



Journaling

To prepare for intentional individual and group check-ins, your service year corps members should be encouraged to keep a journal. The practice of journaling will allow your corps members to reflect and capture their thoughts, feelings, and experiences while they are serving. As program staff, you should keep track of your own observations related to their feelings of belonging, assets, strengths, abilities, and talents, and their understanding of newly acquired and developed skills. By encouraging journaling, your corps members will not have to jog their memories during individual and group check-ins and during training sessions and group discussions.

It is important to note that your service year program's culture and environment will dictate whether or not your corps members feel comfortable and safe sharing their experiences. While you should encourage them to share and elevate their voices during individual and group check-ins, it will ultimately be their decision.

To promote journaling with corps members during the program year, use the following steps:

Step 1: Review the list of below Journal Prompts

- The journal prompts are listed by the time of year we believe is best for your corps members to explore them. These are included in each of the roadmaps as well to make it as easy as possible to integrate journaling into your service year training calendar.
- Determine if there is one or more specific journal prompts you want to ensure your corps members explore during your program year.

HELPFUL TIP

In the journal prompt list below, you will see the topics related to belonging are not organized by a specific time of year. That is because the Belonging Culture Curriculum sessions are intended to be integrated entirely during orientation with check-ins and journaling occurring throughout the service year training calendar. The prompts can be incorporated into journaling sessions at the time you feel is appropriate based on your conversations with your corps members

Step 2: Facilitate a discussion about the importance of Journaling

- Discuss the importance of journaling during their service year
- Consider printing and sharing the journal prompts below with your corps members

Step 3: Encourage Journaling throughout the service year

- Identify journal prompts in advance of individual and group check-ins
- Encourage your corps members to explore a journal prompt when they seem to be struggling to articulate their experience
- Share a new journal prompt that may be relevant to a current situation, challenge, and event
- Urge your staff that works with corps members on a day-to-day basis to encourage corps members to write about something they learned, experienced, or were challenged with during service
- If they are comfortable, ask your corps members to share a journal entry during a group check-in that may illuminate a shared learning experience

Journal Prompts

Belonging Culture - Beginning, Mid-Year, and End of Service

1. Set an intention about your time as a service year corps member. What do you hope to gain during your service year? What do you intend to contribute or offer during the service year?
2. What is your favorite story of collective hope?
3. Where and when do you feel the greatest degree of safety? What is it that makes you feel safe? Which identity or identities are most present for you when you feel safe?
4. Where and when do you feel the least degree of safety? What is it that makes you feel unsafe? Which identity or identities are most present for you when you feel unsafe?
5. Think back to a time when someone advocated with or for you when you truly needed it. Then think about a time when you stood in solidarity with someone as an advocate. What did those moments have in common?
6. What does understanding what triggers someone's "fight, flight, freeze, and appease response" teach you about the power of re-humanizing our spaces to create a sense of belonging for human beings?
7. When you think about the best relationships (regardless of type) you ever had, what did they have in common? What were the key characteristics or traits of the relationship?
8. Why is it important to learn and know the stories of people that have different identities than your own? Why is it important to know the stories of folks who have been marginalized because of their identities?
9. In your opinion, what is the most rewarding aspect of building community with others and being inclusive of all? What is the most challenging or difficult aspect?
10. Think back to the people and places that have made you feel safe in your life. What do those people and places have in common?

Asset-Based Framework - Beginning of Service

11. What do you think are your most valuable strengths or assets?
12. How would you like to use your strengths, skills, and talents to serve your community this year?
13. How would you like to grow personally and professionally during your service year? What skills or qualities would you like to develop? Is there anything in particular you would like to learn or do?

Asset-Based Framework - Mid-Year

14. How have you grown or changed since you began your service year? Have you learned something new, gained new insight, developed new skills, or challenged yourself in some way?
15. How are you currently using your strengths, skills, and talents to serve your community?
16. Describe a challenge that you have overcome this year. What abilities, resources, or supports enabled you to overcome it?

Asset-Based Framework - End of Service

17. What new strengths or assets have you developed this year?
18. What have you learned this year – about yourself, others, your community, and the world?
19. What are your plans for after your service year? How has your experience this year prepared you for what comes next?
20. What are your next steps for personal and professional growth?

Journal Prompts

Intentional Skills Attainment - Beginning of Service

- 21. As you complete trainings, assessments, and inventories, what excites you about your service year?
- 22. What skills are you bringing to your service year?
- 23. What skills are you looking forward to developing?

Intentional Skills Attainment - Mid-Year

- 24. What are some accomplishments you made this week?
- 25. What skills did you use?
- 26. What skills did you do well?
- 27. What skills do you need to improve?
- 28. What support do you need to continue to learn and grow?

Intentional Skills Attainment - End of Service

- 29. Are there any projects, tasks, or deliverables that stand out to you? Are there any where you did an excellent job? Are there any that you enjoyed more than others?
- 30. Are there any skills that you discovered are not your strengths? Are there any skills that you discovered hold little interest to you regardless of whether you do them well or not?