

The winter conference

for GB's children and youth leaders

4 November 2017

St Luke's Church Centre,
Great Colmore Street, Edgbaston, B15 2AT

Including

volumise

Why do I feel so bad?

Helping young people deal with difficult emotions like shame and guilt

What is this resource?

This resource is based on the Volumise equipping session dealing with difficult emotions held at Girls' Brigade's conference in November 2017.

This resource has been produced to help you, as leaders, run a practical session with the young people you work with to address dealing with difficult emotions like shame and guilt.

The resource contains four sections including:

1. Engage: To help young people understand the difference between guilt and shame
2. Equip: To engage young people with an exploration of shame culture and how it uniquely impacts girls in the UK
3. Empower: To help young people understand how shame can impact them, the difference that knowing Jesus can make and practical strategies to deal with difficult emotions
4. Embrace: To help young people celebrate their God-given worth.

Girls' Brigade Ministries is passionate about responding to the needs of young people and sharing the positive, hope-filled message of the Gospel. We trust that this Volumise resource will equip you to explore dealing with difficult emotions like shame and guilt with your GB group in a fun, innovative and significant way.

Where should I use it?

The resource is flexible and can be used in a variety of setting:

- GB groups – you could have a theme night around taking care of yourself (i.e. soul care) and encourage the young women you already work with to bring a friend
- Why not use some of the activities to run a workshop or assembly in a local school? You can then encourage the young women who attend to come along to your GB group to find out more or to join the online koko community.

Remember that you don't need to do every activity – pick and choose the ones that are most relevant to your group.

I. Engage

Aim:

- To help young people understand the difference between guilt and shame.

Key messages to communicate/understand:

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- Shame is a focus on self, guilt is a focus on behaviour. Shame is, 'I am bad.' Guilt is, 'I did something bad'
- Feeling shame isn't always connected with actually doing anything wrong
- Shame can be the thought and feeling that we're somehow wrong, defective, inadequate, not good enough or not worthy of love
- Shame is fuelled by our fear of humiliation and un-belonging which is why the natural thing to do when we feel shame is to run away.

Activity #1 – Defining shame

Things you need: Sticky notes.

Divide the young people into groups of 4 or 5. Give everyone a sticky note and ask them to write down words associated with shame. Can they agree on a definition of shame?

After getting feedback from the group, read out Brene Brown's definition of shame:

Shame is the intensely painful feeling or experience of believing that we are flawed and therefore unworthy of love and belonging – something we've experienced, done, or failed to do makes us unworthy of connection.

Do they agree or disagree?

Activity #2 – Weather forecast

Things you need: Different photos of weather ranging from sunshine to storms and everything in between.

Layout pictures of weather and get the young women to stand next to or pick up an image that best expresses how they feel. Then read out a list of emotions and feelings (see below), and get the young women to stand next to the weather that best expresses how that feels for them:

- Embarrassment
- Love
- Anger
- Sadness
- Disgust
- Hope
- Surprise
- Shame
- Happiness

Explain: Shame is a feeling that works on other emotions. The six main emotions are disgust, sadness, unhappiness, fear, anger, and surprise. Shame works on these six emotions like a conductor works on the different instruments in an orchestra.

Check out the Volumise section (within the GB website's Go Leader zone) for a video clip from Rachel Gardner equipping you to think about how we can help young people deal with difficult emotions. Plus a resource of discussion questions/activities which you can use in your group, district network or region to help equip other leaders.

2. Equip

Aim:

- To engage young people with an exploration of shame culture and how it uniquely impacts girls in the UK.

Key messages to communicate/understand:

- Some aspects of our culture shame girls more prevalently than boys
- Girls feel shame when they don't measure up to the specific and narrow ideals of femininity and what's considered to be beautiful
- Our culture expects girls to be sexually attractive and sexually available to men yet shames them when they're involved in promiscuous behaviour.

Activity #1 – Who do you think that you are?

Things that you need: A selection of womens'/celebrity magazines, scissors, glue, and large pieces of paper.

In small groups, invite the young women to read through the magazines and think about what some of the key messages are that are being communicated to girls. Ask them to cut out photos and words that illustrate these messages and, after 15 minutes, invite them to feedback to the group.

Some of the key messages that you can pick up on when facilitating discussion:

- I'm not enough – girls often don't feel pretty enough, rich enough, smart enough – simply not enough
- Cultures primarily judges a girls' worth on her physical attractiveness. On the other hand, boys and men are celebrated for more than what they look like. This is one of the reasons that newspapers and magazine still comment on what female politicians and athletics look like and wear)
- Magazines often shame women with photos of cellulite and muffin tops when they don't conform to a specific ideal of beauty
- The success of the global beauty industry is based on the premise that girls' bodies are projects to be worked upon and constantly improved – girls can always have shinier hair, whiter teeth, slimmer waists etc.

After the discussion, ask them is there anything that they're surprised about? How does this make them feel?

Check out the Volumise section (within the GB website's Go Leader zone) for a video clip from Dr. Claire Rush equipping you to think about how we can help young people deal with difficult emotions. Plus a resource of discussion questions/activities which you can use in your group, district network or region to help equip other leaders.

3. Empower

Aim:

- To help young people understand how shame can impact them, the difference that knowing Jesus can make and practical strategies to deal with difficult emotions.

Key messages to communicate/understand:

- Combating shame begins with us recognising how we experience shame in our bodies and minds
- Your body may react to shame causing your face to get warm, head to drop, chest becoming heavy and your stomach to ache
- Feelings associated with shame are helplessness, incompetence, inferiority, powerlessness, the urge to run away and hide, as well as to give up.

Activity #1 – Pictionary

Things that you need: Large pieces of paper and marker pens.

The aim of this activity is to help the young people recognise the signs of shame in a fun way. Divide the group into two teams and read out the following statements one at a time:

- Shame feels like...
- Shame looks like...
- Shame sounds like...
- Shame tastes like...
- Shame smells like...

Invite each team to complete the sentence and then one team member has to draw their answer in pictorial form on a large sheet of paper. The other team has to guess what they're drawing.

Activity #2 – Hope

Things that you need: Bibles, large flipchart paper/wall paper roll, and pens.

Invite the group to read the story of the Bleeding Woman [Mark Ch.5:25-34]. Help set the context by explaining that menstruating was considered unclean in Biblical times and women were often excluded to other rooms when they had their period. The fact that this woman was continuously bleeding would be a source of shame to her and her family. In fact, she may have spent a lot of money consulting with doctors to heal her to no avail.

Divide the young people into two groups. Ask them to draw an outline of a girl/woman on the large flipchart paper. Invite one group to reflect on how the bleeding woman was feeling before she encountered Jesus. Ask the other group to reflect on how the bleeding woman was feeling after she encountered Jesus. Get them to write various emotions in the outline of the girl/woman. Allow some time for feedback and discussion.

Explain: Once we recognise that we're experiencing shame, the next step is to talk with someone we trust. Shame cannot survive being talked about. Jesus understood this totally. When He was confronted with the bleeding woman whose overwhelming shame made her hide and secretly touch His cloak to be healed, Jesus drew her into the light, not only healing the disease in her body, but also freeing her from the dis-ease of shame.

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4. Embrace

Aim:

- To celebrate each person's God-given worth.

Key messages to communicate/understand:

- Boosting self-esteem helps to combat shame
- Research demonstrates that if someone perceives that they're worth being friends with they're more likely to have a higher self-esteem
- Self-esteem is someone's emotional evaluation of their own worth. It's how they feel about their value.

Three steps to helping us know our worth as a friend:

- **ACCEPT OUR LIMITATIONS**
 - Our weakness, failures, limitations etc. **DON'T** prevent us from being a great friend and loved by others. In fact, it makes us **MORE LIKELY** to be loved because no-one likes people who are perfect!
- **WELCOME OUR UNIQUENESS**
 - We have something to offer that **NO ONE** else has to offer, and that's our unique selves: a combination of our experiences, hopes, skills, personality and achievements
- **CHOOSE TO RISK IT**
 - The fear of rejection and humiliation can make us hide away or shut ourselves off from others. But every time we choose to be our real selves, and even risk feeling shame, we give shame a little kick, because we're showing that shame doesn't have the final say!
 - God can help us with the courage and confidence to lean in when everything in us wants to hold back. Knowing that He will **NEVER** reject us is the starting point for us being able to risk it with others.

Activity #1: Vote with your feet

Things that you need: Two signs with true or false on them.

Stick true or false signs to opposite walls. Are these statements true or false? Invite the young people to vote with their feet. Help them to see that no one is perfect, and perfection isn't the path to being liked and accepted.

1. It's normal to be perfect and never make any mistakes.
2. Emotions can feel complicated.
3. There are some things I can't do.
4. I'm the best I will ever be.
5. I'm unique.

Activity #2: I am...

Things you need: The handout on the following page, scratch art badges from Baker Ross (<https://www.bakerross.co.uk/scratch-art-badges-2>), and background worship music.

Share that over the past hour (or few nights), we've chatted about some really difficult emotions. Because of the culture that surrounds us, many girls may feel ugly, unloved, worthless, fat, useless etc. Some of us are wearing those labels today. But Jesus and the Bible have a different hope-filled message for us.

We're made in God's incredible image:

- We're chosen
- We're loved
- We're pursued
- We're redeemed
- We're rejoiced over
- We're free
- We're made for a purpose.

Invite the group to find a space and to make themselves comfortable in the room. Then give everyone a handout as well as a scratch art badge. Play some music and give them time to reflect on the Bible verses. At an appropriate moment, invite them to claim back part of their God-given identity and write it on the badge. If you feel the group is comfortable with one another, invite them to speak out their I AM statement and close in prayer.

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Further GB resources:

We hope that your GB group finds this session helpful and enjoyable. Our regular programmes unpack managing emotions in more detail – why don't you delve in further?

- **n:vestigate** – Our Feelings
- **n:gage** - Courage/Self-control/Inner beauty
- **n:counta** - Our Emotions/Who am I!/Coping with Life
- **n:spire** - Diva Channel/Future Channel

Be The Change:

If you haven't done so already, please get your hands on GBEW's Be The Change **n:spire** programme. Girls' Brigade believes that we need to empower girls and stand with them as they challenge the shame culture in the UK. Girls are incredible hope-bringers and transformers. The Be The Change programme is a practical follow-on from this resource and it will equip them with the tools to challenge shame culture and raise hope for girls. A practical challenge could be producing a piece of positive media which tells girls a different hope-filled and truth-filled message about who they really are.

I AM...

I am LOVED.

I've never quit loving you and never will. Expect love, love, and more love!
Jeremiah Ch.31:3.

I am CHOSEN.

Don't be afraid, I've redeemed you. I've called your name. You're mine.
Isaiah Ch.43:2.

I am DEFENDED.

But the Lord is faithful. He will establish you and guard you against the evil one.
2 Thessalonians Ch.3:3.

I am FREE.

I came so they can have real and eternal life, more and better life than they ever dreamed of.
John Ch.10:10.

I am STRONG.

The LORD is my strength and shield. I trust him with all my heart. He helps me, and my heart is filled with joy.
Psalm 28:7.

I am VICTORIOUS.

For the LORD your God is going with you! He will fight for you against your enemies, and he will give you victory!
Deuteronomy Ch.20:4.

I am REDEEMED.

This new life is starting right now, and is whetting our appetites for the glorious day when our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ, appears. He offered himself as a sacrifice to free us from a dark, rebellious life into this good, pure life, making us a people he can be proud of, energetic in goodness.
Titus Ch.2:14.

I am VALUABLE.

For you are a holy people, who belong to the LORD your God. Of all the people on earth, the LORD your God has chosen you to be his own special treasure.
Deuteronomy Ch.7:6.