

# Youth Drum Making

RITE OF PASSAGE



DeSales Center // Brooklyn, MI



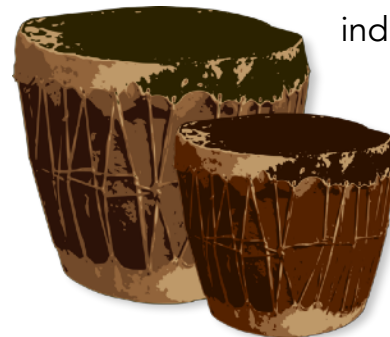
## Youth Drum Making Rite of Passage - for fathers & mentors -

There is an African proverb that says:

*"If the youth are not initiated,  
they will burn down the village."*

Witnessing the dysfunction in society, especially in our politics, maybe it is time to once again return to this wisdom practice for the benefit of our youth, as well as for the benefit of society and the world. Here is an opportunity to draw closer to your youth and also gift him with a safe – yet edgy – initiation experience.

**Come participate in meaningful rituals, experience time in nature and spend quality time with your youth. Come build something together.**



**Gift him with this drum-build experience.** Leaders of this Youth Rites of Passage are committed to

passing on this ancient wisdom practice. *They will teach you individual components of the drum can be intentional metaphors that represent our life experiences.* The



wood strips and goat skin are powerful signposts for our psyches to help us realize that discomfort and suffering often accompany new growth and allow for healthy transition in life.

**Each part of the drum is a potential metaphor for events and parts of our life.** We say potential because there is no connection without our looking for it. *Once we reflect on possible connections, our eyes and hearts are opened and the metaphors come to life and speak truth to our souls.* The

individual components, each wood slat, the cardboard tube, the glue, the staples and the drum skin are all teachers connecting us to the outer world and to potentiality for relationship.

**Rituals are intended to open us up to new places in our inner world that gives meaning to our conscious/outer world.** They can give order like a morning routine or be disruptive in a helpful, healthy way like the Rites of Passage for Men that some of us may have attended. Rites of passage try to create a safe container in which to experience perhaps a call to a new level of maturity or greater interior integration.



The container allows us to confront and be confronted by obstacles to growth and transforms us into a new way of seeing and being.

**It is our hope that this rite of passage for young teen males will be such an experience both for the youth and their dads or mentor.**

In this safe container it is our hope that the narrow male stereotypes

that young teens are bombarded with through most of the media they are exposed to and even perhaps

by men whom they admire, will be challenged. In that challenge **we hope that those who participate will gain a wider view of what being a man** means or at least the beginning of such an opportunity. It is our hope that this will be especially true for the dads or mentors, so that they can continue the journey with these young with greater intentionality.



**This rite of passage focuses on young males who are at the beginning of their pubescent experience.**

Their bodies are alerting them to the approach of something new and different about themselves. Their idealism and energy open them to challenges that they may

sense are important and meaningful; even if they do not yet have enough life experience to reap the challenges fullest meaning for themselves.

**This is where the dads' or mentor's presence at the rites and in the youth's future is important for him to**



perhaps have a greater understanding of what his journey to manhood means. It is our hope that this rite of passage will be one of those safe container where a youth can approach a passage way to liminal space where he can

sense a healthy vision of his maleness and future manhood. And invite him and his dad or mentor to continue the journey together and individually.

### **POSSIBLE PRE ATTENDANCE ACTIVITIES**

It might be good for fathers or mentors to initiate some pre rites activities before coming to the actual rite of passage. These would be simple rites in themselves.

#### **These could look like:**

**1.** Watching a movie that addresses young pubescent males moving toward manhood/adulthood and sharing observations.

- Ender's Game 13-17yrs
- The Giver 15-17yrs
- Seabiscuit 15-17 yrs.

- The War (with Elijah Wood) 13-17 yrs.
- Simon Birch 13-17yrs
- Dead Poet Society 15-17yrs
- Radio 15-17yrs
- Walking Across Egypt 15-17yrs
- That's What I Am 13-17yrs
- Swimming Upstream 15-17yrs
- Secondhand Lions 13-17yrs
- Saint Ralph 13-17yrs
- The Hobbit 15-17yrs
- The Lord of Rings 15-17yrs
- October Sky 15-17yrs

These are older movies but prove their worth for this purpose. Some of these movies have problematic dads. This could be helpful in opening space for dads or mentors and the youth to discuss relationally difficult areas.

**2.** Having the youth shave his head before attending or if he has long hair, cutting a piece and somehow keeping it in a small bundle with a decorative string so that it can be attached to the drum after returning home.

**3.** Giving away toys that belong to a younger age or one that the youth still enjoys.

4. Visiting a family cemetery and talking about an ancestor that influenced the dad or mentor.
5. Visiting a living man that influenced the dad or mentor and talking about growing up and what their relationship meant.
6. Spending time in a wilderness area together or outdoors after dark watching the stars.

These or any others that the dads or mentors might come up, these would need introduction by the dad or mentor who would have to be clear about why he and the youth are doing it. A lot that could be helpful in these pre-attendance ideas, is dependent on the dad's or mentor's openness and intentionality.



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