

TOPIC: Personal Growth

Participants will answer the following questions by the end of the session:

- How does personal growth fit into Venturing?
- How do the opportunities for personal growth develop over time in Venturing?
- How can an advisor use regular conferences to help Venturers gain the most from their experiences?

Presentation Method

In planning the presentation, you should review the latest materials posted at <http://www.venturing.org/>. The most recent program updates are posted there are ready for your use.

Use the discussion outline below to help you prepare your remarks. PowerPoint presentation slides were not prepared for use during this session. If you wish to use one, the content below will be helpful in constructing your presentation.

Resources

Boy Scouts of America (2014). *Handbook for Venturers*. Irving, TX: Boy Scouts of America (BSA No. 619088)

Boy Scouts of America (2014). *Venturing Advisors Guide*. Irving, TX: Boy Scouts of America (BSA No. 618768)

Boy Scouts of America (2014). *Venturing Awards and Requirements*. Irving, TX: Boy Scouts of America (BSA No. 618767)

OVERVIEW

The Venturing program is structured around four areas of program emphasis: Adventure, Leadership, Personal Growth, and Service – ALPS. This session explores the use of personal growth as an area of program emphasis.

INTRODUCTION

The ALPS model was developed during the 2012-2014 program review process by the National Venturing Task Force.

	ADVENTURE	LEADERSHIP	PERSONAL GROWTH	SERVICE
SUMMIT 	<i>Mentoring and participation</i>	<i>Ongoing leadership development</i>	<i>Goal-setting and personal growth</i>	<i>Leading others in service</i>
PATHFINDER 	<i>Leading and participation</i>	<i>Leading others</i>	<i>Goal-setting and personal growth</i>	<i>Participating in service</i>
DISCOVERY 	<i>Participation</i>	<i>Preparing to lead</i>	<i>Goal-setting and personal growth</i>	<i>Participating in service</i>
VENTURER 	<i>Initial participation, orientation to the crew, Personal Safety Awareness training, induction into the crew</i>			

**PERSONAL
GROWTH IN
VENTURING**

As a Venturing Advisor, you serve as a positive role model for the members of the crew.

Your interest in their well-being and success and your investment of time and interest in their growth is a terrific gift for the members of the crew. You don't have to be perfect, but you do need to be invested in helping them design and lead crew adventures—and be there to help them succeed and to help them make sense of what they learned during their time in the crew.

One of the challenges of Personal Growth as one of Venturing's areas of program emphasis is that it is not really an outcome by itself, but rather comes about as a result of accomplishing other tasks. The process is facilitated by helping Venturers set goals for learning and through their accomplishments, as Advisors help members of the crew make sense of what they have learned through their experiences.

The Areas of Personal Growth

Personal growth can and should occur in many areas of one's life. The Venturing areas of personal growth—Development of Self, Development of Others, and Development of Faith—afford Venturers a framework for identifying areas in which you want to develop and that can become a goal that speaks to you and your aspirations. These goals may be also seen as helping to structure personal growth around the ideas present in the scout law: duty to God (and country), duty to oneself, and duty to others.

The personal growth area suggests reflection and development across Development of Self, Development of Others, and Development of Faith. The areas should be interpreted and personalized to suit your specific needs and goals, so it might be helpful to think of them as addressing different aspects of personal growth.

By the time a Venturer has traveled the trail to the Summit, he or she will have explored each of the areas of personal growth at least once, and at least one of the areas in some depth.

Setting Goals

The foundation of every Venturer's areas of personal growth will be the results of his or her structured personal reflections and subsequent goals. Completing a structured personal reflection is an effective strategy for becoming aware of one's abilities and limitations, and it is a necessary first step along the journey of personal growth. The structured personal reflection is a process of guiding a Venturer through a series of questions that help him or her think deeply about his or her own life's purpose in a meaningful way. A structured personal reflection also helps identify what is important to the Venturer so that he or she is able to avoid having others impose their values or desires.

Following are the suggested questions found in the Handbook for Venturers for those embarking on a structured personal reflection. As an Advisor, you may generate additional questions that reflect upon the Venturer's life experiences or

crew activities.

Questions that a Venturer May Ask Himself/Herself

- What do I value?
- What motivates me?
- What is my purpose in life? What do I want out of life?
- What successes and achievements have I had?
- What am I good at?
- What am I not good at?
- What gives me joy?
- What are my current life circumstances?
- Who is someone I admire, and what characteristics does he or she have?
- Do I have those characteristics?

The process is designed to be open-ended but structured. The sort of guiding questions that are relevant to counseling are idea for this process. There are guidelines for counseling and mentoring in the “Becoming an Effective Advisor” chapter of the *Venturing Advisor Guidebook* to help you construct questions and help a Venturer process the discussion that takes place during an advisor conference.

“OTHERS”

Development of Others includes an assessment of relationships and how one serves others. Development of Others can be a commitment to organize a clothing drive for a homeless shelter, teach Sunday school for preschoolers, build a storage shed for the crew’s equipment, or accomplish any goal that promotes skill development while serving others.

“SELF”

Development of Self, includes analysis of your strengths and limitations, wants and needs, and development of a plan to address a self-improvement goal. Development of Self can be a commitment to become physically fit, complete an online computer science course, learn to horseback ride, or accomplish any goal that promotes the development of personal skills and self-improvement.

“FAITH”

Development of Faith allows for an opportunity to explore one’s values and morals and to delve deeper into one’s faith or to expand one’s world-view by exploring spirituality, faith-based practices, and organized religions. Development of Faith can be completion of the TRUST Award, commitment to read a sacred text, organization of or participation in a mission trip, or any goal that promotes personal growth through an exploration of faith.

**ADVISOR
DISCUSSIONS**

An important part of Venturing is adult association. That’s more than just spending time together on adventures and in service projects; it is also a time to grow through conversations about the things in life that matter to you. Consider your Advisor conferences an opportunity to get feedback on what is important to you and how you are meeting your personal standards.

An Advisor conference is a requirement for the Discovery, Pathfinder, and Summit

awards. Venturers should be encouraged think of the Advisor conferences in two parts. The first part of the process is to share with your Advisor the goals a Venturer set for himself or herself in the three areas of personal growth.

An advisor should encourage Venturers to do this as soon as you start working on your developmental goals for the Discovery, Pathfinder, or Summit awards and as frequently as is helpful for you to form your goals and plans to achieve them.

The follow-up conference allows you to discuss what a Venturer has learned during their progress to the next level of recognition, including how they have done in achieving the goal that he or she set. As you develop your relationship with your Venturers, consider how you can serve as source of perspective and insight as you help them reflect on the successes and challenges they have experienced in Venturing and in life.

**ETHICAL
CONTROVERSIES**

In addition to establishing and achieving multiple goals across the three areas of personal growth, Venturers who seek recognition, specifically the Pathfinder and Summit awards, will need to participate in and then lead an ethical controversy. As Advisor, you can solicit ideas for ethical controversies from the crew or individual Venturers based on their collective or personal experiences.

Ethical controversies are dilemmas based on complex situations in which rendering a decision or action is difficult because different people, based on their principles and values, can view the situation differently. Challenging Venturers to think about ethical controversies is a great way to promote personal growth, because it requires reflections on the teachings of family, clergy, teachers, and others as they consider different points of view and strive to understand why they think and feel the way they do.

**DISCUSSION
QUESTIONS**

Use the discussion questions to provide advisors an opportunity to process and analyze the information presented during this session. As a general suggestion, keep the discussion positive and constructive, in keeping with the values of Scouting and of Venturing as a youth development program.

A helpful comment to use to keep the discussion moving in a positive direction might be, "how does [comment] promote a youth-designed and youth-led program?"

- How does a regular conversation with the members of the crew help you to guide Venturers in personal growth?
- How does a organizing goals into categories (faith, self, and others) help Venturers grow as individuals?
- How can formal structure for goal setting help Venturers set and achieve goals?
- What sort of counseling is needed to help Venturers appreciate the growth that has taken place through their experiences in the crew?

CLOSURE

Wrap up conversation. Close by asking participants how they will use what they learned during this evening's roundtable to support their crew's program.

ASSESSMENT

Look for participant answers to the following questions by the end of the session:

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