Curriculum Tour

THE DIAMOND STANDARD

Living a Life of Excellence ©

A Promising Future
Introducing THE DIAMOND STANDARD

We’ve set The Diamond Standard in success and relationship education. Through this workshop series, youth and emerging adults (ages 15-25) gain valuable information, skills and resources to help them discover the keys to whole-person health and a promising future.
Diamonds in the Rough

Young people ages 15-25 are among the least served and highest risk populations in North America. They face rapid changes in responsibility levels, social resources, relationships, education and career opportunities. They are also most likely to be involved in life-altering, high-risk behaviors.
Discovering Beauty and Brilliance

Throughout The Diamond Standard workshop series, the story of how a diamond develops from coal to become a brilliant gem is used as a metaphor for the personal development process. Participants begin to discover skills and resources that help them reveal, value and protect the treasure that lies within them.
**Psychosocial, Evidence-based Methodology**

The curriculum is written and developed around a whole-person health approach, which impacts an individual physically, mentally, emotionally, socially and spiritually/morally. These methods develop participants internal and external assets to improve their likelihood of success.

### POSITIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT
The core elements of positive youth development programs increase potential for success. These programs seek to achieve one or more of the following objectives: Bonding, Resilience, Social competence, Emotional competence, Cognitive competence, Behavioral competence, Moral competence, Self-determination, Spirituality, Self-efficacy, Clear and positive identity, Future Outlook, Positive behavior, Prosocial involvement, Prosocial norms.

### SOCIAL NORMING THEORY
This theory impacts attitudinal and behavioral change. Social norms have significant impact on both thought and behavior because people tend to adopt attitudes and act in accordance to group expectations and behaviors for acceptance. By highlighting statistics that accurately reflect the positive choices of populations, prevention efforts can utilize social norms in a constructive way.

### SOCIAL LEARNING THEORY
People learn through observing others’ behavior. Albert Bandura identified four primary elements necessary for an individual to take an observed behavior and implement it as a personal choice:
1. Attention
2. Retention
3. Reproduction

### CHARACTER EDUCATION
Children are most likely to become persons of character when they grow up in communities of character. They learn qualities such as honesty, compassion, courage, kindness, self-control, cooperation, diligence and hard work when there is an effort on the part of the community they're surrounded by such as families, schools, churches, temples, mosques, the media, the government, sports leagues, the chamber of commerce and others.

### COGNITIVE BEHAVIORAL THEORY
The basic premise behind Cognitive Behavioral Theory (CBT) is that behaviors are the direct result of a person's internal thoughts and emotional content. Using this theory individuals identify those behaviors which are unhelpful and develop a plan to respond with a more positive perspective in the future.
### Developmental Assets for Young Adults

The Search Institute and the Social Development Research Group conducted a meta-analysis of 50 theoretical and empirical explorations of successful adult development. The results of these studies indicate eight key components to successful adult transition. The following table provides a brief overview of these factors.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Physical health</th>
<th>Good nutrition, regular exercise, no substance abuse or dependence, safe sexual behavior, avoiding violence, no drinking and driving</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Psychological and emotional well-being</td>
<td>Positive self identity, life satisfaction, positive outlook, sense of purpose, prosocial orientation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life skills</td>
<td>Decision-making, emotional self regulation, interpersonal skills, self-efficacy, financial responsibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethical behavior</td>
<td>Telling the truth, keeping promises, avoiding crime, obeying the law, calling in sick only when really sick, demonstrating care and concern for others, taking responsibility for oneself</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Healthy family and social relationships</td>
<td>Bonding and frequent interactions with a parent, an intimate partner, and with peer(s); involvement in groups such as community sports teams, church groups, music groups, dance classes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational attainment</td>
<td>High-school completion, completion of post-secondary degree or occupational certification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constructive engagement</td>
<td>Over 35 hours per week in school, employment, or homemaking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civic engagement</td>
<td>Volunteer work, political participation, charitable giving</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
THE DIAMOND STANDARD

The complete curriculum includes:

- **Teacher’s Manual** | 10 developmental lessons, each with a detailed Teacher’s Guide and Teacher’s Answers.
- **Student Manual** | 100 spiral-bound pages containing lesson content, activities, worksheets and inspiring quotes and graphics.
- **CD–ROM** | Electronic version of the Student Manual, which allows teachers to duplicate handout materials for teaching purposes.

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**Table of Contents**

1. **Dare to Dream**
   - Explore your incredible ability to dream and create extraordinary success.

2. **Masquerading**
   - Uncover the roles and games people play to feel confident and safe in life.

3. **Treasure Hunting Within**
   - Discover the amazing talents, skills and experiences that position you for fantastic success.

4. **Success Talk**
   - Express yourself more clearly and achieve your goals more directly through effective communication.

5. **No War Zone**
   - Resolve conflict and create new hope for the future with cooperative, win-win strategies.

6. **Cultivating Character**
   - Enhance your future by learning to showcase the core character qualities common to successful leaders worldwide.

7. **Weaving Wonderland**
   - Expand your potential for success by developing a wide range of healthy relationships.

8. **Happily Ever After**
   - Celebrate the joy of love and commitment by preparing for healthy romantic relationships.

9. **Promoting Future Brilliance**
   - Inspire others to excel by becoming an aware, intentional role model.

10. **Attracting Success**
    - Achieve magnificent things by developing a strategy to go beyond the current limits of your life.

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**SESSION 1**

**Teacher’s Guide (TG-1)**

**OBJECTIVES:**

1. Create an environment for participants to understand the value of a vision/dream for the future.
2. Develop an understanding of the barriers to dreams.
3. Provide an opportunity to begin developing a dream vision.
4. Help participants discover skills and resources to support their dreams.

**RESOURCES NEEDED FOR TODAY’S SESSION:**

- Question of the Day cards (see details below)
- Pens/Pencils for participants
- Fact Sheet on Coal
- Dream Puzzle (see details on following page)
- Plastic sandwich bags (quantity dependant on # of participants)
- Glue sticks
- 8 ½ x 11 sheets of paper
- Extra copies of Brainstorming Webs (see details on following pages)
- Prize for “Dream Puzzle” winners
- Piece of Coal and Glass Diamond

**TOTAL PERIOD LEARNING:**

It is imperative to catch participant’s attention with the theme from the first greeting. The room should have visual cues to support the theme of “Dare to Dream” and introductory conversations should be directed toward achieving dreams. If a meal is being provided, be sure to use meal time as a good “warm-up” opportunity to discuss dream-related ideas. For example, with the theme Dare to Dream, there could be pictures of careers (policeman, nurse, doctor or superhero) to color.

**QUESTION OF THE DAY (QOD):**

If a meal is being served, put 3x5 index cards on the table with a question for the group to discuss. Proposed question for this session is:

If you were to travel anywhere in the world, where would you go and what would you do?
# Table of Contents

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8. **HAPPILY EVER AFTER** | Celebrate the joy of love and commitment by preparing for healthy romantic relationships.

9. **PROMOTING FUTURE BRILLIANCE** | Inspire others to excel by becoming an aware, intentional role model.

10. **ATTRACTING SUCCESS** | Achieve magnificent things by developing a strategy to go beyond the current limits of your life.
Dream

Remember when you were little and you were full of dreams? The world seemed like a place of great adventure and the future was all about discovering something new and powerful.

As time goes by, we sometimes push dreams aside in our daily efforts to just live life. By doing this, we limit our ability to live life to the fullest.

Langston Hughes, a famous African American author and philosopher wrote:

"Hold fast to dreams for if dreams die, life is a broken winged bird that cannot fly."

Dream Again…

Take a minute now and remember the things you used to dream of doing as a kid. Finish the following statements:

When I was a child, I wanted to be: _______

When I played make-believe, I liked to pretend to: __________

My favorite story as a child was: __________

The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams.

Eleanor Roosevelt

The biggest adventure you can ever take is to live the life of your dreams.

Oprah Winfrey

Nothing happens unless first a dream.

Carl Sandburg

If you can imagine it, you can achieve it. If you can dream it, you can become it.

William Arthur Ward

Masks

Masks can be barriers to keep others out and ourselves caged within. Through a mask, a man cannot see himself.

Chinese proverb

Sometimes people carry to such perfection the mask they have assumed that in due course they actually become the person they seem.

William Somerset Maugham

Streets are lined with people in colorful costumes and masks during Mardi Gras and on Halloween. These are times of celebration where, for a little while, people get the chance to pretend to be someone other than who they are in real life. A mask disguises one’s true identity, and for the right reason, can be fun and healthy.

Yet there are many times in life when we wear invisible masks that keep us from revealing our true selves. These masks can stop us from becoming all we have the potential to be. Masks come in many forms:

- The _______ people put on us, or we put on others. For example, someone with great grades in school might be labeled a “geek” by peers and be teased for his intelligence.

- __________ that hide how we truly feel. For example, rather than showing that the words someone spoke hurt, a person might choose to put on an attitude that says, “I don’t care what other people think. I don’t need other people.”

- Assumed ________ often become masks we hide behind. For example, every school has a “class clown.” This is the student who will always make jokes and get people to laugh in class. This behavior can be used to hide low self-esteem or insecurity while outwardly the “clown” appears to be a happy person. These assumed behaviors can also be called character-roles.

THE DIAMOND STANDARD - Living a Life of Excellence
Masks

Through a mask, a man cannot see himself.
Chinese proverb

Sometimes people carry to such perfection the mask they have assumed that in due course they actually become the person they seem.
William Somerset Maugham

The most important kind of freedom is to be what you really are. You trade in your reality for a role. You trade in your sense for an act. You give up your ability to feel, and in exchange, put on a mask.
Jim Morrison of The Doors

Though I know it is unfair, I reveal myself one mask at a time.
Stephen Dunn

If you don't understand yourself, you don't understand anybody else.
Nikki Giovanni

If you don't love yourself, you can't love anybody else.
Jennifer Lopez

Contents | 10 developmental lessons

THE DIAMOND STANDARD - Living a Life of Excellence
Classroom Structure: Teaching Modalities

The Diamond Standard program is developed on the theory of total-period learning wherein participants are engaged in the subject matter during the entire time they are gathered. Engaging the emerging adult population requires using a multi-modal style of presentation. Each session has various components to engage interests:

- **FILL-IN-THE-BLANK WORKSHEETS**
- **CREATIVE EXPRESSION**
- **PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES AND GAMES**
- **DIALOGUE-BASED WORKSHOP STYLE PRESENTATION**
- **TAKE-HOME ACTIVITIES**
- **SMALL GROUP DIALOGUE**
- **QUESTIONS OF THE DAY**
Teaching Modalities

FILL-IN-THE-BLANK WORKSHEETS

These pages offer fun and challenging exercises that require participants to cognitively cement material they are learning from the presentation. This example from Chapter 1 - Dare to Dream, compares the value and development of one’s dreams for success to that of a diamond.

“Be careful what you water your dreams with. Water them with worry and fear and you will produce weeds that choke the life from your dream. Water them with optimism and solutions and you will cultivate success. Always be on the lookout for ways to turn a problem into an opportunity for success. Always be on the lookout for ways to nurture your dream.”

Lao Tzu

“The key to realizing a dream is to focus not on success but significance - and then even the small steps and little victories along your path will take on greater meaning.”

Oprah Winfrey
Create A Mask

Using your paper plate, create the "mask" that you have worn recently. Read the questions below to create your own mask.

What emotions have I been feeling lately?
Am I expressing those emotions clearly and appropriately, or are there ways I use a mask to cover them up?
If so, draw what that mask looks like.

Teaching Modalities

CREATIVE EXPRESSION

Famous quotes and poetry are used throughout the curriculum to engage participants who are inclined toward abstract, creative thought. In addition, written and graphic creativity are used throughout to help participants create and link symbols from their personal experience with the subject matter. Here is an example from Chapter 2 – Masquerading. Using art supplies, participants are asked to create a mask as a visual representation of invisible masks that may keep us from revealing our true selves.

“The only way to discover the limits of the possible is to go beyond them into the impossible.”
Arthur C. Clarke
## Teaching Modalities

### PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES AND GAMES

Many emerging adults are kinesthetic learners and need movement to process subject matter. The Human Obstacle Course Activity from **Chapter 3 – Treasure Hunting Within**, facilitates movement and fun while offering an important lesson on obstacles that hinder goal achievement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Purpose/Instructions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Introductions</td>
<td>Build rapport and credibility. Review homework from previous session. Provide an overview of this session.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Treasure Hunt Activity</td>
<td>Create a sense of searching for something valuable while building energy and activity in the group. Divide into groups of 5 or smaller.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Treasure Hunting Intro Page</td>
<td>Read the introductory paragraphs about famous people who failed during their lifetimes and faced many challenges to success.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Hidden Treasures in Failure</td>
<td>Participants will work in groups to discuss questions that reveal ways to persevere through failure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Finding the Treasure in the Mirror</td>
<td>Have students complete the page as detailed in the instructions that follow.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Obstacles to Success/ Human Obstacle Course Activity

- Complete Obstacles to Success page and Human Obstacle Activity as described in instructions on following pages.

- Have volunteers read through the Understanding Your Unique Design/Myers-Briggs activity as given on the following pages.

- Students will respond to the scenarios given on the pages in groups. See details on following pages.

- Complete Obstacles to Success page and Human Obstacle Activity as described in instructions on following pages.

- Review the questions and tips on the "Next Steps" page.
Bridge Building: The Win-Win Approach to Conflict
The win-win approach is about changing conflict from attack and defense to cooperation. It is a shift in attitude where conversation centers on working as a team to find a solution to the problem with an effort to value each person’s needs. Win-win conflict resolution says: “I want to win and I want you to win, too.”

Teaching Modalities
DIALOGUE-BASED WORKSHOP STYLE PRESENTATION
Research on this curriculum indicates participants remain more engaged in sessions that feel like a workshop as opposed to a classroom. Presenters promote interaction by minimalizing didactic (one-way) teaching and incorporating questions for participant input. One example of this from Chapter 5 – No War Zone, where participants compare “Wall Building” vs. “Bridge Building” conflict resolution styles. Participants offer answers and examples that characterize building “Walls” in relationships vs. “Bridges.”
Teaching Modalities

TAKE-HOME ACTIVITIES

These activities give participants an opportunity to further assimilate information into their personal awareness and belief system. Each session ends in a “Take it Home” series of questions for deeper contemplation on the subject and tips for building stronger knowledge and skill sets specific to each topic. Here is an example from Chapter 6 – Cultivating Character.

Take it home:

What are some areas in my life where I may not be setting successful boundaries?

If there are relationships in my life that are not built on strong character traits, what can I do to improve them?

How can I use the information about character to improve my relationships?

Tips for learning more about healthy relationships:

1. Learn more about promoting positive character in the community at charactercounts.org
2. Go to the library or bookstore and find literature or audio-books about developing healthy relationship boundaries.
3. Give your friends a copy of the Healthy Relationship Assessment and encourage them to rate you and themselves. Ask them to share their results.
4. Do a computer search for websites that teach “character and success” or “healthy boundaries.”

Teachings:

- ____________________________
- ____________________________
- ____________________________
- ____________________________

How can I use the information about character to improve my relationships?

Teachings:

- ____________________________
- ____________________________
- ____________________________
- ____________________________

Endnotes:


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Teaching Modalities

SMALL GROUP DIALOGUE
Small groups allow participants to express their views and ideas, while allowing those who are more reserved a less threatening medium to engage in dialogue. In Chapter 8 – Happily Ever After, participants examine for themselves the risks of non-marital sexual activity over the perceived benefits with hypothetical scenarios.
Teaching Modalities

QUESTIONS OF THE DAY
Highlight each lesson’s content and help participants to get to know each other at a deeper level. Take for example this question from Chapter 9 – Promoting Future Brilliance, which focuses on inspiring others to excel by becoming an aware, intentional role model.

QUESTION OF THE DAY (QOD):
If a meal is being served, put 3x5 index cards on the table with a question for the group to discuss. Proposed question for this session is: **Tell about one person who made a major, positive impact in your life.**
THE DIAMOND STANDARD

Yes, I/we want to promote a promising future through success and relationship education by equipping youth and emerging adults with psychosocial skills and resources.

Additional Training & Curriculum Information

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