

Mind Mapping: Making Your Dreams Come True!

Audience: 15-18 year old teens

Time Needed: 55 minutes

Workshop Objectives:

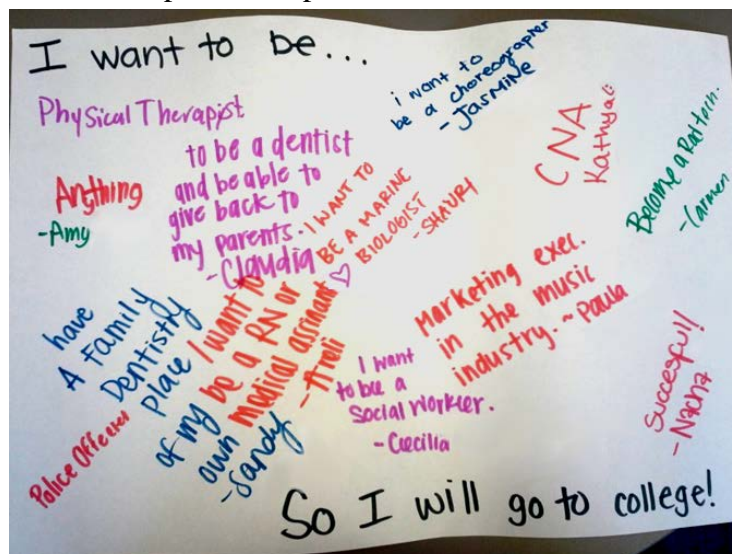
The participants will be able to:

1. Understand the broad benefits of graduating from college;
2. Comprehend that graduating from college is a critical step toward making dreams reality;
3. Practice the skill of mind mapping and learn how it can be applied to achieving dreams and maximizing resources in everyday life; and
4. Recognize that they are more likely to accomplish their dreams and goals when they write them down and share with others.

Resources Needed:

- White board and markers
- White paper for each participant (preferably legal size or larger)
- An assortment of colored markers for writing on paper
- Tables for participants during the workshop

Optional: A shorter version of this mind mapping activity (illustrating individual dreams for their lives and careers) can also be offered at a display or resource table at events. You will need larger paper, markers, and a location for them to create their posters. On the top of the paper write the following heading: “I want to be...”. At the bottom write, “So I will graduate college!” Below is an example from a previous conference:



Workshop Presentation:

1. Welcome and Introductions (5 minutes)

Welcome the group and introduce yourself; then ask each participant to introduce him- or herself with the following information: first name, grade, and school. NOTE: All of the words in italics are samples of statements the facilitator can make during the workshop.

My name is _____. I am with _____. I am very excited to be here with you today to talk about your dreams. Before we get started I would like to quickly go around the room and have everyone state his or her name, grade, and school.

If the group is too large you may not be able to do this as a large group; however, you have the option of dividing the large group into smaller groups for introductions, if desired.

2. How does education fit with our dreams of a happy life? (10 minutes)

Tell participants that you'll be drawing a picture today, and then ask them the following questions:

What does a "happy life" mean to you?

What do you think is needed for a happy life?

As the audience brainstorms ideas, write them on the board. Alternatively, ask participants to come up to the board one at a time and draw their images of a happy life. If they need help, you can add ideas or prompt them. Examples of answers include: money, family, nice vacations, good self-image, lots of friends, good health, a home, a great job, and finish school.

Once they have finished, draw the parallel between the six categories of benefits of education and our dreams of a happy life. Here is a sample of what you might say:

These are great ideas. I agree this is what is needed to have a happy life. Did you know that all of these things that you have listed are benefits of going college?

List or write the six benefits categories. However, to save time you may want to write the six categories of benefits on a flip chart in advance. Use the second page on the flip chart so you can reveal the six benefits after the ideas have been brainstormed.

Benefits of higher education:

- Better job and higher pay
- Healthy and happier lifestyles
- Confident, stronger sense of self
- Smarter decision making
- Informed parenting decisions and more parental skills
- Stronger community ties

Discuss with the group how each one of these items correlates with the ideas they suggested for a happy life.

3. Why are having dreams and goals to make them come true so important? (5 minutes)

This is the time to make it personal. Consider sharing a personal story about how you or someone in the group achieved their goals and dreams.

4. Now let's start mapping our dreams (20 minutes)

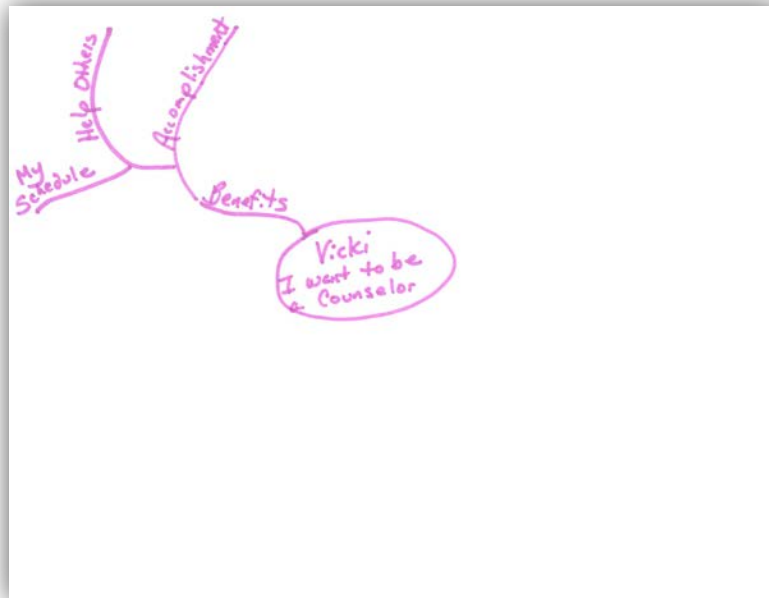
You can introduce this part of the workshop but saying something like the following:

Today we are going to be learning about mind mapping. Mind mapping is one way of making our dreams come true. Did you know that when we write our dreams down they are more likely to happen? It also helps to make a plan or create a map of how we are going to get there. Today we are going to practice this skill. You can use these skills in a variety of ways. We are all going to do this together.

Step 1:

Start with yourself in the center of the page - write your name and add a few words to describe your dream (use a color you really like)! NOTE: Show the students what you mean by writing your name and your dream on the white board. This should only take a couple of minutes.

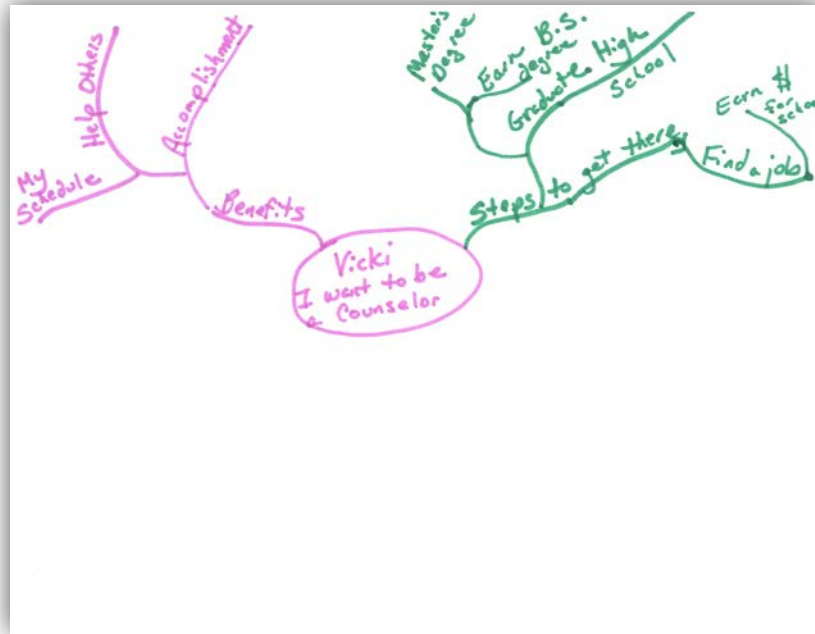
Next, on one branch of your mind map - write the benefits of fulfilling this dream.



Step 2:

On a second branch list some of the steps it will take to get there. Use a different color for this branch. Ask the following question: *What are some of the steps it will take to get there?*

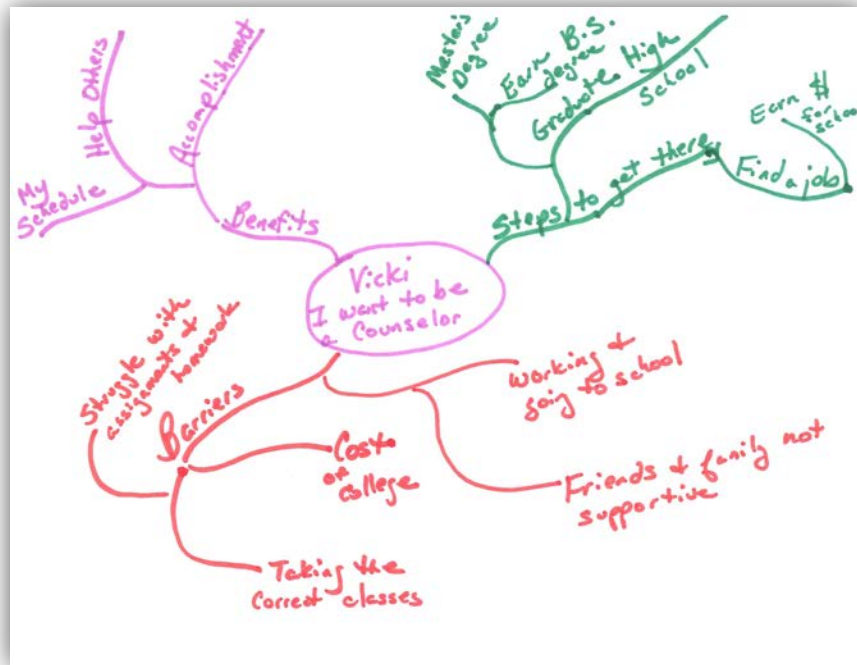
Again, show them by writing yours on the board. Then walk around to see if the group is ready to move on or if they have any questions. Once again, allow only 4-5 minutes and then move on when most have completed this step.



Step 3:

Ask the following questions: *Choose another color and draw another branch this time answering the following question: What barriers might you encounter along the way?*

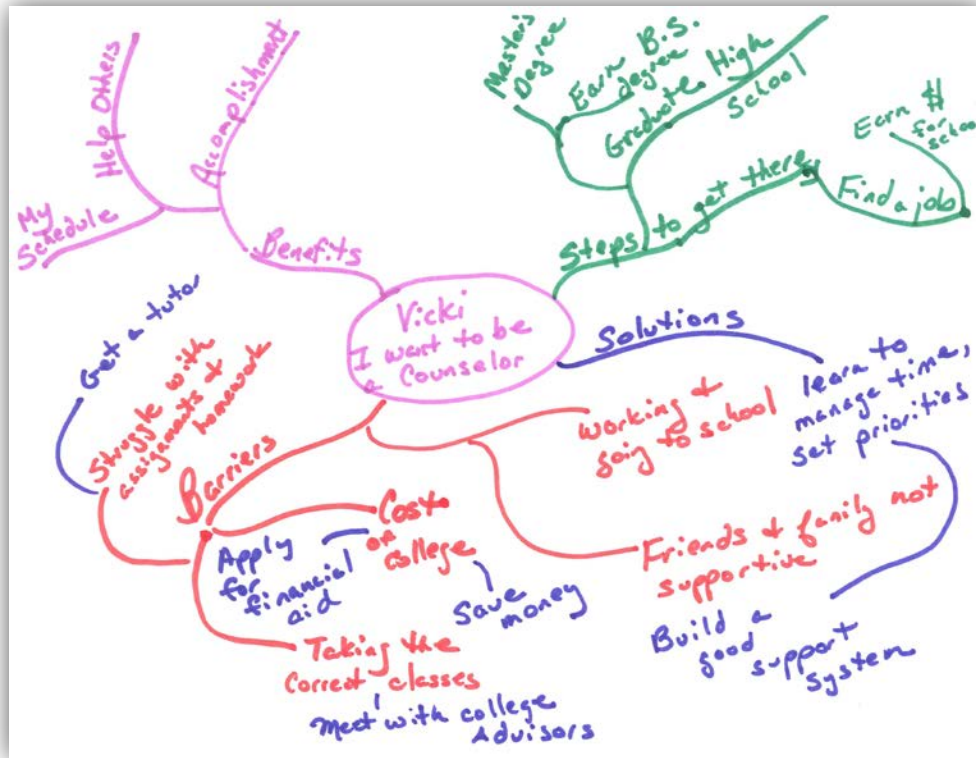
Again, show them by writing yours on the board. Then walk around to see if the group is ready to move on or if they have any questions. Once most everyone has completed that step, move on.



Step 4:

Make the following statement: *We're ready for the last step of creating our mind map. Now, find another color and create a branch from each barrier. I want you to write how you will overcome each of these barriers.*

Give the students a few minutes to identify barriers. Walk around and assist students that are having a difficult time thinking of how to overcome the barriers.



5. Sharing and application beyond today (10 minutes)

After a few minutes, call the group back together.

This is great! Today you all have thought about your dreams, written them down, and created a plan to overcome any obstacles. Research tells us that sharing our goals and dreams with someone important is very helpful. When you share your goals and dreams with others, you are more likely to make them happen.

Would anyone like to volunteer by sharing their dream with the group? If sharing it with one person helps you to accomplish your dream imagine if it is a whole room of people! Who would like to share their dream?

A few participants will volunteer to share their mind maps with the group.

Discuss with the group how else they can use mind mapping (practical applications include studying for a test, writing a paper, preparing for a presentation, planning a trip, etc.).

Today I have a challenge for all of you. Share your mind map with someone you respect and who can support your dream. Sharing a goal or dream makes it much more likely you will succeed!

6. Conclusion (5 minutes)

Having dreams is wonderful. Having the plans to accomplish your dreams help make them realities.

Sharing your dreams with people in your life who you trust and respect is a great way to gain support for your journey to making a dream a reality. It's like a pebble in the water - cast a stone and watch the ripple effect take over as more and more people are willing to help and support you along the way!