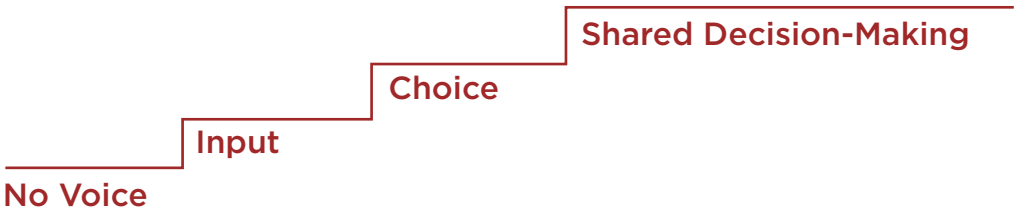
See Worksheet 7 on nurturing a youth-centered approach for tips and Worksheet 16 for information on how to interrupt adultism and empower youth voice and decision-making. You can also find more information on interrupting adultism in a comprehensive resource from Michigan State University on strategies to build strong youth and adult partnerships.

Strategies to Engage Youth Voice

MENTOR

This information is adapted from a framework used in the Youth Work Methods Training on Youth Voice from the Weikart Center for Youth Program Quality, a division of the Forum for Youth Investment. For more information on this framework, visit www.cypq.org.[i]

The following examples for engaging youth voice can be utilized both in the context of purpose-related activity exploration, or for developing understanding of a young person's broader intentions related to supporting others. Research illustrates there are ways adults can engage feedback from young people, and these strategies can be experienced as progressively more empowering. In the following example, each step can be thought of as increasingly beneficial to empowering a young person's voice and subsequent engagement.



Input: Involves getting basic, typically one directional input from a young person. Often this information is drawn from youth in the form of surveys or activity reflections like sticker charts. While young people may appreciate opportunities to offer basic feedback on their experiences, input usually does not allow them to offer context or explanation. Nevertheless, depending on a number of factors including the situation, the young person's developmental needs, how well you know one another, etc., basic input may prove a helpful place to begin engaging youth voice. See the examples below for ideas about engaging youth input in regard to activity exploration, as well as exploring a young person's intentions related to supporting others.

- On a scale of 1 to 5, how did you enjoy that? (1 meaning you did not like it, and 5 meaning you loved it.)
- Give me a thumb up, down, or sideways to let me know how it felt to help out your neighborhood by cleaning up the park today?

Choice: Expanding on input, choice offers young people the opportunity to feel increasingly empowered by contributing both preference and feedback. To help ensure choices leverage youth voice, the choices presented should be experienced as both meaningful and relevant.[j] This mean choice options relate to something a young person is both interested and invested in. See the examples below for ideas about engaging youth choice in regard to activity exploration, as well as exploring a young person's intentions related to supporting others.

- We talked about drawing and going to the library today. How should we divide our time? Which should we do first?
- You mentioned that you want a job working with animals. If you want experience working with lots of different animals, we could start volunteering together at the animal shelter. Or because you love dogs, we could start helping my friend who owns a dog-walking business. How do these options sound to you? Which are you most interested in?

[i]Worksheet adapted from the training summarized in: Akiva, T., Phillips, S., and McGovern, G. (2011). Youth voice. Ypsilanti, MI: Weikart Center for Youth Program Quality a division of the Forum for Youth Investment. Available online at: http://www.cypq.org/sites/cypq.org/files/Youth_Voice_GuidebookSample.pdf
[j]Assor, A., Kaplan, H., & Roth, G. (2002). Choice is good, but relevance is excellent: Autonomy-enhancing and suppressing teacher behaviours predicting students' engagement in schoolwork. British Journal of Educational Psychology, 72, 261–278.

Shared Decision-Making: Expanding on choice, shared decision-making supports youth and adults to strive toward power-sharing interactions, where adults release some decision-making authority, and a young person rises to the opportunity to practice making decisions. Like choice, shared decision-making opportunities should be experienced as relevant and meaningful, as well as authentic. In other words, for shared decision-making to be experienced as empowering, it needs to be experienced as useful to the young person by reinforcing independence and skill-building in ways the young person finds of value. See the examples below for ideas about engaging youth in shared decision-making as it relates to both activity exploration, as well as exploring a young person's intentions related to supporting others.

- We have $15 and 90 minutes to make dinner. What store should we go to, and what do you want to get to make ourselves dinner with this amount of time and money?
- After we volunteered at the senior center last week, my friend who works there said one of the residents really enjoyed talking with you. My friend said this woman was more upbeat than usual for several days after our visit. How would you feel about going to the senior center more often? If you're up for it, what ideas do you have for different ways we could engage with the residents that they might enjoy?

To practice integrating your understanding of strategies to nurture youth voice, read the following scenario and identify at least one way you could incorporate each step of youth voice, from basic input, to choice, to shared decision-making.

Engaging Youth Voice Scenario:

Joey is a 13-year-old boy that you have known for five months through your time volunteering at his middle school. As a finance officer for a local bank, you have a strong background in accounting and provide weekly tutoring support in a math course that Joey is in. Joey also has an aptitude for numbers and, though he does not often need help in the classroom, he seems to enjoy the opportunity to connect with you, as he often cracks jokes and asks you to review his assignments. Joey recently told you that he would like to do something related to banking or finance as a career, but he's not sure how to begin exploring opportunities including potential school or trade paths.

- What are some ways you could engage basic input from Joey?
- What are some ways you could support Joey to engage in choice?
- What are some ways you could support Joey to engage in shared decision-making?

Boundary Considerations for Supporting Youth Purpose Exploration*

MENTOR

Paying attention to physical, emotional, and social safety needs is important for all interpersonal relationships, especially youth and adult mentoring relationships. Identifying your own boundaries, or edges of comfort, with regard to engagement with a young person will be important to nurturing ongoing interactions.

Modeling how to build awareness of these considerations and how to communicate your needs to others can empower a young person to do the same. Boundaries can be thought of as invisible parameters that help people engage in interpersonal interactions. While there are numerous ways we can think about our preferences and needs for safely engaging with others, common boundary areas that arise in youth and adult mentoring relationships relate to physical, emotional, and social considerations.

An example of a physical boundary might involve the way you greet a young person. Emotional boundaries can involve how much we share, for what reason(s), when, and how. When considering emotional boundaries, it can be helpful to consider the difference between self-disclosure and use of self. Self-disclosure is when we reveal something personal about ourselves, often subconsciously, in close relationships. Use of self is conscious—when we intentionally lean into a relationship and offer information that might help another person lean into the relationship as well. One way to practice intentional use of self in establishing emotional boundaries with a young person is to ask yourself, "Would I be okay with explaining to this young person's parent or my program contact why I shared this information with this young person?" If you're not sure, chances are whatever you want to share may more closely align with your own needs rather than a young person's. Social boundaries encompass all sorts of considerations, including the way people relate to time, money, cultural values, family interactions, and so on.

When identifying boundaries alongside a young person, keep the following considerations in mind:

- Boundaries are challenged, that's how we identify them for ourselves and others.
- When boundaries are challenged, it is important to communicate from a place of personal honesty.
- When you are not sure how to respond, request time to think about it.

Try using the following questions adapted from Thom Garfat (2012) to reflect on how you typically relate to, or show up in, interactions with others.[1]

- How do you limit your own openness to others, to connecting, to being with others?
- How do you explain these self-imposed limits?
- How might these responses relate to boundaries that are relevant to your interactions with a young person?

* The reflection questions here can be repurposed to use directly with youth. Before doing so, read the full section on "Laying the Foundation for Purpose Exploration." Be sure to pay attention to the level of rapport you maintain with a young person, as well as how to adapt this activity to meet their comprehension and learning style(s).

[1]Garfat, T. (2012). The interpersonal in-between: An exploration of relational child and youth care practice. In G. Bellefeuille, D. Jamieson, & F. Ricks (Eds.), Standing on the precipice: Inquiry into the creative potential of child and youth care practice (pp. 7-34).

Reflecting on physical safety needs:

- How do you relate physically to others? How do these tendencies change in different dynamics?
    - o How close do you usually stand to a stranger versus someone you know?
    - oHow do you typically greet someone you haven't seen for a while?
    - oHow, if at all, do you respond physically when consoling someone you care about?

Reflecting on emotional safety needs:

- How do you typically warm up to or get to know people?
- How do you decide to share personal information with others?
- Do you tend to remain closed off emotionally? Or conversely, do you tend to freely share personal information with others you don't know?
- How much do you typically reveal in sharing how you are feeling with others? How does this vary across interpersonal interactions?

Reflecting on social safety needs:

- What are cues in environments or settings that help you feel welcomed, like you belong?
- What are social values that are really important to you?
- How do these values show up within interpersonal interactions?

Purpose-Exploring Conversation Topics and Questions*

MENTOR

The following are a series of topic areas and questions adults can draw from during interactions with youth to help young people think about their experiences building multifaceted aspects of purpose. You can use the space below each topic area and set of questions to reflect on how this topic and question played out in practice with a young person. How, for example, did the young person respond? What, if anything, do you feel like you came to understand better or learn about them?

When using any of the following questions in interactions with young people, try to model respect of a young person's unique learning styles, strengths, or ways they prefer to engage in critical thinking (visually, kinesthetically, verbally, auditory, etc.). For example, if you mentor a young artist, you might engage the first question as a drawing reflection exercise.

- As we draw today, what if we draw a few symbols or images to represent who we are and what's important to us? When we are done we could share what we both drew and why.

Beliefs/Values

■ Based on your experiences, what have you learned that is important to teach others?

■ What is true for you, how did you come to know/understand this?

■ What values are important to you and why?

Challenges

■ What do you find yourself usually . . .

- thinking about?
- challenged by?
- frustrated with?

* These questions are designed to be used directly with youth, though not as a prescriptive checklist. See how you can integrate them into natural conversations and opportunities that align with a young person's developmental needs and learning styles.

Mentor Reflection: Worksheet 10

Contributions

- What's something you do that others appreciate?
- How do you know your efforts are appreciated?
- When do you feel valued?

Desires/Wants

- Close your eyes and envision something that you want. What do you see?

Interests

- What's an activity that you participate in that makes you feel strong?
- What makes you feel proud of yourself?

Needs/Opportunities

- What helps you feel safe with others?
- What do you need to feel comfortable in spaces that are important to you?
- What's something you want to work on to help you connect with others?

Mentor Reflection: Worksheet 10

Mindsets

- How do people who know you best describe you?
- What do you appreciate most about yourself?

Motivations

- What excites you?
- What makes you angry?
- What makes you want to change something?

Skills/Talents

- What's an example of feedback that others have given you that felt good?
- What's a strength of yours? Why is this helpful?

Passions

- If you could spend all of your time doing one to three things, what would they be and why?

Intentional, Purpose-Building Activity Engagement

MENTOR

This information is adapted from a framework used in the Youth Work Methods Training on Youth Voice from the Weikart Center for Youth Program Quality, a division of the Forum for Youth Investment. For more information on this framework, visit www.cypq.org.[n]

Young people stretch their skills and confidence when adults support their autonomy and allow them to exercise choice.[o]

•**Young people need choice** and options for getting involved. Like adults, young people build inspiration when they participate in settings and activity options consistent with their interests and skills. This means offering ideas for how a young person might engage in activity that relates to their interests and strengths, while also encouraging their voice and choice.

•Regardless of where young people choose to get involved, they **need clear roles**. They need to know what is expected and how their engagement impacts others.

•**Young people need time and coaching to prepare for their roles and engagement.** This is how they are empowered to rise to high expectations.

When youth are given opportunities to make choices within situations or settings where adults gradually decrease control, they develop autonomy. Adults can support youth engagement in these opportunities by scaffolding learning and increasing challenge over time.

Scaffolding means breaking learning/tasks down into small, digestible chunks and then offering the choice, coaching, and roles that match a young person's needs, as noted above.

Increasing challenge over time means providing support that aligns with a young person's confidence and competence. Increasing challenge involves creating/supporting learning opportunities that are neither too difficult nor too easy. People are likely to continually engage and learn in settings where they are neither bored nor overwhelmed, but appropriately challenged and supported.

[n]Worksheet adapted from the training summarized in: Akiva, T., Phillips, S., and McGovern, G. (2011). Youth voice. Ypsilanti, MI: Weikart Center for Youth Program Quality, a division of the Forum for Youth Investment. Available online at: http://www.cypq.org/sites/cypq.org/files/Youth_Voice_GuidebookSample.pdf

[o]Zeldin, S., Krauss, S. A., Collura, J., Lucchesi, M., & Sulaiman, A. H. (2014). Conceptualizing and measuring youth-adult partnership in community programs: A cross national study. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 54(3), 337–347.

You can learn more about the important role that caring adults play in letting youth take the lead and how they can offer youth opportunities to make choices and experience autonomy as a way of facilitating purpose in the readings noted at the bottom of the page.[p,q,r,s,t,u,v,w,x,y]

Reflection Activity

Read the following scenario, and based on each young person's behavior, see if you can determine how this situation suits each young person's respective learning zone. Write the names of each young person next to the zone most reflective of their experience.

While preparing to engage in community service project, a small group of three eighth grade youth (who self-selected to help out on this project) are asked to take five minutes to think about and then explain why they want to be involved. Within a couple minutes you notice that Sam appears anxious. He's not engaging with anyone and is tapping one foot repeatedly. Alisa is reading a science-fiction novel, while Eddie writes some notes and then asks a friend for feedback.

Task too easy _____Task just right _____ Task too hard _____

Supporting youth exploration of purpose involves paying close attention to young people (their behavior, needs, and experiences) and continually reflecting on and fine-tuning your efforts to nurture their engagement in settings where they experience a sense of meaning while contributing to others.

You can use the following questions to help you reflect on a young person's engagement in a specific opportunity:

- What's their behavior like when we're engaged in this?
- To what extent do they seem to enjoy this?
- What underlying emotions might their behavior be communicating (quiet, excited, bored, etc.)?
- How can you tell they are developing skills or comfort relevant to this activity?
- See the following fictional exchange for an example of a mentor incorporating choice, role expectations, and coaching to a young person as they prepare for an activity together—a family event night.

[p] Soenens, B., & Vansteenkiste, M. (2005). Antecedents and outcomes of self-determination in three life domains: The role of parents' and teachers' autonomy support. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 34, 589–604.
[q] Eccles, J. S., & Wigfield, A. (2002). Motivational beliefs, values, and goals. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 53, 109–132.
[r] Pelletier, L. G., Fortier, M. S., Vallerand, R. J., & Brière, N. M. (2001). Associations among perceived autonomy support, forms of self-regulation, and persistence: prospective study. *Motivation and Emotion*, 25, 279–306. doi:10.1023/A:1014805132406
[s] Ryan, & Deci. (2000). Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivations: Classic Definitions and New Directions. *Contemporary Educational Psychology,* 25(1), 54–67.
[t] Larson, R., & Hansen, D. (2005). The Development of Strategic Thinking: Learning to Impact Human Systems in a Youth Activism Program. *Human Development*, 48(6), 327–349.
[u] Mitra, Dana L. (2004). The Significance of Students: Can Increasing Student Voice in Schools Lead to Gains in Youth Development? T*eachers College Record*, 106(4), 651–688.
[v] Morgan, W., & Streb, M. (2001). Building Citizenship: How Student Voice in Service-Learning Develops Civic Values. *Social Science Quarterly,* 82(1), 154–169.
[w] Reeve, J., & Jang, H. (2006). What teachers say and do to support students' autonomy during a learning activity. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 98(1), 209–218.
[x] Assor, A., et al., (2002).
[y] Reeve, J., Jang, H., Carrell, D., Jeon, S., & Barch, J. (2004). Enhancing Students' Engagement by Increasing Teachers' Autonomy Support. *Motivation and Emotion*, 28(2), 147–169.

Scaffolding Youth-led Activity Engagement

Choice: Young people need choice and options for getting involved.

Mentor explains: *I noticed you are kind to people you don't know, in ways that seems to help others feel relaxed and welcomed around you. Your school has a family night event coming up, what do you think about drawing on this strength of yours to help out at the event? The bulletin board said they are looking for a volunteer to greet families as they arrive, and another person to welcome everyone over a microphone when the event begins. Would you be interested in providing support in either of these roles? If so, which are you most interested in?*

Roles: Young people need clear roles. They need to know what is expected and how their engagement impacts others.

Mentor explains: *If you want to be a greeter, let's think about what's involved in this role. For example, when people arrive, they'll probably need a welcome packet, a place to sit, and, if they are interested, to create a nametag. How do you feel about supporting families to do these things as they arrive? What else might be important to share with families as they come in? How will the ways you interact with families as they arrive impact their experience at the event?*

Coaching: Young people need time and coaching to prepare for their roles and engagement

Mentor explains: *Okay, how should we practice or prepare for your role as a greeter at the family event? I could pretend to be a family arriving and we could practice role-playing? Since it will be busy on the night of the event, what if we brainstormed some potential questions you might have on the night right now? What can we do now to help you feel ready to greet families on the night of the event?*

- How'd that go?
- What felt good about that, or what did you notice you did well?
- What could you use more practice or support with?
- How can I help?

Reinforcing Purpose Exploration through Encouragement

MENTOR

This information is adapted from the Youth Worker Methods Training titled, Ask, Listen, & Encourage from the Weikart Center for Youth Program Quality, a division of the Forum for Youth Investment (2011). For more information on this framework visit cypq.org.[z]

To provide encouragement means to inspire, and typically involves a strengths-based observation—an affirming statement—followed by an open-ended question to support the person to integrate and expand on the feedback.

Praise – me telling you about you

- I like that . . .
- I noticed that . . .
- I am so proud of you for. . .

Encouragement – you telling me more about you

- You got to school by yourself every day last week. How'd that go?
- There are so many details in this drawing, what does it represent?
- Thank you for leading circle today, how did it feel?

Notice that praise statements tend to prioritize an adults' feelings first, whereas encouraging statements priortize the young person's experience.

> **"You put your hands up to let Mark know you were ready for him to pass you the ball. What was it like to make that play?"**

Another simple way to offer encouragement instead of praise it to simply thank a young person for their contributions and explain what was helpful.

> **"Thank you for showing Celia how we set up for class. It helped us all start on time, and she seemed to appreciate learning from you."**

[z]Based on concepts and frameworks reviewed in Ramaswami, R., Phillips, S., McGovern, G., & Akiva, T. (2011). *Ask, listen, encourage*. David P. Weikart Center for Program Quality, a division of the Forum for Youth Investment. Available online at: http://www.cypq.org/sites/cypq.org/files/Ask-Listen-EncourageGuidebookSample.pdf

Sample Conversation on Reinforcing a Youth's Social Network

MENTOR

Review the following exchange between a mentor and young person. When finished, try using the summary questions to reflect on the strategies used to reinforce this young person's social network.

Mentor: Hey, Dan mentioned you've been coming by on Tuesday and Thursday evenings for the last month to help at the food bank, how's that going?

Youth: Ok, I guess.

Mentor: How do you like it?

Youth: I don't know; it's not really what I wanted to be doing.

Mentor: I see. What are you doing?

Youth: A lot of prep, and clean up. I help get meals ready—turn on warming plates, set out serving utensils, plates, and silverware—basically set things up before people come in. Once it looks like most everyone is finishing up, I also help with clean up—clearing platters, doing dishes, restaging tables—that sort of thing.

Mentor: What do you wish you were doing, or what did you have in mind for ways that you might help out at the food bank?

Youth: I don't know. I just thought because I know what it's like to not have enough food, that I could relate to people who go there regularly and help them feel good when they come in, you know, help them feel comfortable that it's not like anything they should be ashamed of, and just to, like, feel good, laugh, have some company with someone who cares while they enjoy a meal.

Mentor: Sounds like part of why you want to be involved with the food bank is to connect with others who are experiencing something you can relate to.

Youth: Yeah, and I don't feel like they're even giving me a chance to really talk to people.

Mentor: I can see why that might feel frustrating, especially if that's the reason you got involved. Have you talked to Dan about how you're feeling?

Youth: Nah, I don't want to bug him. I said I'd help out in whatever way I can, and I guess this is the help they need.

Mentor: Yeah, it sounds like you're filling some key responsibilities to meal prep and clean up. What have you noticed while doing it?

Youth: There are tons of people involved behind the scenes to help offer meals to people who need them. I don't know, I guess I never really thought about all the work that goes into preparing and serving even just one meal. And how much of that is done by people who don't get anything for it, they just do it. I kind of assumed the people there got paid, but most of the partnerships with the food bank are donated and are from business and volunteers in the community. When I've gone to the food bank with my family, I sometimes felt like people helping out couldn't really relate to us. And so they might be kind of weird, or just like overly friendly. I guess I'm noticing that while a lot of the people who support the food bank can't relate to what's it's like to be hungry, they still care, and they want to know what they can do to better support people. I've also noticed how there's a wide range of people and families that come to the food bank. Sometimes single people, sometimes single mothers with kids, sometimes two-parent families, just people of all sorts of backgrounds, even people who you wouldn't think, looking at them, that they don't have money to buy food. I guess I'm realizing that you just can't, like, tell if someone is struggling to get food.

Mentor: It sounds like you've gained helpful perspective from this volunteer role, even if it's not exactly what you wanted to be doing.

Youth: Yeah, I guess I have. I haven't really thought about it like that.

Mentor: Before you started volunteering, what did you tell Dan was the reason you wanted to help out at the food bank?

Youth: I was honest. I said that, you know, when I was younger my family went through some hard times and for a few years, you know, we got a lot of meals through the food bank, and sometimes I felt kind of weird when I was there, just, like, kind of embarrassed. And that I wanted to help out there cus I thought maybe I could help kids and families while they come in to get a meal feel welcomed, and just, like, not embarrassed.

Mentor: I see, so Dan does know that you're interested in connecting with people who come in. Why do you think he's got you doing meal-prep and clean-up tasks?

Youth: I don't know, I said I'd be willing to do whatever is needed.

Mentor: Yeah, well, like you said, there's a lot of background work that goes into serving even one meal; it sounds like you're offering some much-needed support. Why else do you think Dan would have you doing tasks that aren't really engaging with people yet, even though that's something you said you wanted to do?

Youth: Um I don't know . . . maybe he just wants me to get a feel of sort of the behind the scenes first.

Mentor: Yeah, that's kind of what I was thinking. Maybe because you shared that you know what it's like to come to the food bank for meals, he wants you to get a sense of what it's like to be on the other side of supporting meal delivery. That way you have a more comprehensive understanding of how the food bank works before spending more time with the people who come in for meal support.

Youth: Yeah, I guess that makes sense, the work I have done has really helped me better understand how it all works.

Mentor: Yeah, and at the same time, it's important that you feel like you're doing something that supports your interests or intention for being there. What do you think you might say to Dan to help you with that?

Youth: Well, I guess I can thank him for the experience so far, and just share kind of what we've talked about—what I've taken away from supporting the back-end of things, and just, like, ask if there's an opportunity coming up to spend more time actually engaging with people during meal delivery and just let him know that's something I'm still interested in and maybe now I'm better able to support.

Mentor: That sounds like a helpful plan to keep engaging in something that's important to you, while also learning how you can continue to build your skills and engagement in ways that make you feel good. How can I support you? Dan's a friend of mine, so I don't mind talking to him if it's helpful.

Youth: Ok, cool. He's pretty easy to talk to, so I'll just try talking with him and see how things go next month. If I feel like I could use some help getting more time with people, I'll let you know. I guess one thing I could use help with is getting home from the food bank on Thursdays. On Tuesdays my cousin can pick me up after his basketball practice, but Thursdays I've been riding the bus home, and it's been kind of hard cus I don't get home till really late.

Mentor: Oh sure, your shift is from 4 PM to 6 PM on Thursday, yeah?

Youth: Yeah.

Mentor: Okay, I'll plan to start taking you home on Thursdays starting next week.

Youth: Cool, thanks.

Mentor No problem, and thanks for sharing more about what this volunteer experience has been like for you. I know sometimes it can feel uncomfortable to talk about something that is frustrating, or just not going the way you planned. I appreciate you being honest and letting me know how it's going for you. When we talk about it and I can hear what's working and not working about the experience, it's easier for me to think about how I can be of support.

Youth: Yeah, it was helpful to talk about it. I hadn't really stopped to think about how much I have learned already. That feels good.

Reflection Questions

1. What stood out to you from this exchange?

2. What about this mentor's response resonated with you?

3. What about this mentor's response did you find challenging or problematic?

4. What's one way you can see yourself reinforcing a young person's support network as they explore purpose?

Mentor Reflection: Worksheet 14

Troubleshooting Engagement in Purpose-Related Experiences*

MENTOR

Mentors can be helpful connectors between young people and the settings or experiences they are invigorated to lean into and share their knowledge, strengths, skills, and abilities. And there are many different ways mentors might do this, ranging from tangible support (helping a young person get to and from certain opportunities) to more nuanced support (priming a young person for their engagement in specific opportunities, acting as resource during activities, and advocating on behalf of a young person to appropriate supports within purpose-related settings). Check out the questions below to help you think about troubleshooting purpose-related challenges and opportunities with a young person.

Time Management

- How does this young person's exploration of purpose align with their other commitments and values?
- What time-management implications are important for them to consider?
- How are they already connecting to their purpose at school, home, or during their engagement in other established commitments? How can they expand on this?

Logistical Access

- How can they get to and from experiences or opportunities related to their exploration of purpose?
- What, if any, support could they use with learning how to use public transit or navigating safe routes?
- What information can they access online to support their engagement? Do they need to register for specific opportunities, meet prerequisites, apply for scholarships, etc.?

Emotional Support

- What, if any, challenges (perhaps anxiety or fears) are they experiencing related to exploring purpose?
- What strategies can you share that have helped you attend to or process similar feelings? If you cannot identify any, what advocacy can you offer to support them in connecting with others who can?

* These questions can be adapted to use directly with youth. Pay attention to how you might address this information in ways that align with a young person's developmental needs and learning styles.

Purpose Activity Self-Reflection

MENTOR

Use the space below to describe a purpose-related opportunity that you embarked on with a young person. First, describe the activity or context as objectively as possible. Try to record details you observed. For example, instead of an interpretation like, “He seemed distracted,” try, “He looked at his phone three times.” Then try reflecting on and responding to the following questions with descriptive details: What did you do? Where did it take place? Who was there? How long did it last? How did the young person describe their engagement? How did you engage?

Based on how you and the young person engaged, try reflecting on what you were both feeling. Try using the following questions to help you reflect on how the experience went emotionally: How was the young person feeling? How do you know? What were you feeling? How do you know? What did you feel, experience, or sense during the experience?

Based on observations of the experience, and both yours and the young person’s feelings, consider the following: How likely are the two of you to engage in this kind of opportunity again? If so, what if anything would help strengthen either of your participation? If not, what about this activity was uncomfortable or not relevant to the young person?

Mentor Reflection: Worksheet 16

Nurturing Youth Purpose through Values-Based Exploration and Critical Consciousness

MENTOR

Supporting young people to build purpose involves supporting them to consider and form their values—and knowing ourselves, our identity, is central to naming and actualizing our values. Values-based exploration typically begins through a young person's context (their environment) or what they like to do (activities they enjoy). As this guide offers many strategies for supporting values-based exploration through activities, this worksheet highlights considerations for supporting values-based exploration as it relates to supporting young people's engagement in their environments.

Young people are supported to lift and celebrate their identities and related values when they engage in opportunities they find meaningful with others with whom they feel safe, valued, and accepted. For young people experiencing interrelated, discriminatory systems and resulting trauma, it can be extremely challenging to find and engage in multiple community spaces where their inherent significance is celebrated and appreciated. As a result, what young people find meaningful often relates to social justice issues impacting them and their communities.

Through critical consciousness, young people can build awareness of both their identities, including experiences of power, as well as understanding of social injustice. Critical consciousness refers to awareness of root causes of social issues, and using this awareness to act in ways to realize equality and social justice. Critical consciousness involves thinking critically about accepted ways of thinking and feeling, and discerning hidden interests in underlying assumptions and framing notions—whether these be class, gender, race, ability, or sect-based.[bb]

By grounding to issues of relevance to young people, conversations that spur critical consciousness create openings that support young people to build understanding of the social, political, and economic realities they experience. Roderick Watts (2017) suggests adult can nurture youth critical consciousness by supporting young people to engage with the following:

Focus	Strategies	Questions
Recognition of injustice and language to describe it	Language for describing oppression and inequality	What did you see, hear?
Causal attributions	Recognizing injustice and examining structural factors	What does it mean? Why do you think that?
Historic perspectives	Examining how historical perspectives are incorporated in the injustice/oppression narrative, post hoc	What do you think and feel about what you saw or heard?
Action Strategies	Approaches to resistance, solving the problem	What would you do?

(Table adapted from a presentation at the 2017 *Summer Institute on Youth Mentoring* by Roderick Watts; originally based on concepts from Friere's Education for Critical Consciousness).

[bb]Watts., R. (2017). Proceedings from The Summer Institute on Youth Mentoring (2017): Youth Personal and sociopolitical development: reuniting the inseparable. Portland, Oregon.

When a young person is passionate about an issue of relevance to them, adults can support them to engage in progressively deeper understanding with that issue. The following example illustrates how an adult can support a young person concerned about food insecurity on progressively deeper levels to explore alignment with their sense of purpose.

Hunger-related civic engagement opportunities:

1. Donate to the food bank
2. Engage/volunteer at the food bank
3. Identify why people are hungry

In each of the above ways, young people can be supported to build sociaoemotional skills, such as communication, problem solving, and relationship building. However, if they want to explore this issue based on personal experience or interaction within a food-insecure context, a civic engagement opportunity that allows them to practice socioemotional skill-building while simultaneously developing understanding of why people are hungry is more likely to be experienced as meaningful and relevant to a social justice orientation.

Questions a mentor can reflect on to support values-based exploration with a young person:

1. What social issue(s) is this young person continually engaging with?
2. How do you know?
3. What are some ways this young person acts/communicates/demonstrates how they are thinking and feeling about this social justice issue(s)?
4. In what ways are they processing their thoughts and feelings in regard to this issue in community with others who might share this experience?
5. How does their engagement with others who share this experience support their development of socioemotional skills like communication, relationship building, and problem solving?
6. How can you support their engagement in community-building experiences with others with shared lived experience?
7. What kind of experiences will support them to build the critical consciousness? (See focus areas above (recognition of and language to describe injustice, causal attributions of injustice, historical perspectives, action strategies.)
8. How can you support this young person's socioemotional skill development (relationship building, communication, and problem solving, etc.) to engage in community-building experiences related to this issue(s)?

What support, skill building, or resources do you need to empower young people to build understanding of the social, political, and economic realities they experience? For ideas, see Mentor Reflection Worksheet 5: Understanding Cultural Responsivity Competencies for Engaging with Young People.

Backward Planning for Purpose

MENTOR

1. On a Post-it, write down an activity that a young person has expressed an interest in exploring.

2. With the young person, brainstorm (asking and writing down on separate Post-its) steps/considerations that they want to (understand/do/know/practice) before engaging in this activity.

3. Once you have identified multiple steps together, and you've written each step down on separate Post-its, move the steps around to collaboratively decide on the best order of steps.

4. For each step, brainstorm a series of progressively more difficult skill-building opportunities to help the young person progress toward this step.

5. Chart the steps identified in collaboration with a young person on a shared calendar and make a plan for a series of continued outings.

6. Make a plan for how frequently and in what ways the two of you plan to check in to reflect on progress toward your plan and opportunities for adjustments.