

STUMIN

SMALL GROUP LEADER GUIDE

MIDDLE SCHOOL FOCUS

YOUR NEW PLAYLIST

APRIL 24, 2024

Week 4 of a 4-week series
about mindset

BOTTOM LINE

Feelings aren't forever.

SCRIPTURE

*There is a time
for everything,
and a season for every
activity under the heavens.*

- Ecclesiastes 3:1 NIV

*I know the LORD
is always with me.
I will not be shaken,
for he is right beside me.*

- Psalm 16:8 NLT

GOALS OF SMALL GROUP

To show students the
connection between their
thoughts and feelings and
to help them recognize
that feelings can (and will)
change over time



>> BEFORE GROUP

THINK ABOUT THIS: Thoughts and feelings can be incredibly complicated and complex. That's what makes talking about them in a broad way rather difficult. It can be hard to address every specific feeling for every individual student in one conversation. Be sure you're not diminishing their feelings as they come up, while, at the same time, not giving them more power than they deserve. The goal is to find a balance between acknowledging and feeling our feelings and shutting down their ability to control us. Remember, feelings influence thoughts and thoughts influence actions. That's why it's so important to teach the skill of recognizing their feelings and the way they influence them in this phase. Your students will not get there fully in one conversation, but you're planting a seed that will grow over time. Finally, remember it's not your job to be a therapist here! You're there to guide and support your middle schoolers through what they feel, but also, to guide them toward additional resources or help when needed. You're equipping them with skills and language to address their feelings (maybe for the first time!) and moving them toward taking steps to choose healthier responses to their feelings as they grow.

>> DURING GROUP

This guide is a suggestion, not a formula. Adjust the questions and activities as needed, and don't feel like you need to do, or ask, everything you see here.

DISCUSS THIS:

- When it comes to your personal playlist, what song would you choose when you're: Happy? Angry? Sad? Excited? Having fun? Trying to chill?

DO THIS:

Help your group identify and talk through the feelings they experience. Hand each student the provided Feelings Wheel print out and a pen and ask the following questions:

- Which words do you not know? Put a star next to them.
- Which feelings have you experienced before? Put a check mark next to them.
- Which have you never experienced before? Underline them.
- Circle the feelings you feel most often.
- Draw a box around the feelings you hope you never experience.

DISCUSS THIS:

- Do you think our feelings impact our thoughts? Why or why not?
- What might make it easy to believe our feelings will last forever?
- Why do you think God created us to experience feelings?

DO THIS:

Hand out the provided journal page and give your group time to work on completing the journal during your time together.

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HIGH SCHOOL FOCUS

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 **PRINCE
OF PEACE**
Called to Connect

>> BEFORE GROUP

THINK ABOUT THIS: The connection between thoughts and feelings is incredibly strong. Our feelings have a way of influencing our thoughts. That's why, if we leave our feelings unchecked for too long, they become the motivators for the thoughts that get stuck on repeat. That being said, be sure not to downplay or dismiss any of the feelings your students have. The goal here isn't to teach them to ignore or diminish their feelings. Instead, it's to help them find healthy ways to respond to those feelings as they come.

>> DURING GROUP

Create meaningful conversations. Adjust the questions as needed and ask thoughtful follow-up questions as the conversation unfolds. Don't feel like you need to answer every question.

DISCUSS THIS

- As a group, work together to name as many feelings as you can.
- On a scale of 1 to 10, how often do your feelings make a big impact on you?
- What's the connection between your feelings and your thoughts?
- Why do you think God created us with feelings and emotions?
- Do you think feelings can change? Why or why not?
- What do you think might happen if you remembered God is in the middle of your feelings?
- Who is one person in your life you can trust with what you're feeling? What about them makes them trustworthy? What might you need to work on to be a trustworthy friend for somebody else?

DO THIS:

Help your group identify and talk through the feelings they experience. Hand each student the provided Feelings Wheel print out and a pen and ask the following questions:

- o Which feelings have you experienced before? Put a check mark next to them.
- o Which have you never experienced before? Underline them.
- o Circle the feelings you feel most often.
- o Draw a box around the feelings you hope you never experience.

Provide a safe time and space for group members to share about their feelings and support one another.