

SMALL STEPS: BIG DREAMS

Welcome to the 180 Degrees Program! The 180 Degrees Program is designed to guide you through a journey of self-discovery. As you work through the chapters and activities in this book, you will have many opportunities to look deep inside yourself, and to ask yourself important questions about where you are in your life, and where you want to go. You will learn new skills that will help you become more aware of *yourself*, and skills that will help you achieve your dreams and live your life to your fullest potential. You will learn about your core values, and how your values influence the decisions you make in your every day life. And, you will have opportunities to think big and dream big. Because you can! You can set challenging and purposeful goals that can support you in achieving your dreams.

Now take a look at the 180 Degrees logo:



What do you think it means to enhance your life, one degree at a time? Wouldn't it be great if you could fully achieve your dreams over night with minimal effort? Do you think this is realistic? Consider, for example, someone who wants to be a marathon runner, who, without proper training, attempts to run a long marathon but collapses due to extreme fatigue. Imagine what would have happened if this runner had trained, taken smaller steps, started by running shorter distances, and gradually increased the distance of each run before taking on the challenge of a long marathon. Each training period, each successfully completed short distance run would have been one degree, one step towards meeting this individual's goal of becoming a marathon runner. There is tremendous power in the small steps that you take that lead you towards achieving your goals.

Through the 180 Degrees Program, you will develop skills in identifying these steps and you will gain both a perspective and an ability to work towards realizing your dreams and passions.

Structure of the 180 Degrees Program



During the semester, you will be part of a 180 Degrees class. You will work with other students in your class, and you will have time for personal self-reflection. In learning about your personal values, you will consider how your values guide your thoughts, attitudes and behaviors. You'll apply critical thinking skills to scenarios and situations in your daily life, and use a variety of tools that will help you set and complete important goals. And lastly, you will define your own leadership style and develop a plan for transforming your passions into action.

The Program will take you through three distinct phases:

1. Self-awareness
2. Self-development
3. Social awareness and responsibility

Each phase is designed to teach you important concepts, strategies and skills. You will be challenged to think critically and evaluate how these skills and strategies can help you in your life.

Each chapter of the 180 Degrees Program is designed to be interactive. Though your facilitator will guide you through the activities and class discussions, your job is to be actively engaged. As a further guide for the different ways that you will be involved, below are symbols (and explanations) that will facilitate your participation.

Symbol	What it Means
	<p>Every chapter has “tools” that you will learn within that chapter. They are listed at the bottom of the first page of each chapter.</p>
	<p>When you see the “Think Pair Share” symbol, you’ll take some time to think about an issue or question, write down your thoughts, and then turn to a partner, or the group and share your ideas. If you do share with a partner or small group, you may be asked to present a synthesis of your ideas to the larger group.</p>
	<p>Four interconnected hands symbolizes pairing up with a partner and sharing your ideas. You will see this symbol frequently throughout your student handbook. Being able to communicate your thoughts clearly to others is an important communication skill.</p>
	<p>At the end of each chapter, look for the protractor and arrow, which will indicate your progress during your 180 Degrees course.</p>



How Will Our Group Operate?

What ground rules would make it comfortable for you to speak up during discussions? What behaviors would make it uncomfortable for you to speak up during discussions? Rather than give you a list of what **WE** think are essential rules for discussion, let's find out what **YOU** think.

Write down rules (guidelines) you think would make discussing issues and topics comfortable for you. Brainstorm a list of guidelines below:



Write your list here:

After you create your list, pair up with someone and share your lists. When you do this, agree on your **COLLECTIVE TOP THREE** guidelines and present them to the class.

Top Three:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Once all guidelines have been posted, decide as a group what the **FINAL** group discussion guidelines will be for the duration of the 180 Degrees Program. Have someone write the guidelines on a poster and hang them up in the room. Refer to this list throughout the program.

Let's begin!