



Precious Times - Term One 2018

Mentoring Weekend - Precious Blood School Riruta – January
6th & 7th 2018



Dear Precious Girls,

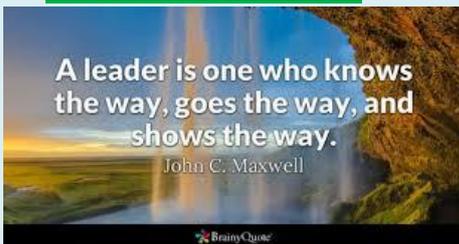
I am excited to share with you this edition of Precious Times that summarises another great weekend of mentoring, learning and interacting with girls from other schools and our faithful mentors.

Introduction

The mentoring event this time round was held immediately after you opened school. 87 out of 88 girls who are school turned up for the event while 35 girls represented our alumni. The event was made even more successful when 46 mentors turned up ready to give you their undivided attention. This was our first mentoring event for the year and we opened the year with the theme of **Leadership** which is different from the ABC themes we are used to. Most of you have shared with me how excited you were to find a new theme and you all had an amazing time. Before we embarked on the weekend's theme, we were led in a refreshing dance by our very own alumni Dafrose Ambani.



What Is Leadership?

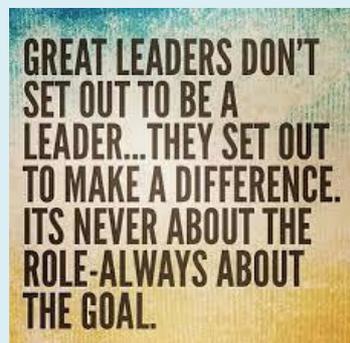


Wallace defined Leadership as the act of leading a group of people to do something, the position or fact of being the leader. A leader is a person in control of a group, country or situation. Although some are more gifted in certain areas, leadership is not for the chosen few. It is the long process of applying yourself, accepting responsibilities or leading projects and learning from them; risking failure and nurturing relationships that will slowly but surely build your skill and

reputation as a leader.

An effective leader is someone who masters the skills required to do four things:

- ✚ Leaders motivate and inspire people to engage with their vision;
- ✚ Leaders take ownership and have a positive attitude towards change. There is an African proverb that says, *'It is the head of the snake that contains the poison'*. People follow the example set by the leader and if a leader talks a lot but does not do what they promise (lacks integrity), then the poison is released and affects the whole body, making it unlikely that the vision will be achieved.
- ✚ Leaders need to be critical thinkers. This is the ability to evaluate and make good judgements
- ✚ Leaders are creative. Creativity is combining two unrelated ideas to create a fresh one



Group Sessions with the Mentors

The group sessions gave each of you an opportunity to interact with girls from different schools but in the same year group. During the group session, you had a mentor to guide your discussion on leadership. I am glad you all learned about leadership and the majority of you, when you went back to school are more open to taking up leadership positions. I expect to hear more of you are taking up leadership roles.

There were statements like the one below that you discussed with your friends in the group.



If you are not part of the solution, you are part of the problem!

- a) Discuss this quote with your friends. Provide an example that shows your understanding of this quote.
- b) Look around you and name the leaders you see. Discuss why you think they are leaders.
- c) Think and come up with three problems that need solutions or three opportunities to improve in your home, school or community and list them.

One-on-one Session with a Mentor

The 1-1 session gave you quality time with a mentor. You had a safe environment to comfortably share and interact with your assigned mentor. The session also gave you an opportunity to discuss your commitments for the term – **which I hope you are all working hard to achieve.**



One of you wrote this comment after the session with a mentor, 'my mentor helped think about the real me as a good and able leader and not the other me as a person who only waited to be led. As I walked back to my seat, I was already a changed girl; a girl who was now yearning for a leadership position in school or even in church'.

Public Speaking Session

While the 1-1 sessions were going on, those who were waiting to see a mentor were participating in public speaking sessions. The aim of this session is to endorse the importance of expressing self fluently with varying a degree of creativity and to help you gain courage. The topics of discussion this time round were:

- ✚ All Children Should Walk to School
- ✚ Teenagers Should be Taught Family Planning
- ✚ The Government Should Give Every Family a Basic Living Wage

Each person was supposed to stand up and share her perspective by giving the advantages, disadvantages and spark interest in the discussion. The moderators who were Muthoni and Rhoda ensured that each of you had a chance to speak.

The session was also a combination of creative thinking and critical thinking. A leader requires being creative to create a vision. Although everyone has a creative gene, few people choose to nurture it yet it is the one that defines great leaders. To be a critical thinker one needs to apply creative knowledge to find innovative solutions and identify opportunities. A leader needs to lead where others follow.

One of you has told me she learnt that 'before making a choice, one needs to ask self a set of questions: which criteria should I use to choose the best option, how will I communicate, what are the consequences of the options and what is next after this'.

After the 1-1 sessions and public speaking sessions, there was a relaxing time as Muthoni had identified and brought several TED talk videos on youth and leadership for you to watch. TED is an organization which posts talks online for free distribution, under the slogan "ideas worth spreading". The following were the Ted videos:

- ✚ Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie asks that we begin to dream about and plan for a different, fairer world -- of happier men and women who are truer to themselves.
- ✚ Charity Wayua put her skills as a cancer researcher to use on an unlikely patient: the government of her native Kenya. She shares how she helped her government drastically improve its process for opening up new businesses, a crucial part of economic health and growth, leading to new investments and a World Bank recognition as a top reformer.
- ✚ Muthoni the Drummer Queen talks to Larry Madowo on her new song 'Kenyan Message' and the sorry state of Kenya
- ✚ Kamau Gachigi tells us how Africa needs engineers, but its engineering students often end up working at auditing firms and banks. Why? Suspects it's because they don't have the spaces and materials needed to test their ideas and start businesses. In this forward-thinking talk, he shares some of the extraordinary projects and innovations coming out of his Kenyan fab lab

Sunday Morning Skits

This was a time for creativity as you presented skits depicting what skills you had learned about leadership. Your assignment was to identify a problem in the society, come up with a solution which you were supposed to present in form of a song, poem or a discussion panel. The group composition was to have girls from each year group and have all schools represented in the group. The winning group received chocolates.

Career Talks

As usual, Wallace had secured phenomenal professionals who have undertaken different paths to chart their careers.



✚ Florence: Actuary

Florence studied Actuarial Science at the University of Nairobi. Her decision to study Actuarial Science was greatly influenced by speaking with professionals already working in the field. Actuarial Science focuses on Statistics and Probabilities. Actuaries offer financial solutions to organizations.



✚ Frank: Monitoring and Evaluation, Mercy Corps

Frank pursued Range Management at the University of Nairobi, with a focus on Dry Land Management. Monitoring and Evaluation offers solutions with a focus on accessibility, sustainability, yield and profitability.

Since projects are funded by donors, accountability also factors in to ensure resources are used for the relevant target.

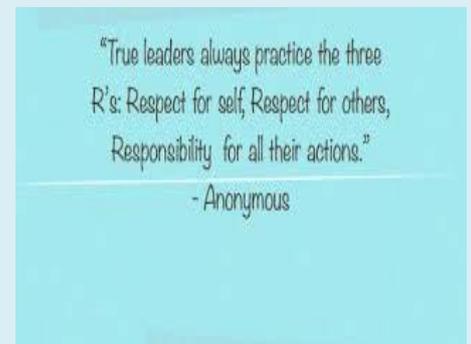


✚ Mary: Electrical and Heat Engineer

Mary studied Engineering and now works in the State of Georgia as a Technician.

Our take away:

- ✚ Be yourself, do what you like, talk to and engage with professionals in your field of interest. Know its okay to change your career path, always work hard and most importantly believe in self.
- ✚ Tap in to your networks.
- ✚ Whatever opportunity comes your way, embrace it with open arms and do your very best.
- ✚ Hard-work and passion will never fail you.
- ✚ Build your networks early on, you will reap the benefits. At some point take risks, even when not sure of the outcome



Our immense gratitude goes to our faithful mentors for always showing up when you are called upon. It would be impossible to quantify all the ways you have inspired, challenged and motivated our girls during the mentoring weekends. And to the Administration and Catering Staff of Precious Blood Riruta, thank you for your never-ending hospitality.

30 YEARS FROM NOW
IT WON'T MATTER
WHAT SHOES YOU WORE
HOW YOUR HAIR LOOKED
OR THE JEANS YOU
BOUGHT
WHAT WILL MATTER
IS WHAT YOU
LEARNED
AND HOW YOU USED IT.

Having
influence
is not about elevating self,
but about
lifting
others.
Shari Dew

Leadership and learning are
indispensable to each other.
John F. Kennedy

WORRY IS LIKE A ROCKING
CHAIR. IT GIVES YOU SOMETHING
TO DO BUT NEVER GETS YOU
ANYWHERE.
-ERMA BOMBECK
www.graduationwisdom.com

A goal
without a plan
is just a wish.



Leadership is
taking responsibility
while others are
making excuses.
-John C. Maxwell
YQR Health
www.yqrhealth.com

"Be more concerned
with your character than your reputation,
because your character is what you really are,
while your reputation is merely
what others think you are."
John Wooden,
Winningest UCLA Basketball Coach

Education is the most powerful
weapon which you can use to
change the world.
Nelson Mandela
BrainyQuote

Difference Between	
 <u>Boss</u>	<u>Leader</u> 
Drives employees	... Coaches them
Depends on authority	... On goodwill
Inspires fear	... Generates enthusiasm
Says, "I"	... Says, " We "
Places blame for the breakdown	... Fixes the breakdown
Knows how it is done	... Shows how it is done
Uses people	... Develops people
Takes credit	... Gives credit
Commands	... Asks
Says, " Go "	... Says, " Let's go "

Yaaper Pashy

Reports compiled by:
Kilungu – Lillian
Gatimu – Caroline, Catherine & Nancy
Starehe – Madelene, Jentriks & Mercyline

Alumni Session

Turn-out and Theme

The focus is still on concepts that are more relevant and impactful to the various alumni tiers. For the January session, the intended themes were: **Sex Education and the Price of Public Shaming**. The former was to cater for the most recent graduates (Class of 2017) and the latter, the rest of the alumni tiers since the alumni group was to be split in to two. With Public Shaming, we were to explore the **issue of pregnancy (during and after)** during the morning session. During the afternoon section, the discussion was to look at the **role played by social media and the society in public shaming**. The sex education was centred on the following topics: **autonomy, forging romantic relationships, and compatibility in social relationships**. All these were common areas of struggle by some of you during year 1 and 2 of your university journey. Turn-out was an all-time high, with over 30 girls showing up for the session.



Ground Rules: Sex Education Segment

Given the sensitive and personal nature of the discussion, some ground rules were established to ensure a safe space for sharing was created. The ground rules were:

- Use of inclusive speech
- No shaming
- If not comfortable sharing in the main group, you were free to approach a mentor privately
- No question was silly

Main Discussion

The importance of the Sex Education session was to openly talk about all the taboo issues which otherwise wouldn't be addressed in other settings such as family discussions, friendly conversations or even in classroom environments. To encourage participation, I had prepared Sexploration game cards. Sexploration is a sex education tool designed by William Dunkley, Christopher Feth, Tatiana Ramos, and Abigail Tang to encourage an open-minded approach to our sexuality and embrace it. Sexploration addressed the following concepts:

- ✚ **Healthy and unhealthy relationships (Reproductive Health (Contraceptives/birth control)**
- ✚ **Sexually Transmitted Diseases/Infections (STDs/STIs)**
- ✚ **General Sexual Orientations (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer)-LGBTQ Awareness**
- ✚ **General Sex Education (sexual slang words)**

The objective was to inform and educate by simulating different scenarios of the above-mentioned themes through the game cards. The game brought complicated and sensitive subjects to light in a fun and interactive manner. **This was achieved because in the afternoon I witnessed very bold discussions with active participation and great interest in the conversation at hand.**

If interested in a more detailed account of the concepts covered during the session, you can follow the links below.

- http://sexedproject.org/games/sexphrase/PDF_General%20Sexuality%20Vocab.pdf
- http://sexedproject.org/games/sexphrase/PDF_Healthy%20Relationships%20Vocab.pdf
- sexedproject.org/games/sexphrase/PDF_Slang%20Vocab.pdf
- http://sexedproject.org/games/sexphrase/PDF_Transmitted%20Deseases%20Vocab.pdf

Outcomes

- ❖ Shifting from the ABC approach has created more interest in the alumni sessions
- ❖ The discussion of sexual education was normalized
- ❖ The session was informative and created awareness on the concepts covered
- ❖ A distinction was made amongst myths, facts and commonly held stereotypes

I hope you all learned something from the session and you shall educate your peers on the same, stand-up for yourself and others, and make wise and educated choices. Lastly, have a filter for personal choices, cultural or societal standing and expectations, and know when and where to apply either scenario.