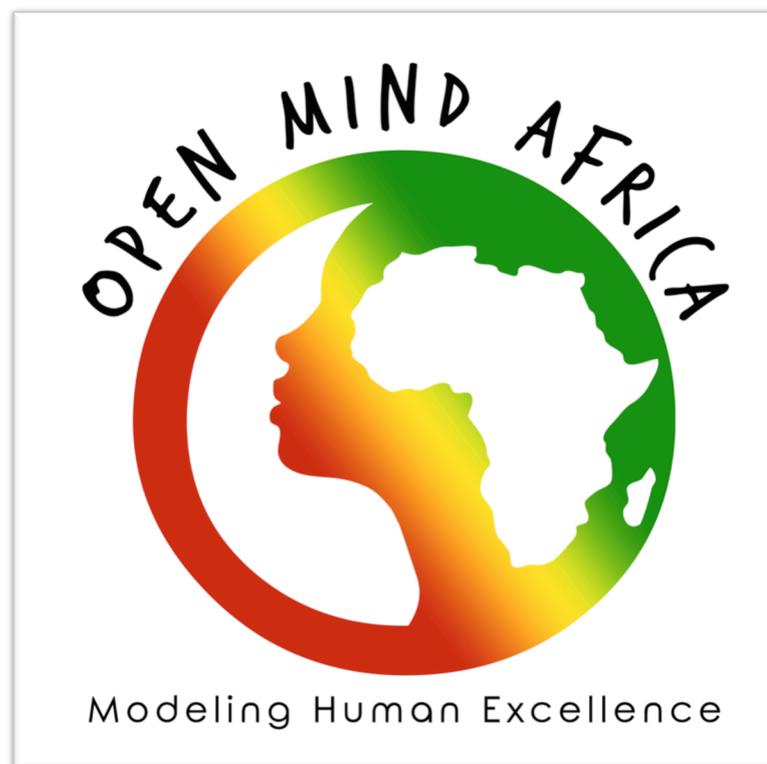


# Open Mind Africa First International Summer Camp in Ghana

15th to 17th August 2017

St. James Seminary Senior High School Campus





## Contents

- ❖ Introduction to Open Mind Africa
- ❖ About OMA Summer Camp
- ❖ Participating Schools
- ❖ Membership
- ❖ Organizing and Logistics
- ❖ Funding
- ❖ About Facilitators
- ❖ Day One – Multiple Intelligences
- ❖ Day Two – Self-Management
- ❖ Day Three – Growth Mindset
- ❖ Campus Meetings
- ❖ Feedback
- ❖ Parents Involvement



## **Introduction to Open Mind Africa**

Open Mind Africa is an organization that models human excellence and success in the African Child through Social Emotional Learning (SEL), Neuro Linguistic Programming (NLP), Growth Mindset, Multiple Intelligence Education, and Character Development (Grit). We provide the African Child with a range of tools for developing emotional intelligence and cultivating mindset, skills, and character for success.

We coach the African Child to manage their emotions better, replicate patterns of excellence found in the most successful people in the world and to develop passion and perseverance for long-term goals. Open Mind Africa is also introducing a modern form of social education where each student supports the academic success of another, to further the development of African countries, and to provide the skills and grit required for the workforce of the future.

Open Mind Africa seeks to get every capable African Child involved in the human resource development of Africa. Education is the key that will open the door to Africa's fortunes, and it's time the ordinary citizens of Africa are encouraged to get involved and help each other by sharing their life experiences, mentoring and helping each other in the pursuit of happiness and success in Africa.

Our programs are results-oriented and focused on providing practical solutions to some of the challenges most African students face in their education and pursuit of success and happiness in Africa. They were carefully structured based on research, personal life experiences of some selected Africans, as well as on 'The Students' Needs Assessment Survey' that was conducted in July 2016 by Open Mind Africa at eight Senior High Schools in the Brong-Ahafo Region of Ghana.

We are confident that Open Mind Africa programs and competencies will be essential in providing solutions to supplement the existing educational framework in Africa, and help deal with the problems of limiting ideologies, high youth unemployment in Africa.

## **About OMA Summer Camp**

We designed the first Open Mind Africa International Summer Camp in Ghana with programs that gave our students fantastic opportunities to develop essential social-emotional skills, multiple intelligences, build friendships and make memories that will last a lifetime. We invited educators and facilitators from the United States, Australia, and Ghana.



## **Participating Schools**

Open Mind Africa invited students from three out of ten affiliated schools in the Brong Ahafo Region, since OMA board of directors decided that it is prudent to start with a small number of schools and gradually expand to cover the rest over time.

These schools were selected because we enjoy enormous support and cooperation from their leadership and teachers. The schools that participated in the summer camp were; St. James Seminary Senior High School, Notre Dame Senior High School, Sunyani Senior High School, and Kwame Nkrumah University of Science & Technology.

Also in attendance were campus managers from the three mentioned above senior high schools, students' supervisor from Notre Dame Senior High School, OMA director of school programs as well as organizers and facilitators from Open Mind Africa.

## **Membership**

Open Mind Africa used a very flexible and easy criterion for selecting students who participated in the first summer camp. We designed the camp for 30 students; therefore we gave a quota to each of the participating schools. OMA campus managers in consultation with their school leaders selected the students who eventually attended the camp.

Twenty-three students from the three senior high schools and Kwame Nkrumah University of Science & Technology (KNUST) participated in the camp. They constitute our first official beneficiaries and members of Open Mind Africa. You can visit our website and see more information about all the students that attended the camp.

Membership is currently limited to the twenty-three participants of the summer camp. However, we are allowing interested students at our various partner schools to attend our Campus meetings so they will be eligible to attend our next summer camp and continue to become full members.

## **Organizing and Logistics**

Organizing of our first international summer camp in Ghana went through several phases of decision making and readjusting our plans to fit the broader goals of the organization.



The initial plan was to host six hundred students from all ten senior high schools, we are currently affiliated with in the Brong Ahafo Region, but financially it would have been impossible. Also we were concerned about the safety of such a big number of students. Finally, the boards decided it was best to start with small number and expand over time to cover more students as the program matures.

We provided the entire students with free accommodation, T-shirt, handbags, water bottle, notebook, pen, nametags, plastic folders and three square meals.

Based on our initial idea of inviting 600 students for the camp, we planned to use the catering services of St. James Senior High School, but when our numbers came down to just thirty students, we chose to use the services of a private caterer. According to the students' feedback, they were totally satisfied with the food that was served during the camp.

We settled on St. James Seminary Senior High School campus to host the camp, because they have great facilities, nice environment and we enjoy a wonderful support from the leadership of the school. The students were separated in two dormitories. A supervisor stayed with the students day and night throughout the camp.

We received some few complaints concerning accommodation from the students. The bathrooms and toilets were a bit far away from the dormitories and therefore it was unsafe for students to use the facilities at night. The students also thought it would have been better to provide each student with two T-shirts so that they could change when necessary. We noted all the feedbacks and complaints from the students and we will take steps to improve on this situation during our next summer camp.

## **Funding**

Open Mind Africa is a young organization that is going through early formation stages. We are still strategizing the various aspects of our programming, and this includes a formidable fundraising campaign. Before the 2017 Summer Camp, Open Mind Africa had not been able to raise money from external sources. Our executive director – Joseph Adams, provided all the funding to cover the expenses for the camp. Looking forward to 2018 Summer Camp and Educator Summit, we are working assiduously to seek funding from donor agencies and charitable organizations around the world.



## About Facilitators

Kathleen Prevost from the United States, Joanne Maree Binns from Australia and Joseph Afful Adams from Ghana facilitated the Open Mind Africa summer camp. The three of them are educators with many years of work experience in different countries. Their educational backgrounds include Social Emotional Learning, Neuro Linguistic Programming and Multiple Intelligence Education. The first day of the camp was on Multiple Intelligence & WOOP, facilitated by Joanne Binns. The second day of the camp was on Self Management, facilitated by Kathleen Prevost. Joseph Adams had a night session with the students on the topic “How to Study Smarter not Harder”. Then the morning of the final day was on Growth Mindset & Character Development and Joseph Adams facilitated. For more information about our facilitators, please visit our website at <http://openmindafrica.org/team.php>.

## Day One – Multiple Intelligences and WOOP

Multiple intelligence theory is based on the work of Howard Gardener at Harvard, and his book *Frames of Mind*. Asked to study human intelligence, Gardener determined that all humans have a number of different intelligences. Typically both individuals and cultures tend to develop some intelligence more than others. However, all intelligences are available to all of us and we can use our more developed intelligences to enhance our less developed ones. Multiple intelligence theory is important to educators because it suggests that effective instruction empowers the human cognitive potential of all students.

Joanne Binns started the camp with the snowball fight icebreaker, which was a fun and interesting activity designed to get students comfortable and excited about the upcoming three days of the camp. Joanne asked students to meet fellow participants from other schools and start to get to know each other. She made students aware of the purpose of the camp and what to expect in the subsequent days. The students were introduced to the logistics of the camp, and were also informed about the rules and expectations of participating in the camp.

On the topic of multiple intelligences, she introduced students to Gardner’s Theory of Multiple Intelligences and asked students to consider themselves in relation to this theory and develop an understanding of the intelligences they prefer and/or are strengths. She helped students understand more about their own culture and other cultures in relation to Theory of Multiple Intelligences, and encouraged the students to put Theory of Multiple Intelligences into personal and practical contexts.



WOOP is an acronym for Wish -Outcome – Obstacle – Plan. WOOP is a practical, accessible, evidence-based mental strategy that people can use to find and fulfill their wishes and change their habits. Over twenty years of research shows that WOOP works. Known scientifically as Mental Contrasting with Implementation Intentions, the approach has proven effective across ages and areas of life, helping people achieve goals dealing with health, career/academics, and interpersonal relationships. Based on the feedback we received from the students, both written and recorded, it was evident that the knowledge of WOOP is going to make a positive impact in the academic development of the students.

In the second half of the afternoon, we separated into three groups for workshops on the topic of the day. The three facilitators (Kathleen, Jo and Joe) lead each of the workshops. During this session we delved deep into the topics and the students had the opportunity to ask questions as well as to apply these concepts/tools to their academic life. Representatives from each group were selected to do a short presentation on behalf of their group after the group discussions.

Students will revisit and study more into Multiple Intelligences and WOOP during their on-campus meetings in their respective schools. OMA campus managers will facilitate the campus meetings, but materials, content and training support will be provided by Open Mind Africa. Each school has agreed to hold at least two campus meetings monthly.

## **Day Two – Self-Management**

Kathleen Prevost facilitated the second day of the camp that was on Self-Management. Self-Management includes strategies that teach students to independently complete tasks and take an active role in monitoring and reinforcing their own behavior. An important goal in education is to foster self-reliance and independence. In fact, Self-Management strategies can be implemented before any problem behaviors occur. Research studies show that they can be used to improve academic performance, productivity, time on-task, and to decrease problem behavior. The ability to use Self-Management effectively is a skill that becomes very important for success as children grow into adulthood.

Kathleen made the students aware that in Self-Management we learn to change our internal organization in order to react to the world how we want or need to. She introduced a lead-in question to help the students think through the topic and to prepare their minds. “How do I organize my self on **inside** to be who I need to be on **outside**?”

She introduced the students to the ‘Marshmallow Test’, and together they identified a couple of challenging academic marshmallow situations that students face in school. The students were introduced to Self-Management strategies that will help them deal with such challenges better in school.

She also trained the students on how to set S.M.A.R.T outcomes. Kathleen spent a lot of time coaching the students through this process step by step. At the end of the camp, most students spoke about how insightful this was, and how helpful this tool will be for them going forward in their academic pursuits.

Kathleen also introduced the students to the power of body language through high power poses. This was a very interesting kinesthetic activity and the students had fun with it. She taught the students how they record their experiences of the world through auditory, visual or kinesthetic senses. She talked about primary senses and connected this idea to the different learning styles that each student has. Kathleen explained that everyone can learn better by arranging their learning material in relation to their specific primary sense.

Finally, Kathleen taught the students about the ‘circle of excellence’ technique that can help them maintain high-level performance during school and final exams. She taught the students to make an imaginary circle on the ground, step into the circle, remember a time in the past when they experienced peak performance and high energy, and then mentally bring that positive energy to inside the circle. With the help submodalities students can enhance this experience and use it any time and any place of need.

### **Day Three – Growth Mindset**

Joseph Afful Adams facilitated day three of the summer camp. The topic of the final day was on Growth Mindset and Character Development (Grit). One kind of hope is the expectation that tomorrow will be better than today, it’s the kind of hope that has us yearning for nice weather, or a smoother path ahead. It comes without the burden of responsibility. The onus is on the universe to make things better. Grit depends on a difference kind of hope. It rests on the expectation that our own efforts can improve our future. I have a feeling tomorrow will be better is different from I resolve to make tomorrow better. The hope that gritty people have has nothing to do with luck and everything to do with getting up and trying again.



Over 30 years ago, Carol Dweck and her colleagues became interested in students' attitudes about failure. They noticed that some students rebounded while other students seemed devastated by even the smallest setbacks. After studying the behavior of thousands of children, Dr. Dweck coined the terms fixed mindset and growth mindset to describe the underlying beliefs, people have about learning and intelligence. When students believe they can get smarter, they understand that effort makes them stronger. Therefore they put in extra time and effort, and that leads to higher achievement.

Joseph started by introducing the concept of SEL (Social Emotional Learning) as 'skills beyond academic knowledge that are crucial to college and career readiness', he also introduced the concept of character development in terms of 'Strengths of Mind, Strengths of Will and Strengths of Heart'.

On the concept of growth mindset, Joseph helped the students understand the differences between the two; he explained that, Students with a *fixed mindset* believe that their own intelligence and talent are innate traits that don't change whilst Students with a *growth mindset* believe that ability can change as the result of effort, perseverance, and practice. Moreover, he emphasized that the differences in mindset can lead to achievement gaps in grades, test scores, class behavior, and other student outcomes that last for years.

To further demonstrate the differences between growth mindset and fixed mindset, Joseph showed the students a chat that helped them visualize and discuss the differences among themselves. He also taught the students that mindsets come from but not limited to the following reasons; personal history of success and failure, how others have responded to these same outcomes, limiting beliefs and lack of SEL education.

Joseph also talked briefly about the results of Dr. Angela Duckworth and Dr. Carol Dweck's research on growth mindset with more than two thousand high school seniors in America.

In the evening of the second day of the camp, Joseph introduced the students to a book by The Everyday Genius Institute in the United States of America 'Study Smarter, Not Harder' (Think like a genius straight A+ student). From this book, Joseph taught the students how to approach school by setting clear goals for class, school and future. He facilitated for students to develop powerful guiding questions, build good relationship with their teachers, and honor personal commitments.



## **Campus Meetings**

Before, during and after the summer camp, the facilitators did a lot of debrief of the contents and all the activities to improve and make maximum impact on the students. It was obvious that, the campus meetings were going to be the perfect forum for students to continue to learn, practice and share the ideas, tools and techniques they have learned during the camp.

After the camp, the facilitators designed lesson plans based on the topics they taught the students during the camp. The lesson plans were sent to the campus managers to use during their bi-weekly campus meetings with the students. The lesson plans are also available on our website for free downloads. You can also visit our website for comprehensive information about our campus meetings (Open Mind Club).

## **Feedback**

On the final day of the camp, Open Mind Africa gave out feedback forms to all the participating schools to inform us about their thoughts on the summer camp. The purpose of this exercise was to find out what made the most impact on the students; where we can improve and how, from the students' point of view, we can organize the campus meetings effectively.

We recorded the students talking about their experience at the camp. Kathleen asked students about a concept or tool that they learned during the camp that will help them in their academic, career and personal development. The students opened up and gave wonderful responses to the amazement of all the facilitators. It is beautiful to see how helpful the summer camp has been to the students.

## **Parents Involvement**

At Open Mind Africa we desire and fully encourage parents to participate in our SEL and other programs for their kids, as a result, we have also made it a policy to keep parents informed about our curriculum and other programs we are offering to the students.