

INSIGHTS FROM THE CREATIVE MENTORSHIP INITIAL TRAINING

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Cultural Center Parobrod

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RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TWO BOOKS MENTIONED DURING THE TRAINING:

[“Search inside yourself - The unexpected path to achieving success happiness and world peace” by Chade Meng Tan](#)

[“A whole new mind - Why rightbrainers will rule the future” by Daniel H. Pink](#)

1. THE UNFOLD APPROACH

The starting point of this approach is that all change that you want or wish for starts and ends with you. The main principle in this is to love failures, which means to choose to constantly learn and develop. To go beyond judgment and into the question “what can I learn from this?” in every single failure. In every failure you make active choice to focus on learning and to stop judging.

1.1. From achieving to learning in each situation

This means that you would have to let go of the idea that life is about achieving. When we are attached and focused on result we judge ourselves in relation to others, which blocks creativity, joy and peace. When we live the belief that life is a constant learning we can stop judging and every failure will be a support on the way to our full potential.

DON'T TAKE YOURSELF TOO SERIOUSLY

When we allow ourselves to make mistakes and let our desire guide us, our joy of life expands and courage grows stronger.



This idea gives you the possibility to keep your power and to **focus on possibilities and new perspectives, instead of being in the role of victim** and focus on obstacles, judgment, preconceptions and being in the past... When you judge you put everything outside of yourself and become a victim and this is disempowering you.

Don't have feeling of guilt and shame because it's proven that those two feelings are the hardest to handle, they eat your energy. Even if you know that you didn't do everything right, release yourself of guilt and shame **by taking responsibility for your actions and accepting them. If you are willing to learn, every situation brings a new perspective and empowers you.**

Fear of heights and fear from falling are the only two fears that we are born with - all others are learned later on in life. We should do our best to get over our fears and transform that energy to passion or purpose. Even though fear can lead to success, and be initiator and motivator, we have to base our choices on love and conscious decisions, not on fear.

We have to be wise and aware, but not petrified. Question whether the fears lead us to the fulfillment of our needs or elsewhere, think about them, become aware of them and of excuses, accept them and get over them.

1.2. How do I relate to others if I follow Unfold approach?

When I follow Unfold approach I do not have a need to have a position and show power to people, but I have a belief that every person has something to contribute with. Then I take responsibility for my thoughts, feelings and actions in relation to other people and I let other people take responsibility for them.

Willingness to follow others is more important than being able to lead. The new leadership and how to lead ourselves asks from you to be authentic, be human, be yourself. Real leadership is when all of us follow ourselves – being able to lead and to follow at different situations.

When you use Unfold approach **you are honest with what is in you** – your thoughts and feelings - and how you relate to other people. From time to time take a few minutes only for yourself, to be alone and think about your life and purpose, needs, feelings.

Allow your emotions to participate in your activities, be present - whole you, your body, intuition, energy ... **Practice your “courage muscles”! The place where magic happens is outside your comfort zone.**

1.3. The words that are compass which guide you in this approach are:

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Openness• Willingness• Awareness• Courage | | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Possibilities• Gratitude• Playfulness• Acceptance |
|--|--|--|

Give more yes-es than no-s! Concentrate on good things and on people who are supporting you. Become aware of what kind of person you want to become. The most important skill when you use this approach is the ability to **observe yourself** and your surroundings. In the core of the observation is to be neutral and to lovingly put the words on what you experience inside and outside of you, to describe what you see and feel in other person and yourself.



DEVELOP YOUR OBSERVER

When you make conscious decisions you can choose the life you want to live.

1 . 4 . From attitudes and opinions to sharing perspectives

When we meet another person we often start with an attitude and opinion. That leads to a discussion and the core energy is that someone is right and someone is wrong. This is because we discuss from our own answers and we end up position against position. The result is often energy of conflict.

The Unfold approach is that we start from a question. In this situation, **it is not about already formed opinions**, but rather **point of views** that we explore and **share perspectives**. Instead of trying to convince everyone to share my values and opinion and defending myself, I can share my perspective in discussion but I am flexible to accept other perspectives and after that to create opinion. This leads to clarity, understanding and acceptance, even though it may not lead to consensus.

Don't let your stubbornness hold you down! When we discuss we have to be ready that other side is right as well as that we are right.



PRESS PAUSE

Breathe, pause, listen inwardly, ask questions, still your mind, state your intention.

1 . 5 . Developmental questions

In Unfold approach we start with **possibility of learning in every situation** and the key questions are:

1. Where am I in the conversation? Where is my level of consciousness in this conversation?
2. What can I do to make it easier for myself to participate in this conversation?
3. What is the learning in this conversation?
4. What is the possibility?
5. What is here to transform?

Lift our perspective and consciousness and observe... Certain things happen for a reason and want to show us that something can change and transform in order to get better, and for this we cannot judge... the bigger the drama the bigger the possibilities.

2. CONVERSATION LEVELS AND QUESTIONS FOR MENTORSHIP MEETINGS

CONVERSATION LEVELS

Drama

Situation

Choice

Possibility

COMMON QUESTIONS

Whose fault is this?

Who can I blame?

Can you believe that this is happening?

How can we fix this?

How quickly can it happen?

Who do I choose to be?

How do I choose to relate to this situation?

What can I learn from this?

What possibilities exist?

What do I wish to transform?

2.1. Giving personal feedback

If you often take responsibility for other people you are getting involved easily in dramatic situation. **In giving feedback, try not to generalize things - be personal and express yourself from your point of view.** However, when you give feedback **try not to criticize the person, but his/her concrete act or behavior**, since this is the way to empower individuals. Even when we are on Drama - level, it is good to know why we behave like that, what put us on that level; if you accept yourself in that moment, you can use Drama to learn.



You always have a personal responsibility.
Choose to listen to and tend to your needs.

3. PERSONAL CELL AS A COMPAS IN MENTORING CONVERSATION

The personal cell is one possible tool to define your values, needs, capacities and purpose in life. **This cell is a good compass in mentoring conversations as it underlines some of the core principles and values of an individual.** During mentoring process, many of the goals and needs which mentees will express can be professional, concrete, short-term and technical. It would be very good for mentor to ask open questions, deepen the conversation, repeat them, and make sure everything is said and clear. Sumarize the conversation, make sure it is understood the same from both sides. Pay attention to mentee's / mentor's body language, not only words.



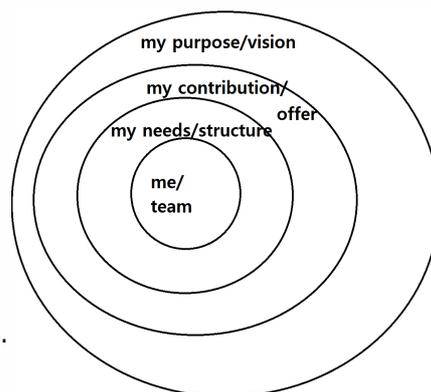
CHOOSE TOUCH

When we choose touch and physical contact, we come in contact with our body, emotions and become more present.

This cell helps a mentor to observe and ask questions to a mentee from a more abstract level, as well as to talk about how certain choices or behaviors are influenced by the values and capacities of the mentee. In this sense, the cell can help when discussing diverse options about the important questions in mentee's life. What would it mean for mentee to start leading him/herself consciously by his/her core values?

3.1. Me

- What are your values and beliefs?
- What do they mean to you?
- Why are they important?
- When we become aware of what is important for us, what we value, what we believe in or what matters to us in life, we can make the right choices and decisions for ourselves.



3.2. Needs

- Be true to yourself
- Be aware of your excuses because once you understand them you will be able to get up and do things you have been afraid of.
- Recognize yourself and your needs.
- What do you need to be more authentic, to feel happy, and to unfold your full potential?
- What choices do you need to make in order to live the life you dream of?

3.3. Offer

- What are you good at?
- What do you offer to people around you?
- What is your contribution to people or to your work place?
- When it is clear to others who you are the opportunities will come your way.

3.4. Purpose / mission

- What do you think is your life purpose?
- Why are you here on Earth?
- What makes your heart tick?

- What would you do if no one would be expecting anything from you – parents, society... ?
- What makes you happy?
- What creates meaning in your life?

We need to have reminders why we want to do something. It is very important to be with people who will remind you of your goals and who will support you.

4. INSIGHTS FROM THE TRAINING

4.1. Insights of alumni mentors

Alumni mentors shared their experience and insights. For some, this program was contribution to the idea of lifelong learning, platform for transformation and chance to make a difference in the society. For others, it was the opportunity to get to know oneself better and to get inspired. Some stated that the engagement in CM encourages them to dedicate time for deep insights for things which are important to them in life. All underlined a chance to meet inspiring, motivated and interesting individuals, all committed to the betterment of our society. Some continue being mentor and mentee at the same time and are always in search for new inspiring mentors...

4.2. Insights based on various exercises during the training:

Exercise I: Chairs arrangement: being put under pressure of the deadline or the need to succeed, we do not cooperate among each other, often do not even consider collaboration. When under stress, we do not breathe properly thus become „stupid“, and our capacities for innovation, creation and problem solving decrease. Our instinct is to consider every little task as extremely important and forget about **the big picture**. Often there is the possibility for embracing someone else's idea and developing it. There can be a conversation with everyone. Every little exercise shows us something more about ourselves and this is the approach we should have in life – see what we can learn from any given situation.

Exercise II: Elevator pitch: presenting your values, your needs, offer and purpose in one minute / four sentences to affirm and prove that your opinion of yourself is much more important than someone else's opinion of you. That doesn't mean that you don't care about other person's perspective, it means that you know your values and you know what is important and true for you. Being sure about our values leads to being authentic. Expressing is a great tool. When you feel uncomfortable or stressed, just express that in front of your family, friends... When you express it, that is the beginning of solving the problem and you will feel better.

Other exercises also showed us the importance of physical contact and body language, words not being necessary for successful communication, various ways of solving a problem, advantages of not taking yourselves too seriously, trusting other people and relying on them and initiating your own action.

5. ADDITIONAL SUGGESTIONS FOR MENTEES AND MENTORS

5.1. Seven steps for establishing quality mentorship relation:

1. Fast, constant or visible improvement is not something you should expect. Usually when you decide to do something new, you need some time for changing, which is a period of lower energy, but if there is a goal and an effort, you will make success. Be realistic and demand impossible.
2. Acknowledge the variety of ways to develop mentorship relationships and the differences among the mentoring couples within the program.
3. Recognize similarities but also differences between two of you in experience, point of view and personality and embrace them.
4. It is of big importance that mentor and mentee meet even when they do not have urgent cause or prepared topic. Something relevant will show up!
5. Confidentiality is very important aspect of this relationship: neither mentor nor mentee should further discuss the information or insight that the other side shared with. Mentorship talks are private and both participants rely on discretion. At the same time, between mentors and mentees there has to be courage to tell if something is bothering them in that relation.
6. For some mentors and mentees it would be interesting, appropriate and useful to take notes during or after the meeting, in order to remember raised issues and follow their development.
7. Being in the same time in the role of mentor and mentee (to different persons) can improve the quality of the relationships, since one could have both perspectives.

5.2. Five things that mentees should always have in mind:

1. Everything in life is about giving and receiving, the more you give – the more you will receive! You are in driver seat and you are the one who makes decision about what you want to gain in this program. What is your goal within this mentorship program? You have to decide what is important for you to learn from your mentor and all participants, it is your responsibility. Additionally, think about not (only) what can you get from the relation, but also what can you offer to it. And when you are thinking of what you have to offer forget about job description and how do you fit in that - era of “employment” is over, now you are creating your own job, your work, your path.
2. It is very important to write your wishes, purposes as well as your needs from the mentor on paper, so you can see it, read it and understand it better, which will help you to follow your development.
3. It is up to you - the mentee - to prepare for the meeting with mentor. Our experience shows that scheduling the next meeting at the end of the ongoing one is a great way of keeping the mentoring relationship constantly going and developing. Also, dedicating the time several days before the meeting to summarize for yourself what it is you want next to discuss with you

mentor is a great way of focusing. Sharing several key questions with the mentor 2-3 days before the meeting will give your mentor the chance to think ahead of time about your questions and challenges and be more prepared for a discussion.

4. Use this opportunity to ask a lot of questions. People who accept to be mentors want to help you and share their knowledge.
5. It is great that you do not limit yourself to this program - you can try to find more mentors, and when someone leaves a really good impression on you, approach them and ask them to share some of their time and experience with you. Expressing what you need can get you where you want to be.

5.3. Ten important suggestions for mentors:

1. The role of the mentor is to guide, support. Sometimes being almost invisible is the right thing to do, while inspiring, encouraging, giving personal examples.
2. It is not recommended to give solutions and “correct” answers to mentee’s questions and needs. Mentees have to feel responsible for their choices, decisions, implementation and eventually achievements, in order to develop their self-esteem. Mentees should be the owners of their solutions.
3. Deal with a failure as with a learning method. Do not position yourself as the responsible for the potential failure of the mentee. Mentees have to feel responsible for the failure and to overcome vulnerability.
4. It is very important to give examples instead of advices, and be courageous to use examples from all aspects of your life, not only professional.
5. Mentors are invited to recommend articles, books, films, TV shows, lectures, events, organizations or other persons they find inspiring or relevant to the mentees, or to share any resources they think would be valuable to mentees, as well as other mentors.
6. You have the possibility to unfold large amount of potential of the mentee, as well as your own. Use it.
7. Encourage mentee to be concrete when talking about aims, plans and needs but also to have in mind the big picture (try to have wide perspective yourselves, too).
8. Take the approach of curiosity, dedication and interest for the person in front of you.
9. When discussing previous decisions in order to share experience and give examples to mentee, share also the reasons and the values certain decision was based upon. You are not convincing the mentees to repeat the decision themselves, but rather offering different approaches and perspectives.
10. Try to get feedback from the mentee and ask him/her for insights about your own doubts.