Sheila Love IMPACT-ology Mastermind

“Sheila Love — Where Everything Is Possible”

LESSON 19

Mastermind & Quantum Leaps

Position	Lesson 19 of 20
Duration	40–50 minutes
Age Group	12–18 years, Liberia, West Africa
Core Idea	A Mastermind is a safe space built together, where others can be experts where you're not. Growth doesn't always come one step at a time. Sometimes it leaps.

1. LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Explain the fly-and-window story and what it teaches about working alone versus together

2. Define a Mastermind in their own words

3. Explain why even mentors need mentors

4. Identify one person or small group they could build a Mastermind with

2. OPENING HOOK (5 minutes)

Ask: “Has a fly ever gotten trapped in your house, banging against a closed window, while the door stood open the whole time?”

Most students will laugh, recognizing it instantly.

> “We do the exact same thing. Today we find out why, and what to do instead.”

3. CORE CONTENT

The Fly at the Window

A fly keeps banging against a closed window, exhausting itself, when an open door is sitting just a few feet away.

It isn't stupid. It just can't see the door from where it's stuck. Working alone, banging against the same closed window, humans do exactly the same thing.

A Safe Space Built Together

A Mastermind is a small group of people working together toward their goals, a safe space you build with others, not alone.

Members of a mastermind can be experts exactly where you have no expertise. That's the whole point. Nobody needs to see every door alone.

Even Mentors Need Mentors

Nobody outgrows the need for other people's eyes. Mentors need mentors. This isn't weakness. It's how the fly finally finds the door.

Leaps, Not Just Steps

Growth doesn't always happen one small step at a time. Sometimes it happens in a sudden leap.

And aiming high doesn't actually take more effort than aiming low, so once you're aiming at all, you may as well aim for something great.

4. STORY: ‘FOUR HEADS OVER ONE PROBLEM’

FOUR HEADS OVER ONE PROBLEM

Fanta, Sekou, Musu, and Prince had each been struggling separately with the same WAEC preparation topic for weeks, a statistics unit none of them had fully grasped.

Each of them had tried alone. Fanta reread the textbook chapter four times. Sekou drew diagrams nobody else ever saw. Musu tested herself with old questions and kept getting the same ones wrong. Prince had mostly avoided it, hoping it wouldn't come up.

None of them knew the others were stuck on the exact same unit.

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It came out by accident, during a lunch break, when Fanta complained out loud about the topic and Sekou admitted, quietly, that he'd been stuck on it too.

“I thought it was just me,” Musu said, surprised.

“I've been avoiding it,” Prince admitted, which made the others laugh, mostly because it was so plainly true of all of them in different ways.

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They started meeting after school, twice a week, at Fanta's family compound, four exercise books open on one table.

It turned out Sekou's strange diagrams, the ones he'd drawn alone and never shown anyone, made something click for Musu that four readings of the textbook hadn't. Musu's habit of testing with old questions gave the group real practice instead of theory. Fanta's careful notes organized what the group had figured out so far. Prince, forced to stop avoiding it in front of the others, finally admitted what specifically confused him, which turned out to be the exact same thing confusing everyone else.

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Within three weeks, the topic that had cost each of them separately weeks of frustration had become, somehow, the one they were most confident about heading into the mock exam.

“We should have done this from the start,” Sekou said, looking at his own diagram on the table, now covered in the other three's handwriting too.

“We didn't know we needed to,” Fanta said. “We all thought we were the only one stuck.”

None of them had planned to call it anything. It had simply become the thing they did twice a week now, four exercise books, one table, doors opening that none of them had found alone.

5. ACTIVITY (10 minutes)

Materials: any paper, any pen or pencil.

1. Write down a goal or problem you've mostly been working on alone.

2. Write down one or two people who might be stuck on something similar, or who have an expertise you lack.

3. Write down what you could offer such a group, the way Sekou offered his diagrams without realizing their value.

4. Write down one small step to actually start the conversation with them this week.

6. DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. When have you, like the fly, kept struggling alone at a closed window while a door was open nearby?

2. What would a Mastermind look like for you specifically, in your own life right now?

3. Why do you think even mentors and experts still need other people's input?

4. What is one leap, rather than a small step, you could imagine for yourself if you stopped working entirely alone?

7. FACILITATOR NOTES

This lesson works best if it results in an actual, real commitment, not just a hypothetical group. Push gently for a real name, a real plan.

Remind students the classroom itself has been a kind of Mastermind since Lesson 1, when this idea was first planted lightly. Make that connection explicit now.

Some students may resist collaborating, preferring to work alone out of pride or past disappointment. Don't force it; plant the idea and let it work over time.

If a diagram or version of the fly-and-window story is available, use it visually here alongside the telling.

8. BRIDGE TO LESSON 20

Before students leave, ask:

“When this course ends next lesson, what do you think will actually be different about you, compared to who sat down for Lesson 1?”

Let them guess.

“We find out together, next time.”