

The Tree That is Me Exercise

“The Tree That is Me” exercise is a fun and creative way for students to explore their gifts and strengths and think about goals. During this exercise, mentees are given an opportunity to create and describe a tree representation of themselves to their mentor. We suggest you do this exercise with your mentee so you each share your trees and learn about each other. You can revisit your tree representations from time to time with your mentee to see how they are progressing toward goals or how they have evolved. Just print out a few copies of this document, have some colored pencils, crayons or markers and get ready for a fun and illuminating experience together.

The Tree That is Me Instructions to share with Your Mentee:

This exercise is all about you—how you see yourself. What follows are some suggestions, but they are only suggestions and you can change this exercise in any way you wish.

- **ROOTS:** What are your “roots”? Just like a tree, people get their food and water from various places. This is not only just food and water, but how you keep your spirits up. What “feeds” your happiness? It could be beliefs you have, interests, or activities (such as sports, artwork, school). It could also be friends and relatives, or even pets. You can see there are several roots. So what feeds or nourishes you and brings comfort to your life? This can be more than one thing.
- **TRUNK:** What is your trunk? What is the biggest strength that you have in your life, the thing that keeps you going—moving forward? It could be one of the things that you put down on the roots, or something new.
- **BIG BRANCHES:** What are some of the major directions you have already experienced, or the directions you might go in life—the roads you dream of taking?
- **SMALL BRANCHES:** You can decide to use the small branches to represent anything else in your life. The branches could be:
 - some of the decisions you are faced with right now
 - they could represent friends or family that you have
 - you can put down anything you want
 - you can just color them and make them look good—they don’t have to have a meaning to them
- **LEAVES:** Leaves dance around, especially when the wind is blowing. The leaves on your tree can represent “fun.” You could write down some of the things that you do to have fun—this could be dancing, singing, playing video games, hanging out with friends, watching TV, doing nothing, cooking— whatever you do to have fun.
- **FRUIT:** One could say that the fruit is the best part of the tree. Many trees produce something good for us to eat—apples, oranges, cherries, peaches, and so forth. What is the “fruit” of your life? This could be related to a goal that you want for yourself. If you want to become a teacher, for instance, part of the “fruit” could be helping children, and another part of it could be the money you make at your job. For others, it could be the ability to buy something, or to travel, or the ability to help others.



