

# Mapping Out Success

An overview

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## Introduction and Content:

Mapping Out Success is a three part educational series designed for people in poverty. The curriculum is not yet published for wide distribution and will be piloted for the first time in Clinton County in 2010. The feedback from the first use of this curriculum will then be used to improve and strengthen the curriculum for publication consideration. The curriculum is designed to help participants acknowledge and explore their current culture of poverty and develop goals towards self-sufficiency.

The first session in Mapping Out Success helps participants reflect on their current socio-economic position in society then, without judging or condemning, the session moves them toward defining a new way of looking at themselves and how they can change their status in their community. The session includes discussion and exploration using activities and four worksheets. Participants learn that moving from a low income lifestyle to a higher economic status is much like an emigrant who moves to a foreign country. (Handout 1:1 attached as example) The travel theme continues by comparing various social standards common in different economic classes. Participants are also provided opportunity to reflect on their past by creating a personal timeline of significant “ups” and “downs” they have experienced. They then graph out their future, thereby identifying personal values and a course for their future. Session One ends with a “Ticket to Success” worksheet for them to complete and return the following session.

The second session contains four in-session worksheets and provides participants opportunity to define success for themselves and start making plans to move toward middle class and away from reliance on public assistance. Participants will define for themselves three life goals: satisfaction, success, and a secure future. Their personal values will be defined in more detail and they will develop work objectives based on their identified personal values. The group will use a large “discussion map” to help them focus on expected and common challenges as they make plans to move toward the life goals of satisfaction, success and a secure future. The discussion map will include seven “map points”:

1. The Rivers of Family Influence
2. The Foothills of Regret
3. The Mountains of Challenge, the Tunnel of Doubt, and the Fog of I’ve Never Been Here Before
4. The Plains of Progress, the Swamp of Stagnation, and the Desert of Disappointment
5. The Crossroads of Choice and the Toll Road Toward Success
6. The Three Destinations Revisited
7. The Roundabout

Session Two will conclude with discussion and worksheets on map points 1 and 2. (Handout 2:2 attached as an example)

Session Three will help participants dig deeper into map points 3 through 7. Participants will again use the discussion map, activities, and worksheets that focus attention on the challenges ahead.

The final objective is for participants to embark on a personal journey toward a new lifestyle and away from dependence on public assistance.

Delivery Method: Mapping Out Success is a three part weekly series; each session is two hours long. The Ohio State University Educator serves primarily as a discussion facilitator for 8 to 14 participants. The facilitator provides guidance and encouragement but does not judge or provide solutions. Although much of the content provides an opportunity to realistically examine the challenges participants will face as they plan their strategy out of poverty, the series will also help participants focus on their strengths and building social networks within the community.