

## TOGETHER APART

### A simple curriculum for use online

*The current period of quarantine and isolation provides uncharted territory for youth workers. While it is an anxious time for many, as we strive to keep up contact with our socially-distanced young people, it is also an opportunity for us to find completely new approaches to youth ministry. As we rethink how we previously engaged teenagers, and seek to translate much of this now into a digital context, we find ourselves at the frontier of youth work innovation. However, this takes time, and while we explore new possibilities for online youth work, it's important to continue to support our young people as they try to find their feet in this new normal.*

*This six-part series of session plans are a suggestion of how you might run a fairly traditional-style youth group by using an online format. **This is not a revolutionary new youth work model**; rather it's a basic tool to help you continue to care for your young people, to keep sharing Jesus with them and to bring them together to have fellowship with one another. Also remember: technology is not failproof – if what we or you've planned doesn't work for technical reasons, that's ok. Youth work has always been about connection rather than content, and that's doubly true now.*

## Session 6: Prayer (1 hour)

*This is the final session in the Together Apart series. The final study uses a video created by [yesHEis](#). yesHEis is a fantastic resource with plenty more videos to explore. Look out for more on the organisation and what they do in the post session notes.*

SESSION PLAN	LEADERS GUIDANCE for use in online groups
<b>BEFORE THE SESSION</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- If you need to remind young people how to join your online youth group, get in touch (making sure you follow safeguarding procedures) and make sure they understand how to work your chosen video chat platform.</li> <li>- Schedule a time to meet and forward any relevant access information to your group.</li> <li>- Prior to the session, ask all the leaders to purchase 5 apples and have them ready for the group.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- If you haven't done this already, choose a video chat platform that is best / safest for your needs. Register and download your chosen app and familiarise yourself with how it works.</li> <li>- For guidance on creating an online safeguarding policy please see the thirtyone:eight Youthscape document.</li> <li>- Make sure you are available and ready to go plenty of time before the start of your scheduled meeting.</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Prior to the session, ask the young people to make sure they have a piece of paper and pen ready to use during the game.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>OPENING THOUGHT</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- As young people get logged on to the video chat, have them discuss the opening thought for today...</li> <li>- Do you think prayer works?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Encourage the young people to talk through different aspects of the question...</li> <li>- Do you think God listens when you pray?</li> <li>- What might make you think that prayer doesn't work?</li> <li>- Do you find it easy or hard to pray?</li> <li>- Why is that?</li> </ul>
<p><b>CHALLENGE (5 minutes)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Once everyone is online, officially start the session with a leader challenge.</li> <li>- All the leaders should have 5 apples ready for the challenge.</li> <li>- Once the timer starts, each leader must try and stack their apples on top of another to form a free-standing tower.</li> <li>- The first leader who can stack their apples and have that stack stay standing for 10 seconds is the winner!</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- If you want the young people to be able to see a visual countdown, load a 60 second countdown on YouTube and share your screen (if you're able) so that they can watch the clock tick down.</li> <li>- Alternatively, nominate someone to time 1 minute on their phones. Have them shout out regular intervals such as 30 seconds to go, 10 seconds to go, etc.</li> <li>- After the challenge, celebrate the winner before moving on to the next activity.</li> </ul>
<p><b>GAME (15 minutes)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Scattergories / Stop the Bus / The Categories Game</b></li> <li>- On the piece of paper, have the young people draw a rough grid with 5 columns.</li> <li>- At the top of each column, write the names 5 different categories, e.g. girls name; boys name; food/drink; animal; place; etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Make sure everyone has a piece of paper and a pen ready for the game. You can either let the young people know before so that they come prepared or leave some time for them to go find a piece of paper and pen before you begin.</li> <li>- Don't feel limited to 5 categories or that you need to use these category titles. Choose whatever subject and however many categories you feel would work best for your youth group.</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Have a leader choose a letter. Once you tell the young people to start, they then have to put an answer in each of the columns using words that begin with the chosen letter.</li> <li>- For example, if the chosen letter was 'M' someone might answer:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Girls name = Mary</li> <li>• Boys name = Mark</li> <li>• Food / drink = macaroni</li> <li>• Animal = monkey</li> <li>• Place = Madrid</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Once a young person has filled in all the categories they shout 'stop' or 'stop the bus' and everyone has to put their pens down.</li> <li>- Go through everyone's answers. Each correct answer in a column is worth 2 points however, if more than 1 person has the same answer for that column, they only get 1 point.</li> <li>- For example, if only one young person has used the name 'Mary' for girls name they get 2 points. But if two people have put 'Mark' as a boys name they only get 1 point for that answer.</li> <li>- Once points for the round have been totalled up, choose another letter and begin again.</li> <li>- Continue the game for several rounds then have the young people add up their scores from each round and find the overall winner!</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Video (10 minutes)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Watch this video together:</li> <li>- <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AbAj1R03itE">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AbAj1R03itE</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Make sure you have watched the video beforehand so that if technology fails you can describe what happened and key things that were said.</li> <li>- Either, ask the young people to watch this yesHEis 'Faith on the Frontline' video on their own (make sure microphones are</li> </ul>

	<p>-muted) or, if possible, load the video on your screen and use 'share screen' to allow the young people to all watch the video through your screen.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- If you decide to go with the share screen option, make sure you have the video pre-loaded and ready to go before the session begins.</li> </ul>
<p><b>QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION (20 minutes)</b></p> <p><b>What do you think about the video?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- What do you think about the different soldier's stories?</li> <li>- How do you think their faith affects their job?</li> <li>- What is your favourite way to communicate with your friends?</li> <li>- How do you feel when someone takes forever to respond or ignores you altogether?</li> <li>- Going back to the opening question, what do you think about prayer? Do you think it works? Do you sometimes feel God takes forever to answer or that he ignores your prayers?</li> </ul> <p><b>Themes from the soldier's stories</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Sergeant Agblekey talks about praying to God for safety for him and his friends were at war. Do you think God answered his prayer or was he just lucky? How important does the Sergeant say prayer is? How important do you think prayer is?</li> <li>- Padre Cannon discusses how much she relies on prayer. She mentions the power of praying for others and asking God for his strength as she tries to support those in need. How much time do you spend praying for others? If your friends were going through a tough time would you pray for them? Would you tell them you're praying for them? If not, what might hold you back?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Make sure to read through the questions beforehand and have an idea of responses so that you can facilitate conversation if it seems to be drying up.</li> <li>- Consider thinking about how you want the young people to answer these questions. Do you want a hands-up system and then you choose who answers? Do you want them each to take a couple of minutes to think of an answer and then you choose someone at random to answer?</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Commander Tweed says prayer helps him focus on what really matters in a world that's full of distractions. Do you agree with him? Do you think we'd cope better with the busyness of our lives if we spent more time in prayer?</li> </ul> <p><b>Optional bible study questions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- When we read the bible, we see how Jesus modelled what a prayerful life should look like. He taught people how they should pray, what they should pray about and led by example to show others how important prayer is. Jesus would often go somewhere by himself where he could get away from everything and just sit and talk to God (Luke 5:16).</li> <li>- Read Matthew 6:9 – 13</li> <li>- How would you rewrite the prayer in verses 9 – 13 in your own words?</li> <li>- If God knows what we need even before we ask him (v8), do you think we should still pray?</li> <li>- Read John 11:38 – 44.</li> <li>- Jesus uses this moment with Lazarus to give everyone a glimpse of who He is. That He is the Son of God and as such has power over death. However, he also uses this experience to teach the crowd something about prayer. What is the main thing Jesus prayer tells us about God?</li> <li>- God isn't like our friends who ignore us when we get in touch. He hears every prayer we say, and he always answers. It may not be exactly the answer we want or come as instantly as we would like, but he always answers.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Do not feel you have to read to whole passage with the group. Read John 11:1 – 44 for yourself beforehand and set the scene for the young people before reading the key verses for this study which are verses 41 – 42.</li> </ul>
<p><b>PRAYER (10 minutes)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Close the session by praying together.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Again, think about how you want to young people to interact in this. Do you want to go around and ask each person for a prayer</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ask the young people what they're anxious about and how you can support them at this time.</li> </ul>	<p>request? Do you want to leave it open and see who volunteers a prayer point?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Also, if you want leave time for the young people to pray as well make sure you explain to the group how that will work.</li> </ul>
<p><b>POST-SESSION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The video in today's session is just one resource available from yesHeis. yesHEis is an incredible programme designed to help, encourage and equip young people to share their faith. It is downloadable as an app and is full of engaging and provoking content. It is a place where young people can be inspired share what they believe with non-Christian friends, feel supported by the online team and build connections with other Christian young people in the same situation.</li> <li>- Why not ask your youth group to download the yesHeis app and discuss other videos/resources together?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Think about how you want to session to end. You can either end the meeting once is prayer is over and goodbyes are said, or you can allow space for the young people to chat and catch up then end the meeting at a later time.</li> <li>- Ask the leaders to stick around for an online debrief after the young people leave the chat. Talk through any concerns (safeguarding, pastoral, etc.) and decide on how best to follow up.</li> </ul>