

Five Tasks for the Empowerment of Young Adults

by [Mike Obsatz](#)

When people share concerns about youth drug abuse and violence, they often come up with consequences and punishments. Young people use drugs and act out in violent ways because they lack maturity, self-esteem, and interpersonal skills.

If we want our young people to live productive, mature lives, there are five tasks which they must accomplish.

- ***Task #1***

First, they must **learn about their gifts and talents, and develop a sense of purpose for their lives**. This involves discovering what they do well, what they feel passionate about, and what gives them pleasure and a natural high. This discovery process is helped by having caring, supportive adult mentors who encourage them to search inside themselves, to develop competence in certain areas.

- ***Task #2***

Second, they must **learn about the world, how it works, how families operate, how organizations function, the political process, people's motivations, media's influence on culture, and how individuals interact in groups**. This process of learning about the world means immersing oneself into it, finding different types of people and situations and developing a conceptual understanding of the world. It means coming to terms with people's strengths and limitations.

- ***Task #3***

Third, they must **integrate their gifts and talents into the world**, and discover **how to make a living and support themselves**. This may mean finding a job that pays for their gift or talent, or finding a job that allows them to share their gifts and talents in addition to working a regular job.

- ***Task #4***

The fourth task of young adulthood is to **learn about intimacy, sexuality and trust, and choose people to care about and love**. This means learning interpersonal skills, and developing friendships and love relationships. Young people also need to learn about identifying and sharing emotions, including when to let emotions out, and when to keep them private.

- ***Task #5***

Finally, the fifth task is to **develop empathy, compassion and gratitude, and a desire to give back to the community**. The person then discovers ways of giving back and does so.