

Personal Growth

Overview: Personal growth represents the “P” in the “ALPS” model. It is seen in Venturing in the form of personal reflections, goal setting, ethical discussions, and code of conducts. This document will guide you through writing personal reflections, the goal setting process, and the creation of ethical discussions and code of conducts.

What is Personal Growth?: Personal growth is improving your self-awareness, reflecting on your identity, and developing talents and potential. Personal growth is important because it helps improve important skills used in leading your crew and dealing with real-world situations.

Personal Reflections: Personal reflections can be seen as a cycle that leads to setting and completing goals. There is a separate document attached labeled “Personal Reflection Worksheet” with an example of a worksheet you can use when creating a personal reflection. Creating a personal reflection consists of picking an area of development and asking yourself questions related to that area. Then, use the answers to your questions to set a goal and implement a plan to achieve it. You must complete the goal or be actively working on the goal to earn your current award. Below are descriptions of the three areas of development.

- Development of Self: The development of self includes the analysis of strengths, limitations, wants, needs, and the creation of a self-improving goal. An example of a self-improving goal is the commitment to become physically fit, learning to horseback ride, the completion an online computer science course, or any goal that promotes the development of personal skills and self-improvement.
- Development of Others: The development of others includes an assessment of relationships and how one serves others. The development of others can be a commitment to organize a clothing drive, teaching at Sunday school, building a shed for Crew supplies, or any goal that promotes skill development while serving others.
- Development of 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 the completion of the TRUST award, commitment to a sacred text, organization or participation of a mission trip, or a goal that promotes personal growth through an exploration of faith. Keep in mind this doesn’t have to be the development of a specific religion, but the development of one’s spirituality, values, morals, or worldly views. This is the only development area that you don’t have to share with your advisor if you don’t feel comfortable.

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Goal Setting: Goal setting is a part of your personal reflection. Your goal should be related towards the area of development you explored. As it was stated earlier, your goal either needs to be completed or being actively worked on to earn your award. When goal setting, make sure you use the SMART goals model listed below to plan and implement your goal. Be prepared to discuss your goal and what you are doing to achieve it during your advisor conference and board of review. There is also a place to plan and record your goal on the file labeled “Personal Reflection Worksheet.”

- Specific: What are the details of your goal? What is the who, what, where, when, why, and how? Your goal should be straightforward and clear.
- Measurable: How will you know when your goal is completed? You should have short measurements to determine how far along your goal is.
- Attainable: How is your goal reasonable, but still challenging? Why are you able to complete this goal?
- Relevant: Why is your goal needed? How are your steps helping you achieve the goal?
- Timely: When will you complete your goal? What are the steps you are taking to achieve the goal?

Ethical Controversy Discussions: Ethical controversies are problems in which solutions are hard to reach because of people’s different principles, values, and tendencies to view the situation differently. These situations may not have a right or wrong answer, but the more you think about ethical controversies and both sides, the better you will be at taking actions to fit your ethical compass.

An ethical controversy discussion is an activity used to discuss ethical standards and dilemmas that apply to the interests of your crew. You can conduct them as single activities at a crew meeting or outing, or use several occasions to dig deeper into the ethical issue. Examples of issues your crew may discuss are: Should it be legal for a police officer to take a second job, is it right to refuse jury duty, or is censorship OK?

When organizing the discussion, split the crew, including adults, into groups of four. Divide each group into two groups of two. (For smaller crews, you can split the crew into two big groups, each taking a side of the argument.) Give each group of two opposite sides of an ethical controversy. It doesn’t matter if they agree with that side or not. The steps you should then take are listed below.

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- 1.) Learn the Position: Allow each group to research their topic and develop arguments to support their side. They can work with other groups with the same side and topic.
- 2.) Present Your Position: Have the groups present their arguments to the other side. Make sure everyone understands the arguments by having them restate what they are being told.
- 3.) Discuss the Issue: Allow the other side to defend their position and state their arguments. Try to persuade the other side and listen to their defenses. Remember to critique ideas, not people.
- 4.) Reverse Positions: Have everyone switch sides. Give time for everyone to review the new side and the arguments associated with it.
- 5.) Try to Reach a Consensus: Work towards finding a conclusion all groups agree upon. Compare positions and arguments used to support them. Reflect on the process, discussing both the activity and the issue.

After the activity, follow-up as one big group. Ask everyone how they arrived at their final position. Compare and contrast the positions and arguments each group used.

Personal Codes of Conduct: A code of conduct is a list of values, morales, and principles. One example of a code of conduct is the Scout Oath and Law. When creating a personal code of conduct list morales, values, and principles you believe you should live your life by. These can include the topics listed in the Oath and Law, but are not restricted to that. Be prepared to share your code of conduct during an advisor conference and board of review.

Venturing Handbook: Check out pages 53 through 63 in your Venturing Handbook for more information on Personal Growth. Also find the attached document on the “Ranks” page entitled “Personal Reflection Worksheet.” Other questions you can add to the graph on the worksheet are listed in the description attached above it.