

March Life Skill On The Go |SELF: Who Am I? Identifying Your Interests and Skills

Recognizing the gifts/abilities that your mentee possesses and helping him/her identify them is one of the greatest gifts that you can offer. Your mentee's skills and interests may take time to understand. As you meet with your mentee you will be supporting him/her to develop these skills and interests and to use them to make positive choices in life.

As you gain an understanding of your mentee's interests and skills you can begin to use their skills to motivate them to grow in a positive way. One of the best ways to mentor a youth and help motivate them is to use their interests and skills. One of the worst things you can do is devalue or "crush" their dreams. If your mentee enjoys playing basketball and says their dream is to be in the NBA, you do not want to tell them how unlikely that is, but use that dream as a way to help them prepare for their future. To make it into the NBA they will need to attend college; and to make it into college they will need to achieve in high school. Also remember that there are many jobs related to the NBA that a youth might enjoy even if they do not make it.

Activity/Discussion:

1. Identify a recent accomplishment of your mentee. It could be completing a school project, volunteering, fix something, planning an event, etc.
2. List all of the skills that were involved in executing that accomplishment. If you planned a school appreciation event, skills might include: advertising, building collaborations, verbal and written communication, leadership skills, planning, etc.
3. Separate from the above discussion about a specific achievement discuss your mentees interests.
4. Create a challenge for your mentee that involves using a specific skill in an area of interest over the next month.

Suggestion: Mentors should also share about themselves in each of these areas. Often, setting up a joint challenge can be fun and rewarding.

Take it deeper by [clicking here](#) to explore the following websites, activities and resources. If you know of a great resource or an activity that worked for your match, please share it with us so we can continue to improve the program.

Activity Idea

Challenge your mentee to use their skills in one of their interest areas to help someone in their community. They can help build something for an elderly neighbor or teach a sibling a new skill. Help them share their story with AYO. They can take pictures or write up their story. AYO would like to share this with others!