

YOUTH LEAD! NOW!

Identity Leadership:

How to Lead Yourself so You Can Lead Others
A Conversation with Stedman Graham

Next Step Curriculum





A Special Thanks to our Partners:



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Youth Lead Now! Next Step Curriculum is a professionally developed curriculum that can be paired with the Youth Lead Now! event. Our goal is to provide you with the resources to maximize the benefits of Youth Lead Now! in your own organizations and families.

This **Next Step Curriculum** can be utilized in a wide variety of contexts from an in-class lesson or training program to a family dialogue or personal reflection. We provide three varying formats below that can be easily adapted to fit your needs and continue the learning process started in the original webinar.

The formats work as follows:

Format 1: The “Next Step Curriculum” provides a curated list of potential debrief questions that can help a group or individual make deeper meaning of the Youth Lead Now! conversation.

Format 2: The “Text-Based Dialogue” builds on the Aspen Institute’s 70-year history of engaging in deeper conversations using “texts” (e.g., literature, poetry, spoken word, art) as a starting point for conversation. This format introduces new content that can be used to drill down on the themes of the webinar to extend learning.

Format 3: “From Thought to Action” represents experiential learning or guided reflection activities designed to move people from ideas to action as it relates to a particular webinar theme.



Format 1: Youth Lead Now! Debrief

Set the stage for the participants' group dialogue by explaining (in your own words):

- Group dialogue differs from traditional debriefs in several key ways:
 - The focus is on participants' lived experiences
 - The goal is more dialogic with participants asking and engaging one another to understand
 - There is a focus not just on what is said but on the process of how the dialogue unfolds as well.
- Acknowledge that for some participants, this form of dialogue may seem intimidating as it can be more personal. That is okay. Again, the Youth Lead Now! Next Step Curriculum is designed to help develop all learning muscles including those that participants may not be fond of or use often.

If you are debriefing in a group, lay out ground rules for your debrief such ask:

- We create space for all voices to be heard in the room,
- We position disagreement as opportunities for learning,
- We challenge ideas not people or their inherent worth,
- Any other guidelines the group would like or needs to follow.

Remember, the role of the moderator is not to walk through the prompt questions like a script. These are just suggestions. The goal is to serve as a conductor drawing out conversation, framing ideas, and pushing for depth.

The Talk

- What resonated in what Stedman Graham shared and why?
- How does that connect to your own experiences?
- What questions do you still have after Youth Lead Now?

Your Experience

- What identities, given to you by yourself or others, might you want to shed?
- To what extent might you struggle to lead yourself? Why?
- What is one thing you heard today you want to take forward in your leadership journey?

Closing may feel abrupt or as if it is cutting off conversation. Remind participants this debrief is designed to open up conversations - not complete them. Encourage the participants to continue exploring these themes, questions, and lessons for as long as they need to.

Format 2: "Self-Mastery" by Henrietta Cordelia Ray Text-Based Dialogue

Instructions

It may be helpful to quickly set the stage for this process and how it is different from a traditional dialogue.

The Aspen Method focuses on using texts as a vehicle to explore what it means to be human, our values, and society. Texts become an in-road to personal reflection, deep dialogue, and the contemplation of values.

We want participants to consider what the text stimulates for them and why.

- What feelings does a text elicit for a person?
- What are the author(s)' primary arguments, messages, or themes? To what extent does it resonate for a person and why?
- What can we learn from considering the text in a contemporary context?

Remind participants of ground rules.

- We create space for all voices to be heard in the room.
- We position disagreement as opportunities for learning.
- We challenge ideas not people or their inherent worth.

Aspen text-based dialogues usually take 40 minutes to dig fully into a reading. We recommend you spend no less than 20 minutes on any text.

Open the dialogue by asking participants to reference the reading in this guide.

We want participants to have the written text in front of them.

- Explain that we will spend a set amount of time on the "text." The conversation won't feel finished when we end, and that is part of the process.
- Begin the process by asking a participant to read the poem aloud for the group. Due to the length of the poem, it may be interesting to have multiple participants read aloud; take notes on the different inflections, pauses, or emphasis as it may add rich insight to the dialogue.
- After the poem has been read, utilize the questions on the following page and/or ask your own.
- Remind participants there is no right or wrong answer in a text-based dialogue.

“Self-Mastery”

by Henrietta Cordelia Ray

To catch the spirit in its wayward flight

5 Through mazes manifold, what task supreme!

For when to floods has grown the quiet stream,

Much human skill must aid its rage to fight;

And when wild winds invade the solemn night,

Seems not man’s vaunted power but a dream?

10 And still more futile, ay, we e’en must deem

This quest to tame the soul, and guide aright

Its restless wanderings, – to lure it back

To shoals of calm. Full many a moan and sigh

Attend the strife; till, effort merged in prayer,

15 Oft uttered, clung to – when of strength the lack

Seems direst – brings the answer to our cry:

A gift from Him who lifts our ev’ry care.

Potential Themes

- The “floods” or “wild winds” that interfere when leading ourselves
- The ideas of “catch the spirit” or “tame the soul”
- Where we look when we find our identities challenged

The Text

- What do the lines “To catch the spirit in its wayward flight/Through mazes manifold, what task supreme!” mean to you?
- What do you think the author meant when she referenced “Seems not man’s vaunted power but a dream?”
- What emotions or feelings does this poem surface for you?

Your Life

- To what extent do you feel like you have experienced what the poem describes?
- To what extent have you ever felt your soul wandering?
- How might our identities, passions, dreams, etc. play into luring our soul back?

The Lessons

- In what ways might you begin to ensure you catch the spirit or your soul is tamed and never wanders?
- In what ways does Identity Leadership play into that process?
- During this conversation, what has stuck out to you? What do you wish to take forward into your life?

Closing this dialogue can move in a variety of directions. Closing may feel abrupt or as if it is cutting off conversation. Remind participants that text-based dialogues are designed to open up conversation not complete them. Encourage participants to continue exploring these themes after the dialogue.

No two facilitations of a text-based dialogue should be the same.

The mosaic of people in the room and context should shape where the dialogue goes.

Remember, the role of the moderator is not to simply walk through the prompts.

These are just suggestions. The goal is to serve as a conductor drawing out conversation, framing ideas, and pushing for depth.

Format 3: Check Your ID & Create Your Vision

The following activities are adapted from Stedman Graham's book Identity Leadership and are meant to merely help begin your Identity Leadership journey. For a deeper dive into leading others by leading yourself, make sure to visit stedmangraham.com to purchase his book Identity Leadership.

Activity #1-Check Your ID

Learning Objectives:

- Reflect on your identities
- Better understand your talents, passions, and dreams
- Begin to craft your Identity Leadership Plan©¹

Instructions:

~20 mins - Guided Reflection

- Provide participants with the Check Your ID Reflection Guide, the questions, or guide the participants through the questions verbally through the entirety of guided reflection section.
- Give participants about 20 minutes to complete the worksheet. Stress to them to use the entire time and really push their thinking. We also want them to bring critical perspectives into the process in whatever way is meaningful to them.
- If they are struggling to finish, encourage them to go with their heart. And remind them this is not set in stone, rather a reflection of where participants are in their lives right now.
- Moderators should feel free to complete the worksheet, as well.

~20 mins - Participant Debrief

- When time is up, call the large group back together to debrief the activity. Possible prompts include:
 - How did the process of completing the worksheet go?
 - Were there parts that you struggled with? Which parts and why?
 - What did you learn about yourself?
- After about 20 minutes of conversation, start to bring the first activity to a close.

¹ Adapted from *Identity Leadership*, by Graham S., 2019, New York City, NY: Hacette Book Group INC. Copyright 2019 by Stedman Graham.

Check Your ID Reflection Guide¹

"Your identity is the intersection of your talents and dreams." - Stedman Graham

List your best features or characteristics as defined by YOU.

List the things that you are truly passionate about.

List your biggest strengths.

To what extent do you see intersections between your best characteristics, passions, and biggest strengths?

¹ Adapted from *Identity Leadership*, by Graham S., 2019, New York City, NY: Hacette Book Group INC. Copyright 2019 by Stedman Graham.

Activity #2- Create Your Vision

Instructions:

5 mins - Activity Introduction

- Let participants know they will now be creating a personal vision utilizing a “Vision Board”.
- Inform them what a personal vision is and some ways to think critically about it utilizing Stedman Graham’s advice from his book [Identity Leadership](#).
 - “A Personal vision statement helps you clarify what is important to you. It acts as a rudder as you navigate through your days and helps you keep your focus on what matters amid everyday distractions.” (Graham, pg. 162)¹
 - “As you think about your personal vision, keep in mind your values, your passions, your strengths, and the areas you want to grow in. Think about what energizes you and makes you happy. Think about how you operate best and your skills and abilities.” (Graham, pg 162)¹
- Explain participants will first answer a few reflection questions then work to find visual representation of their answers.
- Finally, participants will create a board or collage that represents their vision.

10 mins - Individual Reflections

- Have participants retrieve something to journal with.
- For the next 10 minutes, facilitators will read five questions to the participants.
- Participants will have two minutes per question to answer each in any way they wish (free write, bullets, poem, drawings, etc.).
- The reflection questions are as follows:
 - What gives my life meaning?
 - What would I do in my dream job?
 - How do I want to be remembered?
 - What experiences do I want to have in my life?
 - What do I want to achieve in my life?
- After the 10 minutes is up, transition to the Vision Board Creation.

25 mins - Vision Board Creation

- Inform participants they will have the next 20 minutes to craft their Vision Board.
 - Fellows should use the answers to the reflection questions to determine what they wish to put onto their vision board.
 - A vision board is just a visual representation of a personal vision. There is no exact way to compose a vision board. An example is provided on the next page.
 - Participants may use words, pictures, phrases, symbols, or anything else to represent their vision.



- Participants can create the Vision Board however they wish. We may suggest logging on to the free design website, [Canva. https://www.canva.com/.](https://www.canva.com/) or any other virtual platform the participants are comfortable with.
- Remind participants this may just be the first attempt at their vision boards. If they do not finish or wish to revisit the exercise, they should feel encouraged to do so.

20 mins - Vision Board Sharing OR Activity Debrief

- Once the participants have been given time to create their board, allow for them to share the vision they have created with the rest of the group.
- Or, if you'd rather, conduct a group debrief on the exercise of creating a vision board.
- Some potential prompts for a debrief could include:
 - What was that activity like for you? Where did the activity challenge you?
 - What do you find helpful in crafting a vision statement or creating a vision board?
 - How might we take this practice into the future?
- Once everyone who wishes has had a chance to share or you feel you have concluded the debrief, give one final instruction.
- Have the participants take a picture of their vision board or save their creation as a picture. Then, instruct them to set the picture as their phone, computer, or tablet background. Or have them place the vision board in place they will see it everyday (bedroom door, dresser, fridge, wallet/purse, etc.).
- The idea being we want our participants to always think about their vision, their identity leadership, and where they want to go in life.