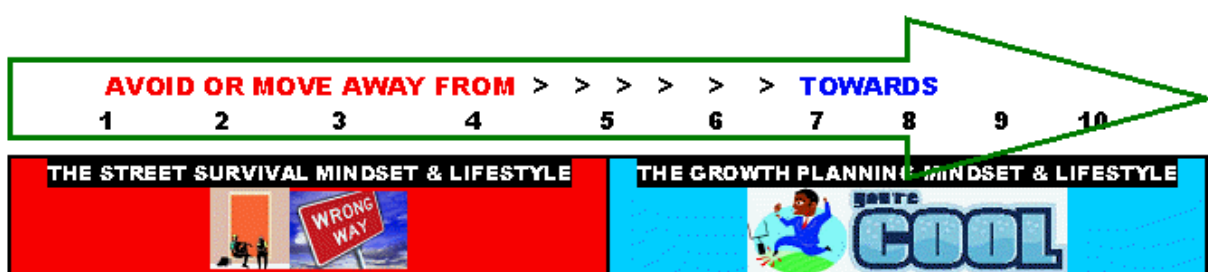


Questions & Answers About MyGrowthPlan.Org.

1. **Who Is MyGrowthPlan.Org, Inc. ... and what is growth planning?**

- ▶ As we state in the About Us section of our website: **“Simply put, MyGrowthPlan.Org, Inc. [MGP.O] is in the business of @risk teen development.”**
- ▶ More specifically, we are a 6 year old nonprofit growth planning service operating in Jacksonville, FL and Minneapolis/St. Paul, MN that trains and supports @risk and other high school youth in learning the art, skill, and power of life-long growth planning that **(like teaching them how to fish)** helps them succeed in school and other key parts of their life, both now ... **and for a lifetime !!**
- ▶ Growth planning is a web-based multi-year self-identity, mindset & lifestyle change and development process that enables @risk and other youth to avoid or measurably move step-by-step away from what we call a *“Street Survival Mindset & Lifestyle”* ... towards living their everyday life with a *“Growth Planning Mindset & Lifestyle,”* as shown below.



- ▶ **NOTES:** (1) Growth planners discuss how the “street survival” mindset & lifestyle has played a positive role in enabling many youth to get through some tough family, neighborhood, or other problems. But, to truly succeed, they now need to move beyond “street survival”...towards living with a life-long growth planning mindset & lifestyle. (2) See the last page of these Q & A’s to see our 4 Forces Model of Black @Risk Youth Development that graphically illustrates how we specifically adapt our growth planning process to help close the achievement gap among Black youth.]
- ▶ With the hands-on guidance from their trained Growth Plan Coaches, youth begin growth planning by building and then step-by-step benchmarking a Growth Plan in a private Growth Plan Data-Center on our website.

2. **What is the growth planning process?** There are two distinct phases to our process:

1. Phase One – The Growth Plan BUILDING Phase. It takes about 36 contact hours for 8th grade and high school students to build the 1st draft of their personal Growth Plan on our website and to begin learning the fundamentals of life-long growth planning.
 - During this phase youth complete a Growth Planning Mindset & Lifestyle Baseline Self-Assessment Form that uses our 35 Mindset & Lifestyle Development Indicators (see page 4) that are based on urban youth development research. At the end of this phase, youth invite family & friends to a graduation event recognizing their graduation into Benchmarking. At the event each youth confidently describes his or her Growth Plan, including their self-identity, life-purpose, and long-term achievement goals.
2. Phase Two – The Growth Plan BENCHMARKING Phase. In this multi-year phase, youth initially meet weekly and then about twice a month to set and evaluate their step-by-step progress towards achieving their Growth Plan ... and towards demonstrating a growth planning mindset & lifestyle in their everyday life.
 - During this phase youth ask a family member, school teacher, and other adult in their life (like a community youth program worker) to complete a Mindset & Lifestyle Line-Of-Sight Assessment Form made up of the same 35 Indicators used in the Self-Assessment. And, rather than simply mailing in their completed Form, each observer is asked to discuss their ratings with the youth. Significant learning comes from this discussion and by comparing the self-ratings with the observer line-of-sight ratings.

3. **How do youth evaluate their growth planning experience?** Our most recent growth planning group was made up of 12 African-American 9th & 10th grade males who completed Phase One of our growth planning program held the summer of 2010 at The Bridge of Northeast Florida in Jacksonville. Here is a table (taken from the Phase One Evaluation Report) showing an average 8.92 rating on a 10-point scale on the question of how helpful growth planning are some of the Phase One results.

- **Helpfulness Question Data:** The question was: “To what extent do you think building and implementing a personal Growth Plan will help you achieve the kind of life you would like for yourself 5 to 10 years from now?”

Will Growth Planning Help You Achieve The Kind Of Life You Want For Yourself?											
WILL NOT HELP AT ALL					← [circle one number] →		WILL HELP A LOT				
GROWTH PLANNERS' RATING:											
1	2	3	4	5		6	7	8	9	10	
Number who selected each SELF-RATING number:											
No Response	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
							1	3	4	4	
% Response On This Item	1 - 4 “ Mostly WILL NOT Help ” %				5-6 Middle		7 - 10 “ Mostly WILL Help ” %				
	0%				0%		100%				
Average SELF-RATING For This Growth Planning Group:										8.92	
PLEASE write in why you circled this number											
<u>The 12 Write-In Comments</u>											
1. I personally feel that I am learning a lot from this Growth Plan and it is helping me a lot with my everyday life. [Rating Number: 9]											
2. I have circled this number because I think it will help us achieve the kind of life I would want; it will help me achieve a wonderful life. [Rating Number: 9]											
3. It will help a lot because it gives us the chance to get our life on-track and make good decisions. [Rating Number: 9]											
4. I circled 9 because you can't be a perfect 10 but you can have a lot of things going, good and few things going bad. So, 9 was a good accurate number. [Rating Number: 9]											
5. You have to have a plan to know what you want to do, and the best way to achieve your goals is to have a plan. [Rating Number: 10]											
6. I circled this number because it made me a bit clearer about my future. [Rating Number: 7]											
7. Implementing a personal Growth Plan will help me a lot. It will help me decide what I want to be in life and help me set goals. [Rating Number: 10]											
8. I circled 8 because I like to help people. I don't like it when people are feeling down. [Rating Number: 8]											
9. I chose this because coming up with a Growth Plan can really help you become a better person and a better learner. [Rating Number: 10]											
10. My Growth has taught values and morals on how to be successful in life. [Rating Number: 10]											
11. I put an 8 because it will help a lot, but then again, I already have been prepared for the future. [Rating Number: 8]											
12. Because you are going to find out what you want to do ... or just an idea of what you want to do. [Rating Number: 8]											

4. **What evidence is there of lasting mindset & lifestyle development?** Of course, any evidence of deep-down mindset change & development among adolescents is extremely difficult to prove. And, evidence of lasting lifestyle change must be proved over time by such evidence as improved school grades and staying out of trouble.

But, for developmental purposes we frequently use candid discussions around the growth planner's self ratings on the 35 Mindset & Lifestyle Development Indicators (compared with their observers' line-of-sight ratings) to track their own perceived mindset & lifestyle change and development over time. During the Benchmarking Phase each youth creates, analyzes, and sets personal improvement benchmarks based on an individualized composite priority-ranking of their self-ratings and their observers' line-of-sight ratings on the 35 Indicators.

The 35 Indicators are based on extensive urban youth development research, and (as shown on the next page), they are organized into 4 parts:

1. 10 Growth Planning Life-Skills
2. 8 Mindset Orientations
3. 12 Lifestyle Behaviors
4. 5 Critical Transition Skills To Young Adulthood Indicators

Several of the 8 Mindset Orientations & 12 Lifestyle Behaviors measure specific components of the 10 Life-Skills. And, the 5 Transition Skills measure how well all 35 Indicators, taken together, are enabling @risk youth to successfully transition into young adulthood.

As shown below, the average self-rating on all 35 Indicators was 7.34 on a 10-point scale for the 12 African-American 9th & 10th grade males who completed Phase One of the growth planning program in the summer of 2010 at The Bridge of NE FI in Jacksonville.

AVERAGE SELF-RATINGS				
ON ALL 4 GROWTH PLANNING MINDSET & LIFESTYLE DEVELOPMENT COMPONENTS				
From Group #1 Phase One Results of The Growth Planning Program at The Bridge Of NE Florida [Using a 1-10 Scale]				
10 Growth Planning Life-Skills	8 Growth Planning Mindset Orientations	12 Growth Planning Lifestyle Behaviors	5 Critical Transition Skills To Young Adulthood	35 INDICATORS TOTAL AVERAGE
7.42	7.38	7.12	7.66	7.34
OBSERVATION ON THIS DATA				
Although there is not much difference among all 4 components, at an average rating of 7.12, it's clear that translating skills and mindset orientations into actual everyday <u>lifestyle behaviors</u> is the <u>most difficult</u> part of developing and demonstrating a growth planning mindset & lifestyle in their everyday life.				
TENTATIVE CONCLUSION FROM THIS DATA				
During the Phase Two Benchmarking part of the growth planning process, put the focus on helping youth make <u>and maintain</u> the tough lifestyle changes that will enable them to sur-thrive (survive & thrive) their teen years ... and maintain step-by-step momentum towards actually achieving their Growth Plan's goals & vision for their desired future life.				

For further information, please check out our website at: <http://mygrowthplan.org>

Or, contact Jon Pekel, Founder & President at 904-762-9156 or jon@mygrowthplan.org

THE 35 GROWTH PLANNING MINDSET & LIFESTYLE DEVELOPMENT INDICATORS

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That Are Measured, Analyzed, & Discussed Throughout The Multi-Year Growth Planning Process

The 8 Growth Planning Mindset Orientations

1. **CONTINUOUS GROWTH Mindset Orientation** – I believe my mental abilities (or, intelligences) CAN be developed over time if I have a passion for learning new things and for learning from my mistakes [vs. believing that my mental abilities are fixed and essentially determined at birth.]
2. **FUTURE-ORIENTED Mindset Orientation** – I think mostly about my future life and how I will achieve my current goals [vs. thinking mostly about my present life & how I will overcome my current problems.]
3. **INNER SELF-CONFIDENCE Mindset Orientation** – I am mostly driven by my own inner self-confidence that I WILL overcome any barriers in my way and eventually succeed [vs. being mostly driven by my own fear of failure and of all the barriers in my way.]
4. **LEARNING MOTIVATION Mindset Orientation** – I love learning new things; so I motivate myself to learn [vs. teachers needing to capture my interest and then motivate me to learn.]
5. **OPTIMISTIC & POSITIVE OUTLOOK Mindset Orientation** – I am mostly optimistic & positive about my future life [vs. being mostly cynical & negative about my future life.]
6. **POSITIVE SELF-WORTH Mindset Orientation** – I use my internal positive self-identity and self-worth to help get me through my tough times [vs. allowing self-doubt and constant worry to get me down.]
7. **RESULTS-ORIENTED Mindset Orientation** – I focus on achieving specific, measurable results ... rather than just trying to do my best [vs. just trying to do my best, since that's all that can be expected of me.]
8. **USE OF TEEN YEARS Mindset Orientation** – I see my teen years as a time to really learn & succeed [vs. something just to get through.]

The 12 Growth Planning Lifestyle Behaviors

1. **CAN WAIT FOR THINGS Lifestyle Behavior** – When I *really* want something, I can wait until I work hard enough to get it in the future [vs. wanting things *NOW!!* ... and the quickest & easiest way I can get it.]
2. **GET HELP FROM OTHERS Lifestyle Behavior** – When I need help on something, I proactively ask for it because I am not too proud or too shy to ask for help when I need it [vs. not asking for help because I'm too shy, too proud, or because I don't want to show that I'm stupid.]
3. **INTRINSIC MOTIVATION Lifestyle Behavior** – I am primarily motivated by *inner* pride & personal satisfaction from what I do [vs. primarily motivated by money & *external* rewards for what I do.]
4. **LEARNING & DOING SATISFACTION Lifestyle Behavior** – I gain most of my personal satisfaction from learning new things & being able to actually do them [vs. getting my personal satisfaction from having neat friends, things & experiences.]
5. **PERSONAL POWER Lifestyle Behavior** – I now have the personal power to control the things that can get in the way, so I usually finish the things I start [vs. can't control things that get in the way, so I don't usually finish things I start.]
6. **PRIORITIZE & FOCUS Lifestyle Behavior** – I can prioritize & stay focused on what needs to be done to succeed in my everyday life [vs. can't prioritize & stay focused.]
7. **PROACTIVE Lifestyle Behavior** – I am mostly proactive – planning and then making things actually happen [vs. mostly reactive – laying back & then just going with the flow.]
8. **QUALITY WORK Lifestyle Behavior** – I do things step-by-step, making sure that I do quality work and get things right [vs. just doing things the easiest & quickest way I can.]
9. **SELF-DIRECTED Lifestyle Behavior** – I follow what I (myself) think I should do [vs. following what others (e.g. those I hang around with) think I should do.]
10. **SURROUNDED BY POSITIVE INFLUENCES Lifestyle Behavior** – I choose my friends carefully; so I only hang around with people who are positive influences on me [vs. with people who are negative influences on me.]
11. **WELCOME CHALLENGES Lifestyle Behavior** – I welcome tough challenges & like to learn from my mistakes so I can continually improve myself & achieve my goals [vs. avoiding challenges & covering up my mistakes so people don't think I'm dumb.]
12. **WORK TO BE SEEN AS A WINNER Lifestyle Behavior** – I work hard to be seen as a real winner in life, especially among anyone who can help me achieve my goals [vs. not caring if I am seen as a loser in life.]

The 10 Growth Planning Life-Skills

1. **Impulse Control** – I can use impulse control & delayed gratification in my everyday life.
2. **Whole-Mind Decision-Making** – I can use whole-mind decision-making to make my tough everyday decision.
3. **High-Performance Standards** – I can set & achieve no-excuse high performance standards in my everyday life.
4. **Visioning** – I can use the power of future-imaging (or, visioning) to pull me into my desired future.
5. **Optimistic/Positive Mindset** – I can develop and keep an optimistic & positive mindset.
6. **Hunger, Passion & Purpose** – I can use hunger, passion, and a worthy purpose as motivators in my life.
7. **Brand Identity** – I can build & maintain my own positive brand identity and reputation among my peers & adults around me.
8. **Resilience** – I can learn & bounce back from my inevitable mistakes, failures, and losses in my life.
9. **Support Network** – I can build & use a support network to help me achieve my vision & goals.
10. **Step-by-step Momentum** – I can maintain step-by-step momentum toward achieving my vision & goals.

The 5 Critical Transition Skills To Young Adulthood

1. **Planning Skills** – I can use the 3 skills of visioning, goal-setting, and step-by-step benchmarking to achieve my vision & goals.
2. **Prioritizing & Deciding Skills** – I can prioritize and decide among competing values or possible courses of action in my everyday life.
3. **Everyday Problem-Solving Skills** – I can use a step-by-step process to identify and analyze the key parts of a problem ... and come up with a good solution to it.
4. **Resistance to Peer Pressure Skills** – I can successfully resist strong pressure from my peers and others to do the wrong thing.
5. **Achievement-Centric Communication Skills** – I can read, speak and write effectively so I can successfully perform in a school or work setting where my ability to consistently achieve results is critical to my life-success.

The MyGrowthPlan.Org
4 FORCES MODEL OF BLACK @RISK YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Since about 90% of our teen growth planners have been African American, based on extensive research* [see note below], we developed our 4 Forces Model of Black @Risk Youth Development (shown below) to guide us in specifically adapting our growth planning process to help close the achievement gap among Black youth. Although not everyone will agree with our theory and model, we think it is extremely important to specifically identify your view of the main underlying cause of the achievement gap in order to create a solution that effectively helps close it.

- * A link to The Research Foundations Of Growth Planning can be found in the About Us section of our website – <http://mygrowthplan.org>
- In the model we use the scientific definition of theory as “a set of facts, propositions, or principles analyzed in their relation to one another and used to explain phenomena that are to be further examined and tested in practice.”

