

## Vision Boards: Dream Big

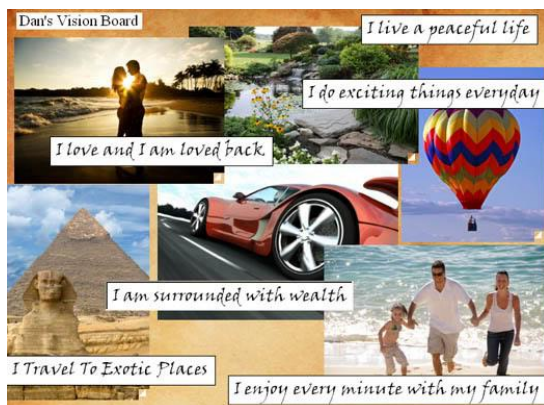
**Use:** This activity may be used as a workshop, activity at a camp program or class

**Goals:** Participants develop independent thought and long-term goals for their future.

**Timeframe:** 90 minutes or longer

**Target Age:** middle school age to adult

**Activity:** Vision board. This activity focuses youth on their future. The board serves as a graphical depiction of a person's hopes and dreams -- a map to guide the person to a future of their own creation.



### Procedure

#### Supplies

A half sheet of poster board per person.

Glue stick or rubber cement per person

A picture of the teen (optional, some place this in the center of their boards)

A variety of magazines (travel, home, lifestyle types work well)

Scissor per person

Other art supplies as you choose (permanent markers, paints, oil pastels, etc)

An open mind

First explain to the participants what a vision board is and that they will be making their own. For middle schoolers, have them focus on what they want to achieve during their high school years. For high schoolers, have them create what they want their lives to be in five years or when they are 25. The main point is for the teen to consider what they want their future to hold for them.

Encourage them to not limit to what is possible. This is not a mental exercise but one where teen can consider the infinite possibilities. Suggest they focus on what the future looks and feels like, and don't worry about how to get there.

Once the teens understand the activity, have the participants spend five to ten minutes in quiet consideration. Have the teens to take some time to sit quietly and consider their future. Encourage them clear the mind and "open up" to future possibilities. The trick is to get outside our own box. The important thing is to be relaxed and dream big.

Once the participants have a dream full of purpose allow them to begin creating their boards.

### Finding Images

Have participants flip through magazines or scour the internet for images, phrases, or headlines that speak to them.

Provide them the following "finding" tips:

- Don't think – give your mind a break and feel your way
- Look for things that invoke a feeling or physical reaction
- Hunt for the unfamiliar (this helps get outside the box of your mind)
- Don't worry; it's not supposed to make sense

### Sorting & Arrange

Have the teens look through their finds and put their favorites aside. Again, the trick is to not think about it. "Feel" the images, some might work and others not. The images can always be saved for later.

Next have teens arrange images on their boards to get a sense of the placement.

### Building Your Vision

Teens paste images on their boards and decorate. Encourage them to be creative in the board's design.

### Display

Once the board is completed, instruct the teens to place their boards some where they can see it every day. Having the "Vision" where they can see it helps teens to consider what steps are necessary to reach the vision.

### Discuss

Once participants are finished with the board, have them reflect on their choices using the reflection questions listed in this material. If appropriate have them share their boards with others. Instructors need to underscore and link the now with the future.

## **Background**

Life visioning, initially used in the Life Coaching sector, provides youth with the opportunity to develop independent thought and decision making skills. This process allows participants to see themselves in their future potential. The board itself can act as a visual realization of the creator's dreams and aspirations.

A vision board is, essentially, a collage. It serves as a graphical depiction of a person's hopes and dreams -- a map to guide him/her to a future of his/her own creation. The process of creating a vision board allows one to clarify their wants or where they want to go, and also gives the future a form. It's not really the board itself that makes dreams happen, it's the process that shifts a person's energy, thoughts, and emotions to line up with the dreams.

Vision boards can be as simple or as complicated as person wants to make them. They can be any size or shape. If you're doing a board that is for your entire life, you may want something bigger.

Remember, visioning can be in any format. The key is to not limit what the experience could be. You can paint a vision board, create a vision box, or make a small set of portable vision cards that are bound together with a ring.

## **Reflection Question**

How do your dreams reflect your reality?

Often when we consider our future we don't think beyond our box. In fact, we generally only come up with a few options or ideas. How did this visioning exercise help you to think differently about your future?

What are the steps you must take to arrive at your vision? If you wanted to be a college athletic in swimming or soccer, what steps must you take to get there? How many hours of practice? What benchmarks would you use?

How could this vision of the future help you determine the way you must take to get this result? If you wanted to be married by 25, what qualities would you look for in a spouse? Do you have those same qualities? If you wanted to have a lucrative career in engineering, what classes do you need to take next semester or next year to be able to go to college?



It's okay to have a picture of your dream car or house, but ask the question "Will this really bring joy, health, meaning, etc. to their life?" As people may get that great new car, but a month later still be unhappy. Will what you have placed in your board bring you joy, health, or meaning to your life?