



**LEADER MATERIAL**

**TERM 1 | 2024**



*What do we do  
when we feel lost?*





# TERM 1 HOW DO WE FIND OUR PLACE?

## TOPIC OUTLINE

We all need to find our place in the world. When we find our fit, we feel confident about ourselves, connected to others and the world around us, and feel like we have something to contribute. Sometimes young people can struggle to find their place. They can feel alone, anxious about the future, and insignificant, like there is no one who cares about them. When young people can't find their place, they can become lost. How do we find our place?

### PART 1 – NO LONGER LOST

In part 1 of the term, we breakdown the spiritual framework for the year, No Longer Lost. We explore how when young people find connection, confidence, and their voice, they can find their place in the world.

### PART 2 – CONNECTION

In part 2, we explore how young people can find connection in their lives. Young people will consider how they can build connections in their interpersonal relationships with friends and helpful adults, how we can connect with God in different ways, and how they can connect with themselves through their thoughts and emotions.

### GOOD NEWS MESSAGE

Sometimes we feel lost in our lives. We might feel alone like we have nobody to turn to, anxious about our future, or like we don't matter. When we feel lost, we can struggle to find our place in life. The Good News is that Jesus loves us and has a place for us. When we are lost Jesus doesn't give up searching for us. We are no longer lost when we find our place with Jesus.

## LIFE LABS

The first of Life Labs explores the key ideas of the framework – connection with others, a sense of security, and significance. The second part goes deeper into the idea of connection – how young people connect with their peers, adults, God, and themselves.

### INTRODUCTORY SESSION

In the first session of the term, take the opportunity to welcome young people back and introduce them to the theme. Rather than a structured Life Lab session, the material explores some activities you could do that are fun, will connect the young people, and help introduce the ideas we'll look at in the life labs. For example, activities that explore the lost/found theme, like mazes, escape room, or scavenger hunt.

### LIFE LABS 1: WHAT DO WE DO WHEN WE FEEL LOST?

*Purpose:* the purpose of this session is to help young people explore the experience of feeling lost and to reflect on the Good News message that we are "no longer lost".

*Scripture:* the Scripture John 4:5-30 explores how we are no longer lost when we find Jesus.

### LIFE LABS 2: HOW DO WE FIND CONNECTION?

*Purpose:* the purpose of this session is to help young people explore how they can find connection and reflect on the Good News message that we can find connection with Jesus.

*Scripture:* the Scripture Matthew 28:16-20 explores how Jesus is always there for us and encourages us to help others find connection with him too.

### LIFE LABS 3: HOW DO I FIND CONFIDENCE FOR THE FUTURE?

*Purpose:* the purpose of this session is help young people explore how they respond in times of uncertainty and reflect on the Good News that we can find confidence because nothing can separate us from God's love.

*Scripture:* the Scripture Romans 8:37-39 explores how we can find confidence for the future knowing that nothing can separate us from God's love.

### LIFE LABS 4: HOW DO WE KNOW THAT WE MATTER?

*Purpose:* the purpose of this session is to help young people explore how they respond when they feel like they don't matter and reflect on the Good News that they are valued by Jesus.

*Scripture:* the Scripture in Luke 15:8-10 explores how valuable we are to Jesus.

### LIFE LABS 5: HOW DO WE CONNECT WITH OUR FRIENDS?

*Purpose:* the purpose of this session is to help young people reflect on how they connect with their friends and reflect on the Good News that Jesus is our friend and wants to connect with us.

*Scripture:* the Scripture Luke 5:27-35 explores how Jesus connects with his friends.

### LIFE LABS 6: HOW DO WE CONNECT WITH HELPFUL ADULTS?

*Purpose:* the purpose of this session is to help young people identify helpful adults they can connect with and consider the Good News that we can connect with adults who love us as Jesus does.

*Scripture:* the Scripture Mark 10:13-16 explores how Jesus welcomes, encourages, and connects with young people.

### LIFE LABS 7: HOW DO WE CONNECT WITH GOD?

*Purpose:* the purpose of this session is to help young people identify different ways they can connect with God and consider the Good News that we can connect with God in ways that make sense for us.

*Scripture:* the Scripture verses about people connecting with God explore how people can connect with God in ways that make sense for them and their lives.

### LIFE LABS 8: HOW DO WE CONNECT WITH OURSELVES?

*Purpose:* the purpose of this session is to help young people connect with themselves by understanding their feelings and emotions and consider the Good News that God knows us and loves us.

*Scripture:* the Scripture, 'God's X-Ray Vision', explores how each one of us is known and loved by God.

### ACTIVITY SESSION

The activity session provides an opportunity to reflect on the topic idea in a less structured session than a Life Lab. You can use the ideas to create a fun and social session that will help introduce the concepts. For this topic, we share ideas for activities that help young people explore the idea of connections with others, God, and themselves. For example, social events like a youth group party, and activities that engage intergenerationally with the faith community, like a celebration night.



# INTRODUCING TERM 1 NO LONGER LOST

For the first session of the term, take the opportunity to welcome young people back and introduce them to the theme.

## Overview

We all need to find our place in the world. When we find our fit, we feel confident about ourselves, connected to others and the world around us, and feel like we have something to contribute. Sometimes young people can struggle to find their place. They can feel alone, anxious about the future, and insignificant, like there is no one who cares about them. In Term 1 we will begin to explore how young people can find their place in the world by introducing the spiritual framework for 2024 “No Longer Lost”. In Part 1 of the term young people will explore what it means to feel connected, confident, and valued as they find their place in life. In Part 2, we'll explore how young people can build connection with friends, adults, God, and themselves.

## What you could do

You could use this session to build group connection by playing games or even going on an excursion. Here's some ideas that would make sense for the term:

- Neighbourhood scavenger hunt
- Go for a hike together
- Complete a maze
- Do an escape room

## Discussion

To help introduce the theme you can take some time to discuss personal experiences of finding your place in the world. This could look like taking 10 minutes as a group to discuss, asking intentional questions throughout the night, or whatever works best for your group. You can ask questions like:

- Who are the people who are important to you?
- What are you looking forward to in the future?
- When you were little, what did you want to be when you grew up?
- Who is someone older than you that you admire?
- What is one thing that you would like to change about the community you live in?



# SESSION 1

## What do we do when we feel lost?

### SESSION OUTLINE

**Purpose:** this session aims to help young people explore the experience of feeling lost and to reflect on the Good News message that we are 'no longer lost'.

**Game:** the 'I'm Going to the Moon' game gets young people to experience feeling confused and left out.

**Activity:** the 'Enchanted Forest' activity helps young people explore how they can respond when they feel lost.

**Scripture:** the Scripture John 4:5-30 explores how we are no longer lost when we find Jesus.

### How to run a session

- Read the introduction and play the game
- Do the activity and discuss the questions
- Read the Scripture and discuss the questions
- Read the conclusion and close the session
- Adapt this session to suit the needs of your group as required

### Equipment needed for this session

- Material to make a grid on the ground (masking tape, chalk, paper plates, etc.)

### READ THE INTRODUCTION, PLAY THE GAME

10 MINUTES



Have you ever been lost? Maybe you needed to catch the bus but caught the wrong one or missed your stop. Suddenly, you're in an unknown environment and don't know where you are or what to do next. Sometimes, we feel lost in our lives. We might feel disconnected or directionless. We might feel that there's nobody on our side and wonder how we can go on. Whether we're feeling a bit down or completely overwhelmed, we can all feel lost.

What do we do when we feel lost?

As a way to begin thinking about this, let's play the 'I'm Going to the Moon' game.

## PLAY THE 'I'M GOING TO THE MOON' GAME

- The aim of the game is for participants to figure out the riddle by trying to complete the phrase with the correct word.
- Participants sit in a circle.
- Elect one participant to be 'mission control'. This participant thinks of a riddle to determine if other participants can come with them to the moon or not.
- The game starts with 'mission control' saying, "I'm going to the moon and I'm taking..." and then they say something that fits their riddle.
- For example, if the riddle is words that start with B, then 'mission control' might say, "I'm going to the moon and I'm taking a balloon". Other examples could be words with double letters, words that start with the first letter of your name, and having your arms folded while answering.
- 'Mission control' does not reveal these to the other participants. The other participants try to figure out the riddle by asking, "I'm going to the moon and I'm taking...?"
- If the participant is correct, 'mission control' can say "yes" or "no, but you can take [something else that fits the riddle]".
- Then, the next participant to their left tries to guess the pattern by suggesting something they would take to the moon, responding with, "I'm going to the moon and I'm taking...?"
- Continue until most of the group has gotten the pattern, then reveal the riddle and choose someone else to be 'mission control'.



How did you go with the game? How did it feel when you didn't understand the riddle? What do you do when you feel confused or lost?

## DO THE ACTIVITY AND DISCUSS THE QUESTIONS

15 MINUTES

# HOW TO DO THE ENCHANTED FOREST ACTIVITY

**Equipment:** Material to make a grid on the ground (masking tape, chalk, car paper plates, etc.)

**Preparation:** Create a 6x6 grid on the ground using masking tape/chalk and mark a beginning and end point.

- Participants walk through the 'forest' one person at a time.
- They can move one square at a time in any direction except diagonal (so forwards, backwards, or side to side).
- If they step in the wrong square, they must return to the start of the maze, and the next participant takes a turn.
- Participants can attempt the maze as many times as they like.
- There are two maps. For each participant's turn, alternate the map used. For example, for the first person to attempt the maze, the leader should refer to map 1. For the second attempt, use map 2. Continue alternating the maps throughout the activity.
- Participants work as one team to get from one end of the 'forest' to the other.
- Your group might find this activity difficult. If this occurs, give the group hints as required.

### Leaders, watch the participants for:

- What they say to each other
- What they find hard
- What they find easy
- What worked
- What caused conflict



### Discuss the activity

*How did you go with the activity? How did you feel when it was your turn to attempt the maze?*

*When did you realise that the map was changing? When the map changed, how did you respond?*

*What did you do when you needed help? How did others help you complete the maze?*

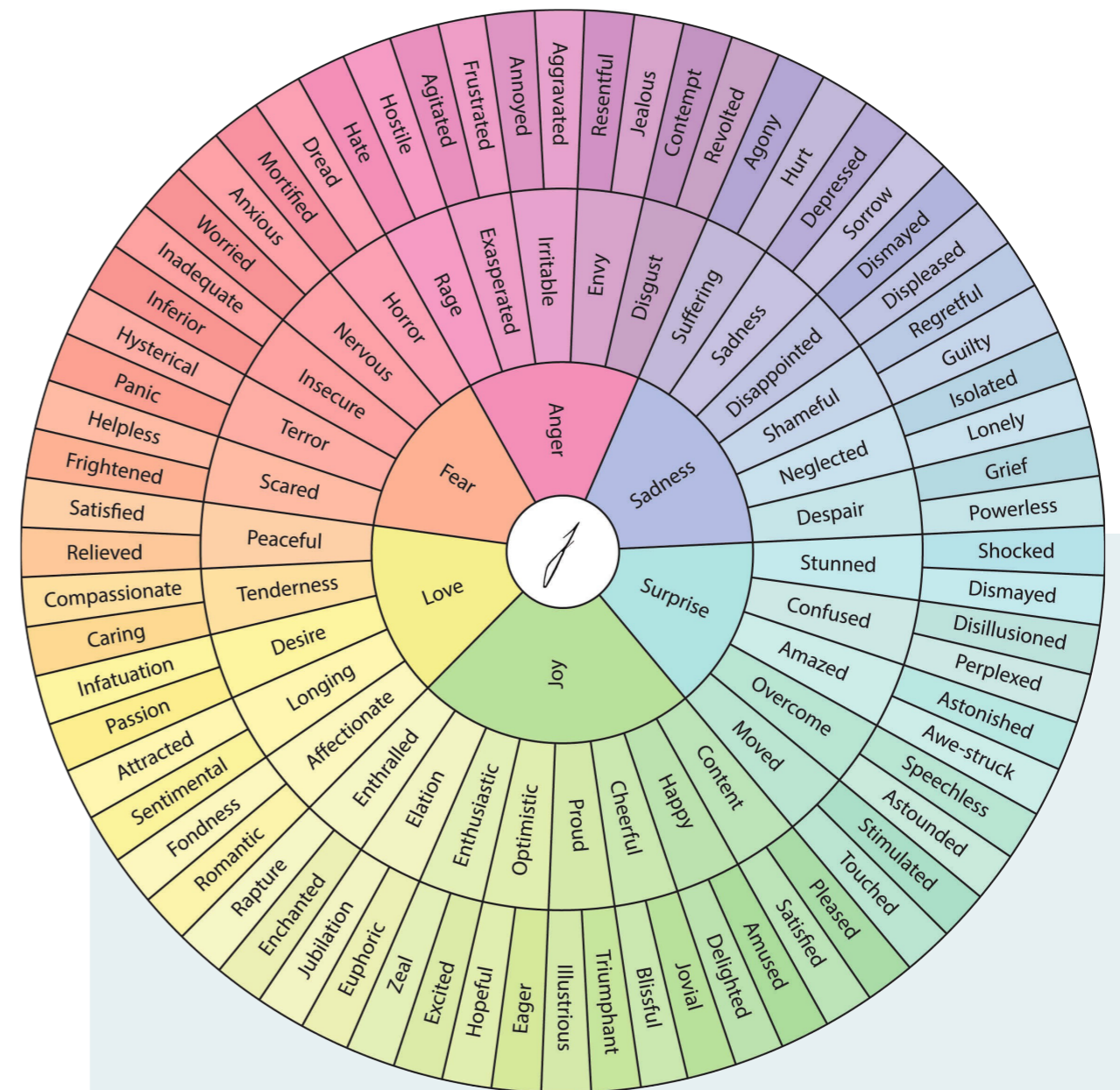
*Have you ever felt like you were in a maze and lost? Who can you ask for help when facing a challenge?*

## THE FEELINGS WHEEL



### In the group material

*Think about a time when you felt lost. Pick five feelings from the Mood Compass that describe how you felt.*



## READ THE SCRIPTURE AND DISCUSS THE QUESTIONS

15 MINUTES

# A LONELY WOMAN MEETS JESUS



If you feel this Scripture is too long for young people to read, you can explain it to them. For an example, you can watch our video here.

<sup>5</sup> In Samaria Jesus came to the town called Sychar, which is near the field that Jacob gave to his son Joseph.

<sup>6</sup> Jacob's well was there. Jesus was tired from his long trip, so he sat down beside the well. It was about noon.

<sup>7</sup> A Samaritan woman came to the well to get some water, and Jesus said to her, "Please give me a drink."

<sup>8</sup> This happened while his followers were in town buying some food.

<sup>9</sup> The woman answered, "I am surprised that you ask me for a drink! You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman!" (Jews have nothing to do with Samaritans.)

<sup>10</sup> Jesus answered, "You don't know what God can give you. And you don't know who I am, the one who asked you for a drink. If you knew, you would have asked me, and I would have given you living water."

<sup>11</sup> The woman said, "Sir, where will you get that living water? The well is very deep, and you have nothing to get water with.

<sup>12</sup> Are you greater than our ancestor Jacob? He is the one who gave us this well. He drank from it himself, and his sons and all his animals drank from it too."

<sup>13</sup> Jesus answered, "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again.

<sup>14</sup> But anyone who drinks the water I give will never be thirsty again. The water I give people will be like a spring flowing inside them. It will bring them eternal life."

<sup>15</sup> The woman said to Jesus, "Sir, give me this water. Then I will never be thirsty again and won't have to come back here to get more water."

<sup>16</sup> Jesus told her, "Go get your husband and come back."

<sup>17</sup> The woman answered, "But I have no husband." Jesus said to her, "You are right to say you have no husband.

<sup>18</sup> That's because, although you have had five husbands, the man you live with now is not your husband. That much was the truth."

<sup>19</sup> The woman said, "Sir, I can see that you are a prophet.

<sup>20</sup> Our fathers worshiped on this mountain. But you Jews say that Jerusalem is the place where people must worship."

<sup>21</sup> Jesus said, "Believe me, woman! The time is coming when you will not have to be in Jerusalem or on this mountain to worship the Father.

<sup>22</sup> You Samaritans worship something you don't understand. We Jews understand what we worship, since salvation comes from the Jews.

<sup>23</sup> But the time is coming when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth. In fact, that time is now here. And these are the kind of people the Father wants to be his worshipers.

<sup>24</sup> God is spirit. So the people who worship him must worship in spirit and truth."

<sup>25</sup> The woman said, "I know that the Messiah is coming." (He is the one called Christ.) "When he comes, he will explain everything to us."

<sup>26</sup> Then Jesus said, "He is talking to you now—I am the Messiah."

<sup>27</sup> Just then Jesus' followers came back from town. They were surprised because they saw Jesus talking with a woman. But none of them asked, "What do you want?" or "Why are you talking with her?"

<sup>28</sup> Then the woman left her water jar and went back to town. She told the people there,

<sup>29</sup> "A man told me everything I have ever done. Come see him. Maybe he is the Messiah."

<sup>30</sup> So the people left the town and went to see Jesus.

**John 4:5-30**

## DISCUSS THESE TOPIC QUESTIONS



What do you think about what we just read? How might it relate to what we do when we feel lost?

The woman was at the well alone, perhaps because she felt isolated or judged by her community. Have you ever felt alone, isolated or judged by others?

The woman was surprised when Jesus chose to connect with her despite their social and cultural barriers. How does it make you feel knowing that Jesus wants to connect with you? How do you connect with Jesus?

Jesus takes the time to listen to the Samaritan woman and answers her questions. What difference does it make that Jesus listens to us?



### Notes on the scripture for facilitators

- It would have been unusual for a woman to go to the well alone, especially during the hottest part of the day. Maybe she felt disconnected from her peers, excluded, or ashamed. Jesus chooses to connect with her despite their social and cultural barriers.
- When Jesus talks with the woman, she asks many questions and shares her opinions about what her faith means to her. Jesus creates a safe environment for the woman to share her opinions confidently. Not only does Jesus listen to what she has to say, but he entrusts her with the good news that he is the Messiah she has been waiting for, something he hadn't told anyone before.
- In her town, the Samaritan woman was ignored, unable to share her thoughts, and seen as less than others because of her past relationships. But because of her conversation with Jesus, the Samaritan woman's life is transformed. Jesus empowers the woman to connect with the people in her community and discovers her purpose to share the good news of God.

**READ THE CONCLUSION AND CLOSE THE SESSION**

**5 MINUTES**



*Sometimes, we feel lost in our lives. We might feel disconnected or directionless. We might feel that there's nobody on our side and wonder how we can go on. Whether we're feeling a bit down or completely overwhelmed, we can all feel lost sometimes. The Good News is that, like the Samaritan woman, we are no longer lost when we find Jesus. When we are overwhelmed or feel lost, we can connect with Jesus and find our place.*



**Ask the group**

*Get each person to share a takeaway from the session.*

*Ask if anybody wants to discuss anything further about this topic with a leader or support person.*

*Remind them when the next session is.*



**CLOSE THE SESSION**

**EXTRA CONTENT**

Start Map 1


Start Map 2


# SESSION 2

## How do we find connection?

### SESSION OUTLINE

**Purpose:** the purpose of this session is to help young people explore how they can find connection and reflect on the Good News message that we can find connection with Jesus.

**Game:** the 'Chain Reaction' game gets young people to experience how we are all linked to one another.

**Activity:** the 'Find Your Fit' activity helps young people practice connecting with others by starting conversations and expressing themselves.

**Scripture:** the Scripture Matthew 28:16-20 explores how Jesus is always there for us and encourages us to help others find connection with him too.

### How to run a session

- Read the introduction and play the game
- Do the activity and discuss the questions
- Read the Scripture and discuss the questions
- Read the conclusion and close the session
- Adapt this session to suit the needs of your group as required.

### Equipment needed for this session

- Small jigsaw puzzle (12 pieces) – template at the back of the session
- Timer

### READ THE INTRODUCTION, PLAY THE GAME

10 MINUTES

*We all want to feel connected to others. When we find connection, we can feel loved, supported, and safe to be ourselves. But sometimes, we don't feel connected to the people around us. Maybe we are bullied, ignored at school, or feel like we don't belong in our families. When we don't feel connected to those around us, we can feel isolated and alone, like no one is there for us. We all need connection but can struggle to know how to find it.*

*How do we find connection?*

*As a way to begin thinking about this, let's play the 'Chain Reaction' game.*

## PLAY THE 'CHAIN REACTION' GAME

- Tell participants to spread out.
- Tell each participant to secretly choose two other people and keep the same distance from each of them.
- For example, if Abdul has chosen Miriam and Marcus, and Marcus moves, Abdul then needs to move so they are the same distance away from Miriam and Marcus.
- Once you shout 'go', the participants will move, setting off a chain reaction and eventually stop.
- If fun, play again, but choose 3 participants each to keep the same distance from.

*How did you go with the game? Were you surprised by the chain reaction when one person moved? Who are the people you are most connected to?*





## DO THE ACTIVITY AND DISCUSS THE QUESTIONS

15 MINUTES

# HOW TO DO THE 'FIND YOUR FIT' ACTIVITY

**Equipment:** small jigsaw puzzle (10-20 pieces), timer

**Preparation:**

- Evenly distribute the pieces of the jigsaw puzzle to the group members. People may not show anyone else their pieces.
- On 'go', people have 30 seconds to find another person with a piece that fits their part of the puzzle. Once they have found someone, they connect their pieces and are a pair.
- Give the pairs another 30 seconds to find a pair that fits their puzzle pieces.
- Continue until the puzzle is complete.

**Leaders, watch the participants for:**

what they say to each other  
what they find hard  
what they find easy  
what worked  
what caused conflict



### Discuss the activity

*How did you go with the activity? How comfortable did you feel connecting with others?*

*How did you find your pair? What approach did you take?*

*Think of a time when you met a new person. How did you start the conversation with them?*

*In this activity, you were looking for someone with a puzzle piece with characteristics that matched yours. What characteristics do you look for when connecting with others?*



### In the group material

*List people you connect with and the characteristics that you like about them.*

## READ THE SCRIPTURE AND DISCUSS THE QUESTIONS

15 MINUTES

# ELEVEN FOLLOWERS WENT TO GALILEE

<sup>16</sup> The eleven followers went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus told them to go. <sup>17</sup> On the mountain the followers saw Jesus. They worshiped him. But some of the followers did not believe that it was really Jesus. <sup>18</sup> So he came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth is given to me. <sup>19</sup> So go and make followers of all people in the world. Baptize them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. <sup>20</sup> Teach them to obey everything that I have told you to do. You can be sure that I will be with you always. I will continue with you until the end of time."

**Matthew 28:16-20**



### Discuss these topic questions

*What do you think about what we just read? How might it relate to how we find connection?*

*Jesus invites his disciples to connect with him. What difference does it make that Jesus wants to connect with you?*

*In the story, Jesus encourages his disciples that he will always be with them. What do you think about Jesus always being with you?*

*Jesus encourages his followers to connect with all people in the world. Who are the people in your life who need someone to connect with them?*

### Notes on the scripture for facilitators

- The eleven disciples in the story are Jesus' closest friends. Before Jesus leaves, he invites them to connect with him on the mountain.
- In the story, Jesus is about to leave his followers. Jesus doesn't abandon them but encourages them by telling them that he will always be with them.
- Jesus encourages his followers to connect with all people in the world.

# SESSION 3

## READ THE CONCLUSION AND CLOSE THE SESSION

5 MINUTES



*We all want to feel connected to others. But sometimes we don't feel connected to the people around us, leaving us feeling isolated and alone, like no one is there for us. The Good News is that we can find connection with Jesus. Just like the disciples, we can remember that Jesus is with us, and we can help others to connect with Him too.*



### Ask the group

*Get each person to share a takeaway from the session.*

*Ask if anybody wants to discuss anything further about this topic with a leader or support person.*

*Remind them when the next session is.*



# CLOSE THE SESSION

# How do we find confidence for the future?

## SESSION OUTLINE

**Purpose:** the purpose of this session is help young people explore how they respond in times of uncertainty and reflect on the Good News that we can find confidence because nothing can separate us from God's love.

**Game:** the 'Freddo Catch' game gets young people to experience a practically impossible challenge.

**Activity:** the 'Number Punch' activity helps young people to adapt to challenges by responding to changes to the activity.

**Scripture:** the Scripture Romans 8:37-39 explores how we can find confidence for the future knowing that nothing can separate us from God's love.

### How to run a session

- Read introduction and play the game
- Do the activity and discuss the questions
- Read the Scripture and discuss the questions
- Read the conclusion and close the session
- Adapt this session to suit the needs of your group as required.

### Equipment needed for this session

- A pack of Freddo Frogs
- 20 paper plates with numbers 1-20 written on them
- Timer
- Markers/masking tape

## READ THE INTRODUCTION, PLAY THE GAME

10 MINUTES



*We all would love to know the future. We could know the answers for upcoming exams and what job we will do. When we know what the future will be, we can feel in control and confident about our lives. But we can't know everything about the future. Sometimes in life we experience unexpected challenges. Maybe our closest friends stop talking to us, our family moves town, or we lose a loved one. When unexpected challenges happen to us, we can feel uncertain and lose confidence for the future.*

*How do I find confidence for the future?*

*As a way to begin thinking about this, let's play the 'Freddo Catch' game.*

# PLAY THE 'FREDDO CATCH' GAME

**Equipment:** a pack of Freddo Frogs.

- Participants form a line behind the leader.
- The leader faces the group holding a Freddo.
- One at a time, each participant positions their hand around the frog but does not touch it (making a sideways 'C' shape with their hand), ready to catch the frog when the leader drops it through their hands.
- The leader gives no warning when they drop it and tries to make it almost impossible for the young people to catch it.



*How did you go with the game? How difficult did you think the game was going to be? How do you respond when you face difficulties?*



## DO THE ACTIVITY AND DISCUSS THE QUESTIONS

15 MINUTES

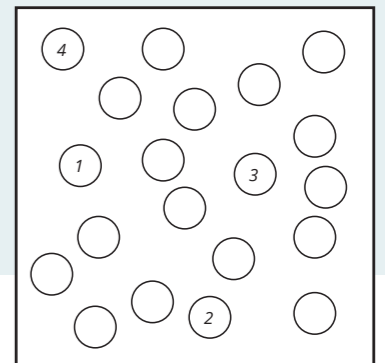
# HOW TO DO THE NUMBER PUNCH ACTIVITY

**Equipment:** 20 paper plates with numbers 1-20 written on them, timer, markers/masking tape

- Set up a square space with 3 metre sides using markers or masking tape.
- In the square create a 'keypad' with the paper plates randomly spread out with the numbers facing up, like the diagram below.
- The object of the activity is for the group to tap the numbers on the 'keypad' in order (1-20) in 20 seconds. (Adjust the time limit so that it feels difficult but not impossible)
- Only one person is allowed to be contacting the 'keypad' (anywhere inside the square) at any one time. They may run onto the keypad to press a number, but then must leave before someone else steps on.
- Should two or more individuals be contacting the keypad at one time, or if any keys are touched out of order, the group has to start again.
- Give the group some time to plan their approach before they start.
- After each attempt shuffle the numbers on the keypad.
- Continue while fun.

### Leaders, watch the participants for:

- what they say to each other
- what they find hard
- what they find easy
- what worked
- what caused conflict



### Discuss the activity

*How did you go with the activity? How did you respond to the challenge of the activity?*

*The activity was difficult and failure was likely. How did you feel when you tried and failed?*

*What did you do when the leaders changed where the numbers were? How did your team adapt when the activity changed?*

*What do you do when something unexpected happens in life? How do you adapt and find confidence to move forward?*

### In the group material

*Helpful tips for young people to build resilience when they face challenges.*

## READ THE SCRIPTURE AND DISCUSS THE QUESTIONS

15 MINUTES

# NOTHING CAN SEPARATE US FROM GOD'S LOVE

<sup>37</sup> But in all these troubles we have complete victory through God, who has shown his love for us. <sup>38-39</sup> Yes, I am sure that nothing can separate us from God's love—not death, life, angels, or ruling spirits. I am sure that nothing now, nothing in the future, no powers, nothing above us or nothing below us—nothing in the whole created world—will ever be able to separate us from the love God has shown us in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 8:37-39

### Discuss these topic questions

*What do you think about what we just read? How do you think it might relate to finding confidence for the future?*

*Paul experienced many challenges in his life including arguments with friends, rejection from his community, and people trying to kill him. What challenges have you faced in your life? How have they affected what you think about your future?*

*Even though Paul had experienced all those challenges, he was still confident about his future. What helps you to stay confident about the future when you go through challenges?*

*Paul is confident that no matter what happens now or in the future, that God still loves us. What does God's love look like to you? What difference does it make when you face challenges in your life?*

### Notes on the scripture for facilitators:

- Paul experienced many challenges in his life including arguments with friends (2 Corinthians 2:1-4), rejection from his community (Acts 18:5-6) and people trying to kill him (Acts 23:12-15). Despite these challenges Paul finds confidence in the future because of God's love for him.
- Paul wrote this passage just before he got arrested and taken to Rome, where he would eventually be killed.
- Paul continues to write letters about God's love while he was in prison. (Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon.)
- In biblical times ruling spirits were used to explain the actions of Kings and other Kingdoms who opposed God's people.

## READ THE CONCLUSION AND CLOSE THE SESSION

5 MINUTES



*We all would love to know the future, but a part of life is experiencing unexpected challenges. When unexpected challenges happen to us, we can feel uncertain and lose confidence for the future. The Good News is that just like Paul we can find confidence knowing that God loves us no matter what. When we experience challenges that leave us uncertain about the future, we can remember that nothing can separate us from God's love for us.*



### Ask the group

*Get each person to share a takeaway from the session.*

*Ask if anybody wants to discuss anything further about this topic with a leader or support person.*

*Remind them when the next session is.*



# CLOSE THE SESSION

# SESSION 4

## How do we know that we matter?

### SESSION OUTLINE

**Purpose:** the purpose of this session is to help young people explore how they respond when they feel like they don't matter and reflect on the Good News that they are valued by Jesus.

**Game:** the 'Bodyguard' game gets young people to experience what it's like to be important

**Activity:** the 'What Would You Do?' activity helps young people practice responding in situations where they feel like they don't matter.

**Scripture:** the Scripture in Luke 15:8-10 explores how valuable we are to Jesus

### How to run a session

- Read introduction and play the game
- Do the activity and discuss the questions
- Read the Scripture and discuss the questions
- Read the conclusion and close the session
- Adapt this session to suit the needs of your group as required.

### Equipment needed for this session

None

### READ THE INTRODUCTION, PLAY THE GAME

10 MINUTES



*Everyone needs to know that they matter, but sometimes we don't feel that way.*

*Maybe you are the last to be picked for a team. Maybe you try to share your ideas and people ignore you. Or maybe you don't have any close friends. When we feel left out, ignored, or unimportant, we can feel like we don't matter. This can affect our self-esteem, confidence, and how we care for ourselves. But when we know that we matter, we feel understood, important, and can express ourselves confidently.*

*How do we know that we matter?*

*As a way to begin thinking about this, let's play the Bodyguard game.*



## PLAY THE 'BODYGUARD' GAME

- Put the participants into groups of four.
- Three participants hold hands and form a triangle.
- One of the three participants in the triangle is the 'VIP'.
- The other two participants in the triangle are the 'bodyguards' trying to protect the 'VIP'.
- The fourth participant is the 'stan'.
- The aim of the game is for the participants in the triangle to protect the 'VIP' from being tagged by the 'stan'.
- The 'stan' must not go under/through the triangle's hands.
- If the VIP gets tagged, switch places so that all participants have a chance to be the VIP.



*How did you go with the game? How did you feel when you were the 'VIP'?  
When do you feel like a 'VIP' in life?*

## DO THE ACTIVITY AND DISCUSS THE QUESTIONS

15 MINUTES

# HOW TO DO THE 'WHAT WOULD YOU DO' ACTIVITY

- Get participants into three groups.
- Each group is given a scenario (see next page) which they can read or act out.
- Each group discusses or writes their responses to the questions below each scenario.
- If you have time, gather all participants together and have each group read or act out their scenario.
- Each group then shares their responses to their scenario's questions.

### Leaders, watch the participants for:

what they say to each other  
what they find hard  
what they find easy  
what worked  
what caused conflict



### Discuss the activity

*How did you go with the activity? How did it feel to imagine yourself as Jordan, Ashley, or Huan?*

*Have you witnessed a situation like the scenarios we explored? What did you do?*

*Have you ever felt like you don't matter? What happened?*

### In the group material

*Scenarios and reflection questions*



## SCENARIOS

### Scenario 1: Finding a Job

Jordan is in Year 11 and is trying to find a job. Jordan goes to KFC and is interviewed by the manager, Asha. Asha asks Jordan what experience they have and what their availability would be during the week. After their conversation, Asha explains to Jordan that someone with more experience has just been given the job and Jordan has been unsuccessful. Jordan then goes to Coles and is interviewed by Charlie. After discussing how Jordan would respond to an unhappy customer, they are again unsuccessful in gaining a job.



*How would you feel if you were Jordan in this scenario?*

*Describe a time when you haven't gotten what you wanted or hoped for.*

*How does it feel to be rejected?*

*What would you do if you were in this scenario?*

### Scenario 2: Finishing Your Homework

Ashley and Eduardo are working on their maths homework together. While they're working, Remy comes in and asks Eduardo if he would like to stop doing his homework and watch TV instead. Eduardo decides that watching TV sounds a lot better than doing his maths homework, so Eduardo asks Ashley if they'd do their homework for him. Just as Ashley shyly tries to say no, Eduardo and Remy begin to walk away.



*How would you feel if you were Ashley in this scenario?*

*Have you ever been ignored? How did that make you feel?*

*Have you ever had to stand up for yourself? What did you do?*

*What would you do if you were in this scenario?*

### Scenario 3: Giving a Presentation

Bailey is giving a presentation to their class about the history of video games in Australia. As Bailey speaks, their classmates start whispering to one another, look away and don't listen to Bailey's presentation. Bailey stops talking and the class becomes silent. However, when they start talking again, people in the class resume their whispering and turn away from them.



*How would you feel if you were Bailey in this scenario?*

*Bailey was disrespected by their classmates. Have you ever felt disrespected by those around you?*

*If someone isn't listening to you, how can you help them understand how you're feeling?*

*What would you do if you were in this scenario?*

## READ THE SCRIPTURE AND DISCUSS THE QUESTIONS

15 MINUTES

# SUPPOSING A WOMAN HAS TEN SILVER COINS

<sup>8</sup> "Suppose a woman has ten silver coins, but she loses one of them. She will take a light and clean the house. She will look carefully for the coin until she finds it. <sup>9</sup> And when she finds it, she will call her friends and neighbours and say to them, 'Be happy with me because I have found the coin that I lost!' <sup>10</sup> In the same way, it's a happy time for the angels of God when one sinner decides to change."

Luke 15:8-10



### Discuss these topic questions

*What do you think about what we just read? How might this story relate to how we know that we matter?*

*In this parable, the woman looked carefully for the lost coin until she found it because it mattered to her. What makes you feel like you matter to someone?*

*In the same way the woman values her lost coin, Jesus loves and values all of us. What difference could it make to know that you matter to Jesus?*

*Just like the woman carefully searched for her lost coin, Jesus searches for us because we matter to him. How can Jesus help you if you feel lost and like you don't matter?*

### Notes on the scripture for facilitators:

- Jesus tells this story as a response to questions about why he hangs out with 'sinners', people who are 'lost'.
- Jesus tells this parable to describe what God is like. God is like a woman who looks for her lost coin.
- The woman has something valuable that she doesn't want to be lost. Something is only lost if it's missed by another person. So, when we feel lost it means that we're valued.
- Some people might not worry about losing a single coin when they still have nine. But the woman desperately searches for her lost coin until she finds it. Like the woman, Jesus searches for all of us. Whoever we are, we matter to Jesus.

## READ THE CONCLUSION AND CLOSE THE SESSION

5 MINUTES



*Everyone needs to know that they matter, but sometimes we feel left out, ignored, or unimportant. This can affect our self-esteem, confidence, and how we care for ourselves. The Good News is that just like the woman valued her lost coin, Jesus values all of us. When we feel like we don't matter, we know that Jesus loves us, cares about us, and values us for who we are. We are no longer lost because we matter to Jesus.*



### Ask the group

*Get each person to share a takeaway from the session.*

*Ask if anybody wants to discuss anything further about this topic with a leader or support person.*

*Remind them when the next session is.*



# CLOSE THE SESSION

# SESSION 5

## How do we connect with our friends?

### SESSION OUTLINE

**Purpose:** the purpose of this session is to help young people reflect on how they connect with their friends and reflect on the Good News that Jesus is our friend and wants to connect with us.

**Game:** the 'Find Some Friends' game gets young people to experience being connected and disconnected from each other.

**Activity:** the 'Connection Styles' activity helps young people to identify how they connect with others.

**Scripture:** the Scripture Luke 5:27-35 explores how Jesus connects with his friends.

### How to run a session

- Read the introduction and play the game
- Do the activity and discuss the questions
- Read the Scripture and discuss the questions
- Read the conclusion and close the session
- Adapt this session to suit the needs of your group as required

### Equipment needed for this session

- Something to play music on
- A speaker
- Coloured highlighter or texta (1 per participant)

### READ THE INTRODUCTION, PLAY THE GAME

10 MINUTES



*If we thought about a time when we had the most fun, it would probably be doing something with our friends. Our friends make us laugh, listen when we need someone to talk to and support us when we're upset. But sometimes we don't feel connected to our friends. We don't know what to say, can struggle to find time to hang out, or get in fights. If we can't connect with our friends, we can feel alone, left out, and struggle to enjoy life.*

*How do we connect with our friends?*

*As a way to begin thinking about this, let's play the Find Some Friends game.*



## PLAY THE 'FIND SOME FRIENDS' GAME

**Equipment:** Something to play music on, a speaker, an upbeat playlist

- Participants move around the room while the music plays.
- Stop the music and call out a number. Participants have to get into groups of this number.
- Anybody not in a group is out.
- The last two people left win.



*How did you go with the game? How did it feel when you weren't connected to a group? Have you ever struggled to connect with friends?*



## DO THE ACTIVITY AND DISCUSS THE QUESTIONS

15 MINUTES

# HOW TO DO THE 'CONNECTION STYLES' ACTIVITY

**Equipment:** Coloured highlighter or texta (1 per participant)

- In the group material, participants fill in their connection styles bingo sheets.
- In one colour, participants mark five things that they would most enjoy doing to connect with their friends.
- Participants then find people who have the same connection styles as themselves. Once they've found a match, participants write the other person's name in that box.
- Participants should find a different person for each highlighted box if possible.

### Leaders, watch the participants for:

what they say to each other  
what they find hard  
what they find easy  
what worked  
what caused conflict



### Discuss the activity

*How did you go with the activity? Were you surprised by any of your answers?*

*Do you have a favourite connection style? Can you think of a time when you connected with someone with your connection style?*

*Were there other people who have a different connection style to you? How do you connect with people who connect differently to you?*

*Who is a friend that you can connect with this week? How will you connect with them?*

### In the group material

*Participants complete the Connection Styles Bingo.*

## SCENARIOS

### How can you connect with your friends?

There are lots of different ways to connect with others. Here are five connection styles we can use to connect with our friends, based on the book *What Are the 5 Love Languages?* by Gary Chapman.

Words of Encouragement	Giving compliments	Sharing an encouraging scripture	Writing a thank you message	Writing a song or poem	Recording a positive video
Quality Time	Playing video games together	Watching movies together	Going for a walk together	Volunteering together	Praying together
Giving Gifts	Making a craft for them	Getting them a birthday present	Lending something of yours they like	Buying them food from the canteen	Giving them something that reminds you of them
Physical Closeness	Giving a high-five	Sitting next to them	Giving a hug	Play fighting	Giving a shoulder massage
Acts of Service	Helping carry bags	Helping with their chores	Asking how you can help	Helping them with their homework	Baking together



## READ THE SCRIPTURE AND DISCUSS THE QUESTIONS

15 MINUTES

# JESUS HANGS OUT WITH HIS FRIENDS

<sup>27</sup> After this Jesus went out and saw a tax collector sitting at his place for collecting taxes. His name was Levi. Jesus said to him, "Follow me!"

<sup>28</sup> Levi got up, left everything, and followed Jesus.

<sup>29</sup> Then Levi gave a big dinner at his house for Jesus. At the table there were many tax collectors and some other people too.

<sup>30</sup> But the Pharisees and those who taught the law for the Pharisees began to complain to the followers of Jesus, "Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and other sinners?"

<sup>31</sup> Jesus answered them, "It is the sick people who need a doctor, not those who are healthy.

<sup>32</sup> I have not come to ask good people to change. I have come to ask sinners to change the way they live."

<sup>33</sup> They said to Jesus, "John's followers often fast and pray, the same as the followers of the Pharisees. But your followers eat and drink all the time."

<sup>34</sup> Jesus said to them, "At a wedding you can't ask the friends of the bridegroom to be sad and fast while he is still with them.

<sup>35</sup> But the time will come when the groom will be taken away from them. Then his friends will fast."

**Luke 5:27-35**

### Discuss these topic questions

*What do you think about what we just read? How might it relate to how we can connect with friends?*

*In the story, Jesus eats, drinks, and has fun with his friends. Is this how people usually describe Jesus? What do people you know say about Jesus?*

*Elsewhere in the Bible, Jesus calls his disciples his friends (John 15:12-15). Do you think of Jesus as your friend? How do you connect with Jesus as a friend?*

*In this story, Jesus invites people who are alone to have dinner with him. Can you think of anyone who may feel lonely that you can connect with?*

### Notes on the scripture for facilitators:

- Jesus and his disciples had fun! They shared in fellowship, grew in their friendship, and encouraged one another as they journeyed together.
- Elsewhere in the Bible, Jesus calls his disciples his friends (John 15:12-15). Jesus doesn't look down on us but wants to connect with us as friends.
- Jesus didn't just connect with the popular and powerful. Jesus socialised with outcasts and 'sinners'. Jesus found people who were alone and brought them into community with him and each other.
- We all know people who are alone and don't have many friends. Jesus connected with those people and brought them into community.

## READ THE CONCLUSION AND CLOSE THE SESSION

5 MINUTES



*Sometimes, we can struggle to connect with our friends. Maybe we don't know what to say, can't find time to hang out, or get in fights. If we can't connect with our friends, we can feel alone, left out, and struggle to enjoy life. The Good News is that Jesus is our friend and wants to connect with us. Just like Jesus connected with the disciples and tax collectors, we can connect with our friends and the people who need friends.*



### Ask the group

- *Get each person to share a takeaway from the session.*
- *Ask if anybody wants to discuss anything further about this topic with a leader or support person.*
- *Remind them when the next session is.*



# CLOSE THE SESSION

# SESSION 6

## How do we connect with helpful adults?

### SESSION OUTLINE

**Purpose:** the purpose of this session is to help young people identify helpful adults they can connect with and consider the Good News that we can connect with adults who love us as Jesus does.

**Game:** the 'Stuck in the Mud' game gets young people to experience how others can help or ignore us.

**Activity:** the 'Human Knot' activity helps young people practice expressing their needs to others.

**Scripture:** the Scripture Mark 10:13-16 explores how Jesus welcomes, encourages, and connects with young people.

### How to run a session

- Read the introduction and play the game
- Do the activity and discuss the questions
- Read the Scripture and discuss the questions
- Read the conclusion and close the session
- Adapt this session to suit the needs of your group as required

### Equipment needed for this session

None

### READ THE INTRODUCTION, PLAY THE GAME

10 MINUTES



*We all have adults in our lives. They might be adults in our family, family friends, coaches, youth leaders, or teachers. Sometimes, the adults in our lives can struggle to connect with us, and we can struggle to connect with them. Adults can support, encourage, and inspire us, but they can also misunderstand us and want unfair things from us. Sometimes, it can be difficult to know if an adult wants what's best for us.*

*How do we connect with helpful adults?*

*As a way to begin thinking about this, let's play the Stuck in the Mud game.*



## PLAY THE 'STUCK IN THE MUD' GAME

- To set up, mark out a space large enough for the group to run around in.
- Choose a participant to be 'it'. Depending on the size of the group, you might need more than one player to be 'it'.
- When a participant is tagged, they freeze and stand with their hand in the air.
- To un-freeze a participant, someone else must high-five their raised hand.
- Allow approximately 1-2 minutes per round. Whoever is left un-frozen wins.
- Play as many rounds while it is still fun.



*How did you go with the game? What did it feel like when you were tagged and someone did or didn't help you? Who in your life can help you when you're feeling stuck?*

## DO THE ACTIVITY AND DISCUSS THE QUESTIONS

15 MINUTES

# HOW TO DO THE 'HUMAN KNOT' ACTIVITY

- Get the group to stand in a circle.
- In this activity, people may only talk when it is their turn.
- The order that they are standing in is the order they can talk.
- A person can only talk when the person next to them has finished. If they don't want to say anything, they can say "pass".
- The group lifts their left hand and reaches across to take the hand of someone standing across the circle.
- Next, everyone lifts their right hand and reaches across the circle to take another person's hand. Make sure that no one is holding hands with someone standing next to them.
- The group must communicate and figure out how to untangle the knot without letting go of any hands.
- When they are untangled, they should be standing in a circle.

### Leaders, watch the participants for:

what they say to each other  
what they find hard  
what they find easy  
what worked  
what caused conflict



### Discuss the activity

*How did you go with the activity? What was it like waiting for your turn to speak?*

*When you did get a chance to speak, how did you go? Did you feel you could communicate what you needed, and that people understood you?*

*How do you communicate what you need to adults? Do you find it difficult or easy?*

*Who do you go to when you need help? Who are the adults that you feel comfortable to speak to?*

### In the group material

*Participants identify helpful adults in their lives.*

## READ THE SCRIPTURE AND DISCUSS THE QUESTIONS

15 MINUTES

# JESUS WELCOMES YOUNG PEOPLE

<sup>13</sup> People brought their small children to Jesus so that he could lay his hands on them to bless them. But the followers told the people to stop bringing their children to him.

<sup>14</sup> Jesus saw what happened. He did not like his followers telling the children not to come. So he said to them, "Let the little children come to me. Don't stop them, because God's kingdom belongs to people who are like these little children."

<sup>15</sup> The truth is, you must accept God's kingdom like a little child accepts things, or you will never enter it."

<sup>16</sup> Then Jesus held the children in his arms. He laid his hands on them and blessed them.

**Mark 10:13-16**



### Discuss these topic questions

*What do you think about what we just read? How might it relate to how we can connect with helpful adults?*

*In Jesus' time, young people were seen as less than adults, which is why the disciples pushed them away, but Jesus welcomed them. Who are the adults that welcome you?*

*Jesus encourages the young people by using them as examples of how to follow God. How do adults encourage you? What would Jesus say to encourage you?*

*Jesus invites all young people to connect with Him because He loves them. Who are the adults in your life who see you as Jesus does?*

### Notes on the scripture for facilitators

- In the story, Jesus shows his love and desire for all young people to connect with him.
- In Jesus' time, being a young person was difficult. They had no agency, experienced sickness, and often died young.
- In Jesus' time, young people were seen as less important than adults, which is why the disciples pushed them away. But Jesus welcomes them. Earlier in the story (9:36), Jesus had already instructed his disciples to accept young people as if they were accepting Jesus himself.
- Jesus not only welcomes the young people in the story but encourages them as an example of how to follow God. Jesus demonstrates the importance of young people not as victims or powerless members of society but as examples.

# SESSION 7

## READ THE CONCLUSION AND CLOSE THE SESSION

5 MINUTES



We all have adults in our lives that we are connected to in different ways, whether at school, home, or youth group. But sometimes, we can struggle to form connections with helpful adults in our lives who want what's best for us. The Good News is that Jesus loves us and wants to connect with us. When we need adults to connect with, we can look for adults who love us like Jesus does.



### Ask the group

- Get each person to share a takeaway from the session.
- Ask if anybody wants to discuss anything further about this topic with a leader or support person.
- Remind them when the next session is.



## CLOSE THE SESSION

# How do we connect with God?

## SESSION OUTLINE

**Purpose:** the purpose of this session is to help young people identify different ways they can connect with God and consider the Good News that we can connect with God in ways that make sense for us.

**Game:** the 'Have You Ever' game gets young people to explore the different ways they can connect spiritually.

**Activity:** the 'Connecting with God' activity helps young people practice connecting with God in their own way.

**Scripture:** the Scripture verses about people connecting with God explore how people can connect with God in ways that make sense for them and their lives.

### How to run a session

- Read the introduction and play the game
- Do the activity and discuss the questions
- Read the Scripture and discuss the questions
- Read the conclusion and close the session
- Adapt this session to suit the needs of your group as required.

### Equipment needed for this session

- Chairs
- Connecting with God quiz in group material.

## READ THE INTRODUCTION, PLAY THE GAME

10 MINUTES



Have you ever heard someone say they feel connected to God? Maybe they went to a camp or church event, spent time praying, or were out in nature. We can see others connecting with God but struggle to find ways that make sense for us. We might go to a camp or church event and feel overwhelmed, pray and not hear anything, or be in a beautiful environment and feel no different. We can start to wonder if we can connect with God or if God is even there.

How do we connect with God?

As a way to begin thinking about this, let's play the Have You Ever game.

# PLAY THE 'HAVE YOU EVER' GAME

- The group sits on chairs in a circle. There should be one less chair than the number of players.
- The player without a chair stands in the centre. They read through the 'Spiritual Connection Activities' list below and choose one they have done. They then say the statement, starting with "Have You Ever...".
- Anyone who has done the same thing stands and has to switch places with someone else around the circle.
- Whoever doesn't find a place to sit is stuck in the middle and must say the next "Have You Ever" statement.

### Spiritual Connection Activities:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| • Prayed with someone else                         | • Read the Bible                                   |
| • Volunteered for a good cause                     | • Sung and danced                                  |
| • Spent time meditating                            | • Went to a concert                                |
| • Listed what you're grateful for                  | • Cared for someone who's in need                  |
| • Made art to express yourself                     | • Thought about where you've seen God in your week |
| • Partied to Jesus music                           | • Gone for a walk to admire nature                 |
| • Stood up for someone else in an unfair situation |  |



How did you go with the game? Have you done many of these spiritual connection activities? Were the ones you had done the same as other people, or different?

## DO THE ACTIVITY AND DISCUSS THE QUESTIONS

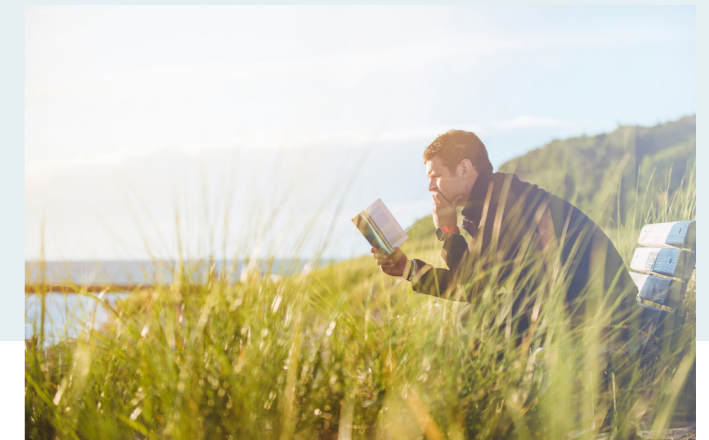
15 MINUTES

# HOW TO DO THE 'CONNECTING WITH GOD' ACTIVITY

- The quiz is based on the Nine Sacred Pathways that Christians can use to connect with God.
- Participants complete the 'Connecting with God' quiz in the group material.
- Participants count their points for each style and identify their top three styles for connecting with God based on their highest scores.
- Participants share their results with another participant.

### Leaders, watch the participants for:

- what they say to each other
- what they find hard
- what they find easy
- what worked
- what caused conflict



### Discuss the activity

How did you go with the activity? What was your highest-scoring connection style?

Did you learn something about yourself or your partner? Were your connection styles similar or different to theirs?

What happens when you connect with God? How do you feel? What do you experience?

Have you ever used your highest-scoring connection style to connect with God before? How could you connect with God in your life?

### In the group material

Participants complete the 'Connecting with God' quiz.

## CONNECTING WITH GOD QUIZ

Take this quiz to find out how you might best enjoy connecting with God. Score the following statements on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being not true at all and 5 being very true. Record your results in the space provided below each section.

### Nature

Naturalists love connecting with God outdoors.

- \_\_\_ 1. I feel alive when I go for a walk along the beach.
- \_\_\_ 2. I experience God when surrounded by creation, amongst mountains, the bush, or the ocean.
- \_\_\_ 3. I'm inspired to think beyond myself when I'm in nature.
- \_\_\_ Total of all your answers

### Senses

Sensates love connecting with God through their senses.

- \_\_\_ 1. Painting something I am grateful for would fill me with joy.
- \_\_\_ 2. I love listening to music.
- \_\_\_ 3. I would enjoy lighting a candle and praying.
- \_\_\_ Total of all your answers

### Traditions

Traditionalists love connecting with God through established practices.

- \_\_\_ 1. I enjoy reading written prayers in the Bible, such as the Lord's Prayer.
- \_\_\_ 2. I would like to read my Bible at the same time every day.
- \_\_\_ 3. I feel close to God when I have symbols to remind me of him, like a cross necklace.
- \_\_\_ Total of all your answers

### Activist

Activists love connecting with God by standing up for justice.

- \_\_\_ 1. I feel close to God when I stand up for and advocate for others.
- \_\_\_ 2. When things are fair, I feel like the world is as it should be.
- \_\_\_ 3. I get frustrated when people around me don't care about justice.
- \_\_\_ Total of all your answers

### Solitude

Solitudes love connecting with God through simplicity.

- \_\_\_ 1. I enjoy sitting in silence with God.
- \_\_\_ 2. I connect with God best when I have limited distractions.
- \_\_\_ 3. I'm closest to God when I'm by myself.
- \_\_\_ Total of all your answers

### Caregiver

Caregivers love connecting with God by loving others.

- \_\_\_ 1. I experience God when I help people in need.
- \_\_\_ 2. I get frustrated when churches don't prioritise helping people.
- \_\_\_ 3. I feel close to God when I make a difference in someone else's life.
- \_\_\_ Total of all your answers

### Enthusiast

Enthusiasts love connecting with God through celebration.

- \_\_\_ 1. I love worshipping through dancing and singing.
- \_\_\_ 2. I would like to go to an engaging and fun worship service.
- \_\_\_ 3. I feel connected to God when I'm free to worship Him how I want to.
- \_\_\_ Total of all your answers

### Contemplative

Contemplatives love connecting with God through reflection.

- \_\_\_ 1. I feel disconnected from God if it has been a while since I thought about him.
- \_\_\_ 2. I like reflecting on God and where I have seen him in my week.
- \_\_\_ 3. I experience God when I think about how much he loves me.
- \_\_\_ Total of all your answers

### Intellectual

Intellectuals love connecting with God through knowledge.

- \_\_\_ 1. I would enjoy leading or participating in a bible study.
- \_\_\_ 2. I enjoy reading books about the Bible and faith.
- \_\_\_ 3. I like memorising verses of Scripture.
- \_\_\_ Total of all your answers

The higher your score for each section, the stronger this connection style is for you. But remember, most of us have more than one way of connecting with God.

## READ THE SCRIPTURE AND DISCUSS THE QUESTIONS

15 MINUTES

# PEOPLE CONNECTING WITH GOD

- Then Moses climbed up the mountain to meet with God. (Exodus 19:3a)
- Then the priest will bring all these parts to the altar to be offered as a burnt offering, a sweet-smelling gift to the Lord. (Leviticus 1:9)
- Then he took some bread and thanked God for it. He broke off some pieces, gave them to the apostles and said, "This bread is my body that I am giving for you. Eat this to remember me." (Luke 22:19)
- After Jesus said goodbye to the people, he went up into the hills by himself to pray. It was late, and he was there alone. (Matthew 14:23)
- Human, the Lord has told you what goodness is. This is what he wants from you: Be fair to other people. Love kindness and loyalty, and humbly obey your God. (Micah 6:8)
- Always remember to help people by welcoming them into your home. Some people have done that and have helped angels without knowing it. (Hebrews 13:2)
- About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing songs to God. The other prisoners were listening to them. (Acts 16:25)
- We must not quit meeting together, as some are doing. No, we need to keep on encouraging each other. This becomes more and more important as you see the Day getting closer. (Hebrews 10:25)
- After three days they found him. Jesus was sitting in the Temple area with the religious teachers, listening and asking them questions. (Luke 2:46)

### Discuss these topic questions

*What do you think about these examples of people connecting with God? Which Scripture stood out to you?*

*People connect with God in lots of different ways. What are some ways your youth group helps you to connect with God?*

*These are just some examples of how people connected with God. Why do you think there are so many ways to connect with God?*

*In each of these examples, people connected with God in ways that made sense where they were at in their lives. What ways would make sense for you to connect with God?*

### Notes on the scripture for facilitators:

- In the Bible, people connected with God in many ways. We can see from these scripture verses that people connected with God in ways similar to what we explored in the activity.
- People who connected with God found ways that made sense to them where they were at in their lives. An example of this is Paul and Silas singing to God in prison.
- People in the Bible connected with God in ways that were customary during that time. The popular practices we use today may be different. However, we still have lots of opportunities to connect with God in our lives.

## READ THE CONCLUSION AND CLOSE THE SESSION

5 MINUTES



*Sometimes, we can see others connecting with God but struggle to find ways that make sense for us. When we struggle to connect with God, we can wonder if God is even there. The Good News is that God wants to connect with us, and we can connect with him in lots of different ways. If we struggle to connect with God, we can try another way and find one that works for us.*



### Ask the group

- *Get each person to share a takeaway from the session.*
- *Ask if anybody wants to discuss anything further about this topic with a leader or support person.*
- *Remind them when the next session is.*



# CLOSE THE SESSION



# SESSION 8

## How do we connect with ourselves?

### SESSION OUTLINE

**Purpose:** the purpose of this session is to help young people connect with themselves by understanding their feelings and emotions and consider the Good News that God knows us and loves us.

**Game:** the 'Big Mood' game gets young people to describe different feelings and emotions.

**Activity:** the 'Body Scan' activity helps young people practice identifying their feelings and emotions.

**Scripture:** the Scripture, Psalm 139:1-14, explores how each one of us is known and loved by God.

### How to run a session

- Read the introduction and play the game
- Do the activity and discuss the questions
- Read the Scripture and discuss the questions
- Read the conclusion and close the session
- Adapt this session to suit the needs of your group as required

### Equipment needed for this session

- Multimedia to play the 'Big Mood Game' PowerPoint
- Post-it notes
- A confectionary prize
- A speaker to play the 'Body Scan' audio file

### READ THE INTRODUCTION, PLAY THE GAME

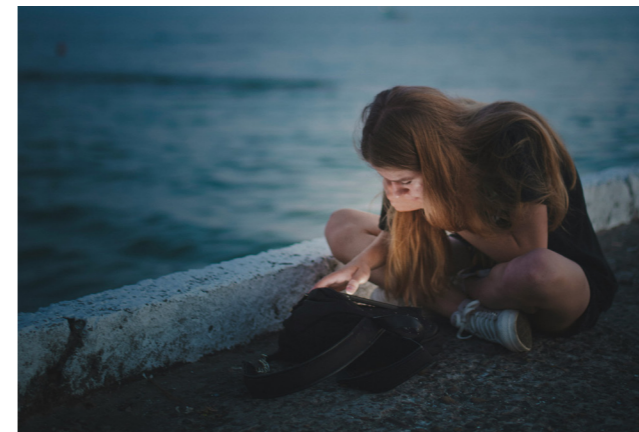
10 MINUTES



*In life, we face complex situations. Maybe a family member has passed away, we struggle with school, or our lives have changed faster than we can keep up. Sometimes, we don't know how to feel or how we're meant to feel. Our thoughts can take control, and we can feel separated from our emotions. We might struggle to connect with ourselves because we don't know how to. If we can't connect with ourselves, we can feel lost and struggle to find our place in the world.*

*How do we connect with ourselves?*

*As a way to begin thinking about this, let's play the Big Mood game.*



## PLAY THE 'BIG MOOD' GAME

**Equipment:** multimedia to play the 'Big Mood Game' PowerPoint, post-it notes, confectionary prize

- Each round, the leader shows a reaction meme on the screen.
- Participants need to identify the thought or emotion of the character and write down an appropriate description to match the image. For example, if the character is sad, the description might be "when you find out the canteen has run out of your favourite food".
- Everyone must vote for the best description at the end of each round. Whoever gets the most votes is rewarded with a point.
- Whoever has the most points at the end of the game wins a prize!



*How did you go with the game? Did you find it easy or difficult to identify emotions? Have you ever found it challenging to describe your own thoughts and emotions?*

## DO THE ACTIVITY AND DISCUSS THE QUESTIONS

15 MINUTES

# HOW TO DO THE 'BODY SCAN' ACTIVITY

**Equipment:** Body Scan audio file, speaker



**Introduce the activity to the group by reading the text below:**

*"When we feel disconnected from ourselves, being present in our physical and emotional experiences can be helpful. This can help us to feel connected to ourselves. One way we can do this is through a body scan."*

*Get everyone in a comfortable position where they won't be distracted. When everyone is ready, play the audio file. It goes for 5 minutes.*

**Leaders, watch the participants for:**

- what they say to each other
- what they find hard
- what they find easy
- what worked
- what caused conflict



**Discuss the activity**

*How did you go with the activity? Have you ever done a body scan before?*

*What did you notice during the body scan? What sensations did you feel?*

*Do you find it easy or challenging to express how you feel? Why do you think that is?*

*What activities do you do to help you feel connected to yourself? (See the group material for extra ideas)*

**In the group material**

*Participants circle which activities help them to connect to themselves.*

## READ THE SCRIPTURE AND DISCUSS THE QUESTIONS

15 MINUTES

# GOD'S X-RAY VISION

<sup>1</sup> Lord, you have tested me,  
so you know all about me.

<sup>2</sup> You know when I sit down and when I  
get up.  
You know my thoughts from far away.

<sup>3</sup> You know where I go and where I lie  
down.  
You know everything I do.

<sup>4</sup> Lord, you know what I want to say,  
even before the words leave my mouth.

<sup>5</sup> You are all around me—in front of me  
and behind me.  
I feel your hand on my shoulder.

<sup>6</sup> I am amazed at what you know;  
it is too much for me to understand.

<sup>7</sup> Your Spirit is everywhere I go.  
I cannot escape your presence.

<sup>8</sup> If I go up to heaven, you will be there.  
If I go down to the place of death, you  
will be there.

<sup>9</sup> If I go east where the sun rises  
or go to live in the west beyond the sea,

<sup>10</sup> even there you will take my hand and  
lead me.  
Your strong right hand will protect me.

<sup>11</sup> Suppose I wanted to hide from you and  
said,  
"Surely the darkness will hide me.  
The day will change to night and cover  
me."

<sup>12</sup> Even the darkness is not dark to you.  
The night is as bright as the day.  
Darkness and light are the same.

<sup>13</sup> You formed the way I think and feel.  
You put me together in my mother's  
womb.

<sup>14</sup> I praise you because you made me in  
such a wonderful way.  
I know how amazing that was!

**Psalms 139:1-14**

## READ THE SCRIPTURE AND DISCUSS THE QUESTIONS

### Discuss these topic questions

*What do you think about what we just read? How might it relate to how we can connect to ourselves?*

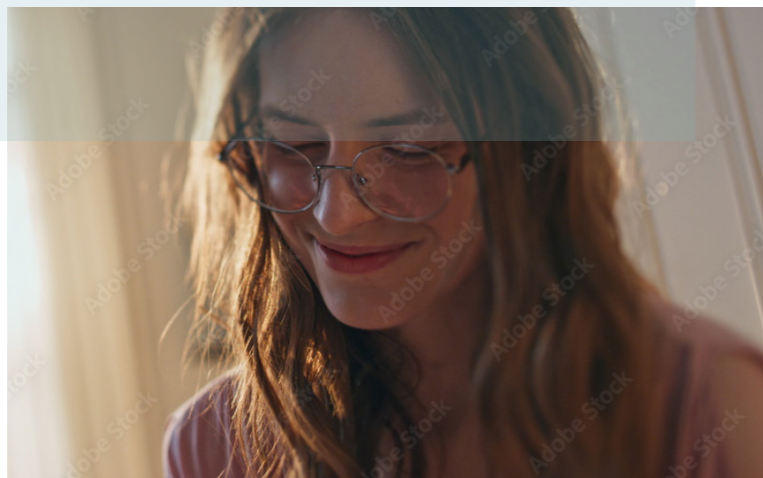
*Sometimes, we can struggle to understand ourselves; this Scripture says that God knows our thoughts and experiences. How does it feel to be known completely by God?*

*When we feel disconnected from ourselves we can feel lost, but this Scripture says that God is always with us. What difference might it make for you to know that God is always with you?*

*God made each of us wonderfully and amazingly. How can God help you to connect with and discover more about yourself?*

### Notes on the scripture for facilitators

- God is love, and love originates from Him. God created us wonderfully and amazingly out of his love.
- Psalm 139 was written by David, who describes how God creates us, leads us, guides us, and sees us for who we are. Sometimes, God can understand us when we don't understand ourselves.
- Knowing that there's nothing we can hide from God can be intimidating, especially when we want to keep certain aspects of ourselves hidden from others.
- Because God created us and knows everything about us, he can help us understand who we are and help us connect to ourselves.



## READ THE CONCLUSION AND CLOSE THE SESSION

5 MINUTES

*Sometimes, we can feel disconnected from ourselves. We may feel lost, confused, and separated from our thoughts and emotions. The Good News is that even if we feel disconnected from ourselves, God knows us because he made us. He loves us for who we are and can help us connect to ourselves.*

### Ask the group

- Get each person to share a takeaway from the session.
- Ask if anybody wants to discuss anything further about this topic with a leader or support person.
- Remind them when the next session is.



# CLOSE THE SESSION

# CONCLUDING TERM 1



## NOTES

## No longer lost

The activity session provides an opportunity to reflect on the term in a less structured session than a Life Lab. You can use the ideas to create a fun and social session that will help reflect on the concepts. For example, for this topic we share ideas for activities that help young people think about how they find connection with friends and adults, God, and themselves.

### Introduction

This term we have explored how young people can find connection in their lives. Young people considered how they can build connections in their interpersonal relationships with friends and helpful adults, how we can connect with God in different ways, and how they can connect with themselves through their thoughts and emotions.

### What you could do

You could use this session to help your group reflect on their on the topics of the term. Here are some ideas that can help young people reflect.

- Plan a party where young people can invite their friends
- Have a 'connect with God' night (Prayer stations, worship, however your young people connect with God)
- Invite young people's carers to participate in a games or trivia night
- Find ways for young people share what your group has done this term with the rest of the congregation

### Discussion

Take the opportunity to explore with young people their experiences of the topic in informal ways. You could ask questions like:

- What are your favourite activities to do with your friends?
- Who are adults that you can rely on in tough times?
- Have you ever experienced a time when you felt connected to God or spirituality?
- What activities help you unwind and de-stress?

Give us  
feedback





## Contact Us

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[salvationarmy.org.au/youth-ya](https://salvationarmy.org.au/youth-ya)  
[equileaders.com.au](https://equileaders.com.au)

