

Becoming Who You Are™

A 7-Week Teen Identity Journey · Ages 13–18 · Course Syllabus

Course Overview

This experience helps teenagers explore who they are beneath external expectations and equips them with practical tools for making intentional decisions, building healthy relationships, and strengthening their sense of purpose.

This course shares its name and its seven practices with Becoming Who You Are™ (Ages 9–12), but the content is written specifically for teenagers — engaging directly with social media pressure, identity performance, relationships, and the uncertainty of the years ahead, rather than a more sophisticated version of the pre-teen material.

Format

- 7 weekly virtual sessions, 45 minutes each
- Delivered live, in a small-group format, via video
- Same five-part rhythm as the rest of the series: Welcome & Check-In, This Week's Idea, Let's Talk About It, Try It Yourself, Carry This With You — with more time in discussion and reflection given the longer session length

The Seven Practices

- Self-Knowledge
- Stillness
- Self-Compassion
- Trust
- Letting Go
- Consistency
- Openness

Outcome

Teenagers develop greater self-awareness, resilience, emotional regulation, and confidence while navigating identity, peer influence, comparison, and future aspirations.

A Note on Facilitator Preparation

This course engages more directly with real teenage experience than the younger tiers — social media, relationships, family expectations, and the pressure of an uncertain future. Facilitators should be prepared for group discussion to occasionally surface more than a lesson plan anticipates.

Before running this course, facilitators should have:

- A clear, written protocol for what to do if a student discloses something concerning (signs of self-harm, abuse, or a mental health crisis) during a live session
- Contact information for a designated adult (parent/guardian, school counselor, or program lead) to loop in immediately following any concerning disclosure
- A calm, prepared response for redirecting a disclosure to a private conversation after the session, rather than opening it up for group discussion in the moment
- Awareness of their own mandatory reporting obligations, if applicable in their jurisdiction or role

None of the discussion prompts below are designed to elicit a crisis disclosure, and most sessions will not involve one. This section exists so facilitators have a plan in place before it's needed, not because it's expected weekly.

Weekly Session Plans

WEEK 1 — Self-Knowledge

Identity Path State: Knowingness

Learning Objective

Teens begin to separate their sense of self from the version of themselves they perform for others — online, at school, or at home.

Welcome & Check-In (5 min)

Quick round: one word for how everyone's feeling as the group starts.

This Week's Idea (12 min)

Discussion opener: "How different is the version of you on social media from the version of you when no one's watching?" Introduce the idea that identity built entirely around an audience — online or in person — is fragile, because it depends on constant approval to feel solid.

Let's Talk About It (12 min)

- Is there a difference between who you are and who you post as? What's driving that gap, if there is one?
- Whose expectations do you feel like you're living up to most right now — your own, or someone else's?

Try It Yourself (10 min)

Journal prompt: "Three things that are true about me that have nothing to do with how many people notice, like, or approve of them."

Carry This With You

This week's phrase: "I know who I am, underneath it all."

WEEK 2 — Stillness

Identity Path State: Stillness

Learning Objective

Teens practice creating a pause between a triggering moment (a text, a comment, a comparison) and their reaction to it.

Welcome & Check-In (5 min)

Recap: one moment this week where a reaction felt automatic.

This Week's Idea (12 min)

Discussion opener: the physical and mental spiral of doom-scrolling or replaying a conflict text thread — how reacting in the moment often makes things worse, not better.

Let's Talk About It (12 min)

- What's your body's first sign that you're about to react instead of respond?
- What would it look like to wait ten minutes — or a full day — before responding to something that stung?

Try It Yourself (10 min)

Practice a grounding technique together (box breathing: in for 4, hold for 4, out for 4, hold for 4), then journal about a recent moment where a pause might have changed the outcome.

Carry This With You

This week's phrase: "I can pause before I respond."

WEEK 3 — Self-Compassion

Identity Path State: Love

Learning Objective

Teens practice noticing perfectionistic or self-critical thoughts and offering themselves the same grace they'd offer a friend.

Welcome & Check-In (5 min)

Quick check-in on how the pause practice went this week.

This Week's Idea (12 min)

Discussion opener: the exhausting pressure to have it all figured out — grades, relationships, plans for the future — and how self-criticism often masquerades as "motivation."

Let's Talk About It (12 min)

- What does your inner voice sound like after a mistake or a bad grade? Would you talk to a friend that way?
- Where do you think that voice came from?

Try It Yourself (10 min)

Journal prompt: rewrite one harsh thought from this week in the voice you'd use with someone you care about.

Carry This With You

This week's phrase: "I am kind to myself."

WEEK 4 — Trust

Identity Path State: Faith

Learning Objective

Teens practice trusting themselves to handle an uncertain future, rather than needing to have it all planned out.

Welcome & Check-In (5 min)

Quick round: one thing weighing on everyone about the future right now.

This Week's Idea (12 min)

Discussion opener: the pressure to have a five-year plan at sixteen — college, career, relationships — when almost no one actually knows how things will unfold.

Let's Talk About It (12 min)

- What's a decision you're facing where you don't know the outcome in advance?
- What's the difference between needing certainty and trusting yourself to handle whatever happens?

Try It Yourself (10 min)

Journal prompt: name one decision or path you're willing to move toward without needing a guarantee it'll work out.

Carry This With You

This week's phrase: "I trust myself, even without certainty."

WEEK 5 — Letting Go

Identity Path State: Non-Attachment

Learning Objective

Teens practice noticing comparison — especially social comparison driven by social media — and loosening its grip.

Welcome & Check-In (5 min)

Quick round: how did last week's decision-making prompt land?

This Week's Idea (12 min)

Discussion opener: the difference between someone's real life and their highlight reel, and how comparing your behind-the-scenes to someone else's best moments is a rigged game from the start.

Let's Talk About It (12 min)

- When do you notice comparison hitting hardest — a certain app, a certain person, a certain time of day?
- What's something you can let go of comparing this week?

Try It Yourself (10 min)

Journal prompt: write about something you're proud of, without mentioning anyone else's version of it, and without checking how it "performed."

Carry This With You

This week's phrase: "I don't need to compare myself to others."

WEEK 6 — Consistency

Identity Path State: Devotion

Learning Objective

Teens practice showing up for their own values and goals, even when motivation fades or social pressure pulls in a different direction.

Welcome & Check-In (5 min)

Quick round: one small win from this week, big or small.

This Week's Idea (12 min)

Discussion opener: the difference between who you are when it's easy and who you are under pressure — with friends, at parties, or when no one's checking. Integrity as consistency, not perfection.

Let's Talk About It (12 min)

- Is there a difference between your values in private and your values under peer pressure?
- What helps you stay consistent with something even when it's inconvenient or unpopular?

Try It Yourself (10 min)

Journal prompt: name one value you want to stay consistent with this month, and one specific situation where it might get tested.

Carry This With You

This week's phrase: "I keep going, even when it's hard."

WEEK 7 — Openness

Identity Path State: Receiving

Learning Objective

Teens practice sitting with the uncertainty of who they're becoming, without needing it to be resolved right now.

Welcome & Check-In (5 min)

Look back across the six weeks: which practice has felt most useful so far?

This Week's Idea (12 min)

Discussion opener: graduation, moving away, changing friendships, new relationships — the teenage years are full of endings that are also beginnings, even when they don't feel like it in the moment.

Let's Talk About It (12 min)

- What's a change coming up in your life that feels more like loss than opportunity right now?
- What might it look like to hold both feelings — grief and possibility — at the same time?

Try It Yourself (10 min)

Closing journal prompt: write a short letter to yourself one year from now, naming one thing you're open to becoming.

Carry This With You — Series Closing

This week's phrase: "I am open to who I'm becoming." Close the full 7-week journey with the complete refrain: I know who I am, underneath it all. I can pause before I respond. I am kind to myself. I trust myself, even without certainty. I don't need to compare myself to others. I keep going, even when it's hard. I am open to who I'm becoming. I AM UNSHAKEN.

Closing moment for this final session — a certificate of completion, or a group share-out of one thing each teen is taking with them into the next chapter.

Facilitator Notes

- The five-part session structure stays fixed across all seven weeks, even as discussion depth increases with the longer session length.
- Discussion openers use unnamed, general scenarios ("the pressure to...", "the exhausting feeling of...") rather than named characters, which reads as more authentic and less "storybook" for this age group.
- Journal prompts remain private by default — never require a teen to share personal reflections aloud.
- Review the Facilitator Preparation section (Before Weekly Session Plans) before running this course for the first time — it is not optional given the maturity of this age group's content.
- If a topic (body image, family conflict, romantic relationships) comes up organically in group discussion, follow the group's lead within the week's theme rather than steering away from it entirely — but keep individual disclosures for a private follow-up conversation, not group discussion.