

Session 1: Who I Am, Who I Can Be & Who I Can Become

Small Group Curriculum
For Teens

Objectives:

The purpose of first part of the session is to build safety and community amongst group members; start to build excitement and commonality of purpose and to clarify expectations. The following skill building will take place during this session:

- Listening skills
- Reporting back without attachment or judgment
- Self-awareness

The purpose of the second part of this session is to enhance self-awareness (personal values, guiding beliefs and qualities admired in others. Skills building that takes place during this part of the session:

- Inquiry
- Listening to difference without attachment
- Discovering rich diversity of group
- Critical thinking
- Follow through with in-between session assignments

Session Overview:

Part 1:

- Welcome (10 min)
- Activity 1: Being a Teen, part 1 (10 min)
- Activity 2: Being a Teen, part 2 (10 min)
- Activity 3: Intro to Program (10 min)
- Activity 4: Safety & Security (5 min)
- Activity 5: Interviews & Introductions (15 min)
- Activity 6: Journaling (10 min)

Part 2:

- Activity 7: People I Admire Worksheet (25 min)
- Activity 8: How Others See Me (10 min)
- Activity 9: Homework Between Sessions (10 min)
- Activity 10: Debrief/Closing (10 min)

Welcome/Check-In: (10 minutes)

INSTRUCTIONS: Give each youth nametag. Spread tinker toys on table prior to start...giving them something to do as others arrive. Each construction is unique and good; youth can take apart and do-over or keep what they create. Hand each youth a pre-assessment survey to complete.

Materials

- Name tags
- Program flier
- 1.5 inch binder for each (with clear view cover and inside pockets)
- Personal journal/notebook
- 4x6 cards
- Pens/pencils
- Flip chart
- Colored markers (paper and dry erase)
- Fishbowl container
- Tinker toys
- Tape
- Water/snacks

Handouts/Worksheets

Z = "Being a teen" (cut into strips)

A= Partner interview sheet for intro

B= People/Characteristics I admire

C=How Others see me

D= Assignment's Interview sheet

Activity 1: Being a Teen, part 1 (10 min)

Worksheet “Z”

Begin with a **brief** explanation of your agency, what it stands for and why you wanted to create support for teens through this group. Explain that you want to start by talking with them about their experiences being a teen. Prior to this activity, pre-cut the handout “Z” called “Being a Teen” into strips of paper with one phrase on each strip. Place these strips in a bowl or container to pass around.

- Have each youth take a strip of paper from the bowl (or more than 1, depending on amount of youth)
- SAY:
 - “Let’s explore together what it’s like to be a teen. What do teens think about, worry about & care about....”
 - To start us off, let’s go around the room and share some of the examples from the strips of paper you’ve drawn. These are taken from other teens and young adults like you.
- ENGAGE youth in conversation, asking if these phrases ring true? Is this what they what is on their minds, if they’d like to share other examples, etc.

Activity 2: Being a Teen, part 2 (10 min)

SAY: “Now that we’ve talked about what being a teen is like, let’s feel it!” This is also a bit like the journey from being a teen to an adult can feel like.... We want you to learn how to make it feel and BE easier!”

ASK: Please stand up.

- Stand with your feet apart (about shoulder width).
 - ASK: Feel how secure that feels? (You might even suggest they gently push on the person standing next to them to see how difficult it is to push them off their stance).
 - SAY: This is what it can feel like to be an adult. That’s the goal; to feel strong and secure and comfortable.
- Now let’s see what it might feel like for teens and young adults a lot of the time:
- Stand on one foot. (See how long they can maintain this and how steady they are)
- Rock on one foot from toe to heel
- Take baby steps while on your tippy toes
- Take baby steps on your tippy toes and push each other as you walk by.
- Explain: there are several ways to make the forward movement easier:
 - Stand on only one foot, fingertip of support from someone behind (repeat to re-gain balance only – the person using their fingertip to support you does not maintain contact, but will help you re-balance if you struggle).
 - If you know who you are and where you are going, you can keep moving forward with more confidence and less hesitation. Try it. One foot at a time, but keep moving forward until you reach the wall. Do you lose balance?
 - Now the ultimate: With a whole network of support.... Life is even easier! With people all around you to help you keep on balance and on target and moving forward whenever you start to falter....

THIS is what our agency does, and what we will be doing with you over these 4 sessions and between sessions.

Activity 3: Intro to Program (10 min)

TPC (insert your program) exists to support the success of teens like you, so that you can be all that you can possibly be!

Touch Point Connection does that by helping teens:

- See ALL of the options and broader choices that might be available
- Understand your natural strengths and talents
- Encourage you to set goals and believe that you can find support to reach them
- Make choices that make sense for YOU, not someone else
- To become more aware of the greatness of owning your own dreams and uniqueness.

TPC uses many of the same techniques that executive coaches provide leaders in business and industry to help them be MORE successful, but instead with young adults like you.

In the 4 sessions we will be using many of these same practices and introduce to you that way of doing and that way of thinking!

Activity 4: Safety & Security (5 min):

This is a necessary step to take with the group. Some call these group rules; some call them group expectations. Regardless of what it is called, these should be agreed upon by all and written down. Each session these guidelines should be posted where all can see. Have large post-it and markers ready to document.

EXPLAIN: To do this kind of work together, we need to talk about safety.

ASK: What will it take to make this a safe group for everyone to participate?

What guideline would you like to establish with each other?

Write down all the responses.

- Are there any that anyone does not understand?
- Are there any that anyone cannot abide by?
- Do we all agree to do our best to abide by these?

** If yes, please raise your hand. (You can also have the youth sign their names).

Activity 5: Interviews & Introductions (10 min):

Worksheet “A”

EXPLAIN that we are now going to do introductions! We are going to have you interview each other and take notes, and then use your notes to introduce your partner to the group. After they have a partner you will demonstrate how to do the activity.

- I'd like you to pair up, preferable with someone you don't know. (Depending on number of students you can also pair them up yourself, or you can have them count off to be paired up, so that they don't have to choose a partner).
- Hand out the interview worksheet to each person. “You will use the sheet to take notes and prepare your intro of your partner to the entire group.”
- **Demo to teens** (facilitators will demonstrate how to interview and introduce their partner)

Name:

Grade level/School

Two things about this person chosen from 2 of the 4 questions options.

1. If you left this life and got to return as an animal, which would it be and why.
2. Do you have a favorite song or poem? What is it? How does it make you feel?
3. If you could go anyplace in the world for a vacation, where would you go and why?
4. What is your favorite possession and why?

- Take turns introducing each other.

If time permits: Each has the opportunity to add something to the intro or share one more thing about themselves they'd like the others to know.

Activity 6: Journaling (15 min)

We'd like to take a few minutes to have you think about your expectations for this group. The first part of this will be done in your own personal journal (hand out journals or notebooks at this time if you have not). The second part will be a short discussion based on what you are comfortable sharing with the group. You do not have to show anyone what you have written in your journal. Facilitator will have 2 questions written on large post it for youth to see. We want to have you think about **Why are you here? And what goals do you wish to set.** (Questions listed on flip chart)

Questions to answer in journal:

- What are your expectations for this series?
- What would you like to get out of this program
- What would be different at the end of this series?

If time:

- Share with one other person
- Share with entire group what you are comfortable sharing.

OPTION: Facilitator write answers on flip chart for all to see for the group-sharing portion.

POSSIBLE BREAK TIME (5 min)

Activity 7: People I Admire (25 min)

Worksheet “B”

EXPLAIN: This next activity is to help you get to the root of your values or guiding principles. It is important to look at the relationship between who you are and what you admire in order to help you clarify your values. First we’ll demonstrate how to use this worksheet.

- DEMO to group (giving examples of how to answer the questions)
- HAND OUT WORKSHEET “B” TO GROUP
 - List 3-6 names or relationships (e. g. aunt) or make up a name if you prefer not to reveal
 - Write down what it is about them that you admire, like, or appreciate. For example...What qualities or characteristics make you love, appreciate or admire them?
- Get into a small group of 3:
 - Take a few minutes each to talk about your lists with each other
- ASK them to discuss together:
 1. What do you notice about your lists? Similarities, differences...
 2. What do your group members notice about your lists?
 3. Are there qualities on the others’ lists that are not on yours that you also admire or appreciate?
- SOLO WORK: Of all the traits/characteristics that you wrote down that you appreciate or admire – choose the top 5-7 that you wish to BE. Write those down on your worksheet.
 - Now share those with your small group.
- Of the 5-7 characteristics that you choose, now we want you to choose your top 3. These are your current core values, which are an important part of you and how you make decisions.

Activity 8: How Others See Me (10 min)

Worksheet “C”

EXPLAIN: Now we want you to take some time to look at how other people see you. You are going to do this with the help of a partner (buddy). Facilitators need to decide how the group chooses their partners; either by working with previous partner, or picking numbers or pairing up on their own or facilitator choosing. Be aware that the choosing of partners can be extremely stressful for some teens. Facilitators will need to time this and tell the youth when to switch (give warnings so they can finish what they are working on). Critical thinking about values and characteristics emerge and take shape.

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Get with a buddy:
- Put your name on your paper.
- Exchange sheets with your buddy.
- **NOW, Think of someone who knows you well. How would that person describe you... your qualities, what you do well, and any areas in which you might be able to improve?**
 - Your buddy will write your answers to the questions on your sheet.
 - You will then write your buddy’s responses on their sheet

Personal reflection time: (bottom of Worksheet C)

Is there an overlap of the top values/traits on your list of characteristics (Worksheet B) you wish to own with the ones you think others might identify with you?

- which overlap
- which do not overlap

- What conclusions can you make at this point?

Activity 9: Homework Assignments Between Sessions: (10 min)

Worksheet “D”

Homework between sessions will help youth to continue their learning. Facilitators can stress the importance of taking time between sessions to think about what they heard and experienced prior to the next session and that these assignments will help them do this. Please note that not all youth will complete between session work, and they may forget to bring their journals with them to the next session. Facilitators can adapt as necessary.

INFORMATION ABOUT HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT (Worksheet D)

In order to get a useful understanding of the homework on this worksheet, there are some important distinctions to consider:

- Assertions: describe something that we can look at and all agree upon as true or false. They are facts.
- Assessments: are opinions and judgments by us or others, of someone or something as seen through the observers' eyes; based on their experiences and what matters to them. For this homework assignment, you will listen to other people's assessments of you.

Here are some examples:

<u>Assertions:</u> I am a man. This book weighs 4 pounds. Ann is 5/2" tall. It is 105 degrees outside.	<u>Assessments:</u> I am smart. This book is heavy. Ann is tall. The weather is great today.
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In order to get the most accurate assessment with your homework interviews, it is important to:

1. Set the context
 - Tell them why you are doing what you are doing; set the mood of the conversation
 - Give them permission to assess you
 - Do you trust the other persons? Are they sincere, reliable, and competent? Do they care about you?
2. Asking others about you may help you learn about yourself
 - It tells you how others see you through their "eyes". It is their opinion.
 - Assessments may not be the truth, but they may be helpful
 - Did multiple people share the same opinion? What does that mean to you?
 - You don't have to hear it as the truth.... But is it?

REFLECTION: if we think of assessments (opinions) like our "stories or thoughts" the question is this: Are our stories or thoughts supporting our path to success?

- Are our assessments true.....for us?
- What happens when you believe your stories and thoughts?
- If they are not working, who would you be without that thought or those stories?

HOMEWORK:

1. INTERVIEWS (Hand out worksheet "D")
 - a. Youth are to interview 2-4 people (e.g. friend, adult, teacher, coach, etc.) and then complete reflections in their journal, answering the following questions: What did you learn from the interviews and compare how you see yourself and how others see you. (Facilitators should demo a brief interview with a teen doing an interview).
 - b. In their notebook ask youth to write 3-4 names of people they can interview (write them down); choose the person they will start with. ASK: Who is comfortable committing to do these interviews? (show of hands). ASK: is there one interview you can do today? REMIND: Interviews should be completed by next session.
2. REFLECTION/JOURNALING
 - a. Review your worksheets and responses to session 1, twice before next meeting to see if there is anything you would add or change.
 - i. ASK: How do the descriptions of those interviewed compare to your imagined description from someone who knows you well?
 - ii. DIRECT: Make notes in your journal. Can be in any form (pictures, drawing, cutting magazine pictures, words, random thoughts, etc.).

Activity 10: Debrief Closing (10 min)

Take time to check in with youth at end of session. Questions to ask:

- What was easy for you today?
- What was hard for you today?
- Name one thing that you realized or that surprised you today?
- What are you taking away from all this?

Thank youth for their participation and by reminding youth of next session: Time/Date/Place

WORKSHEET Z

Being a Teen

My school is so big.

I want to do well in school, but I am not organized. What can I do?

I just don't get all the work we have to do.

I am already so far behind with my homework, what should I do now?

Things are not good at home.

There is so much drama with the kids at my school. How should I deal with it?

I know I could do the work if I just had someone to help me.

I don't know if I like being in school. School can be boring.

I am afraid most of the time and don't know what to do about it.

I just want people to respect me for who I am. I hate being judged.

My best friend is spreading rumors about me.

I wish I had someone I could really trust to talk to.

I believe my life can be really good, but I don't know what to do about it.

I have no one to talk to; my mom is already overloaded taking care of the younger kids.

I know I can be successful.

I want to go to college but no one believes I can.

I feel confused a lot of the time.

I get frustrated and don't know how to handle the tension.

No one else in my family graduated high school, why should I?

I can't figure out how to do math and my dad says, "just do it".

I know I can do better in school, I just don't know where to start.

I wish I had someone to talk to that I could trust.

I got into a fight with my mom this morning.

I got a D and I don't know what to do differently.

I'm getting pressure from home to quit school and get a job.

No one else can take care of my sister and brother, and I have to miss school many times.

I never seem to have time to do my homework, what can I do?

I just want to fit in.

I have great ideas I'm excited about and just need to talk to someone to know where to begin.

I don't like it when people judge me.

I know I can be successful.

I have big dreams and I really want to accomplish them.

Introduction

Name _____

Grade level _____

School _____

Share 2 things about this person from the answers you get from the 4 questions below.

1. If you left this life and returned as an animal, which would it be and why?

2. Do you have a favorite song or poem? What is it and how does it make you feel?

3. If you could go any place in the world on vacation, where would you go and why?

4. What is your favorite possession and why?

Worksheet B

Name _____

a. People I admire

Characteristics I admire in them

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

b. Additional Characteristics I admire in people

c. Characteristics I listed more than once

d. Characteristics I'd most like to have

MY TOP 3

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

How I think others see me

Name _____

How would a person you know well describe you as a person?

What would they say are your best qualities?

What do they think you do well?

Would they say there are areas where you could improve?

Reflection Section

Reflection Section

Reflection Section

Moment of Truth: Do they think I have any of the characteristics I admire? Which Ones?

Worksheet D

Interview Sheet

Name _____

Interview with: _____

How would you describe my best qualities?

What are 3-4 Character traits you most like or admire in me?

What would you say I am good at?

When have you seen me at my best? What qualities did you observe?

Reflection Section

Reflection Section

Reflection Section

*What did I learn about myself from this interview?

*Did they see me the way I see me? Did they see me differently? How?

