



Young Man with a Plan Newsletter February 17, 2022



-Love and healthy relationships are key topics at YMWAP-

Executive Director Dr. Jaykry Simpson elaborates on the subject below:

Why are love and healthy relationships part of the YMWAP curriculum? Love and relationships are central to a teen's life. It's often their biggest struggle. YMWAP typically devotes February sessions to this critical topic. Young men mainly learn about love and relationships from friends and social media. Break-ups and losses, they're inevitable. We discuss how to respond and not do something impulsive out of pain or embarrassment. We define love as different from control. That's important as incidents of young domestic violence are on the rise.

How do you define love? We discussed as a group and landed on the definition that "love is wanting the best life for a person even if it doesn't include you."

What are young people learning from social media? The Covid pandemic amped up social media use. What they worship is on their phones. Social media can rip away self-esteem--the number of "likes" on a post as a measure of your worth. It can idealize unhealthy relationships. They are looking at the hottest couples and feeling inadequate. Social media is 24 x 7 featuring celebrity couples like Cardi B and Offset, stories about Kim and Pete and Kanye. They read things and respond without context. They can easily view wealth as an expression of love.

What are some themes that came up in your discussions? There were six adult mentors in the room—we shared our own stories of heartbreaks and mistakes we made in love. We stressed the importance of being a good person, comfortable with yourself and then responded to young men who said that there is no reward being a decent, moral person. We discussed attraction and the idea that everyone has their own lane, and that different people are attracted to different things. We talked about high school love and more mature love. We talked about the importance of friends being there and supportive for a brother who gets his spirit hurt in love.

Great news! YMWAP received INP's Changemaker's Award!

<https://www.nonprofitpractice.org/news-article/institute-for-nonprofit-practice-announces-recipients-of-2021-changemaker-awards/>