

THE SANCTUARY YOUTH SERIES

Parent and Caregiver's Guide



SANCTUARY
Mental Health Ministries

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For questions related to *The Sanctuary Youth Series*, email: support@sanctuarymentalhealth.org



Disclaimers

The purpose of *The Sanctuary Youth Series* is to raise awareness and reduce stigma by starting conversations about mental health in faith communities. Consequently, *The Sanctuary Youth Series* is intended for educational purposes only and the information provided is not a substitute for medical or therapeutic advice. If you feel you may need medical advice, please consult a qualified health care professional.

The films included in *The Sanctuary Youth Series* capture the experiences of young people in their own words. The views and opinions expressed are those of the speakers and do not always represent the views of Sanctuary Mental Health Ministries.

The Sanctuary Youth Series does not contain graphic content, but it does address sensitive topics. This resource is recommended for use with students eleven to fifteen years of age.



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First Edition

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THE SANCTUARY YOUTH SERIES

SECTION ONE

Welcome



SANCTUARY
Mental Health Ministries

Thank you for your interest in *The Sanctuary Youth Series*!

Whether you've found this guide while looking for resources about mental health and faith for teens, or you've been sent this guide by a youth ministry leader/worker or school staff member, we're glad you're here.

The Sanctuary Youth Series is a dynamic, interactive, evidence-based curriculum that is centered on the pressing questions that young people are asking about faith and mental health. It will provide space for young people to engage these questions and start important conversations with trusted adults in their faith communities.

Research shows that parents and caregivers play a crucial role in building resilience and providing support for young people. Your willingness to be present and engaged makes a big impact, and this guide is designed to equip you with tools and strategies to navigate crucial discussions about faith and mental health.

In the following pages you will find summaries of each session, instructions for the exercises that students are learning, and recommended mental health resources, including specific resources related to the diagnoses discussed in the series' films.

We appreciate your commitment to supporting the mental wellbeing of young people. If you believe that *The Sanctuary Youth Series* would be a valuable addition to your local youth ministry or school but it has not yet been implemented, we have included information at the end of this guide that can help you introduce it to your community.

It is our prayer that through this series many teens will come to a better understanding of themselves, their friends and family, and God—all while learning about mental health and mental health challenges. We're excited for you to experience this resource with your young person.

Blessings on your journey,
The Sanctuary Team



THE SANCTUARY YOUTH SERIES

SECTION TWO

Session Overviews



SANCTUARY
Mental Health Ministries

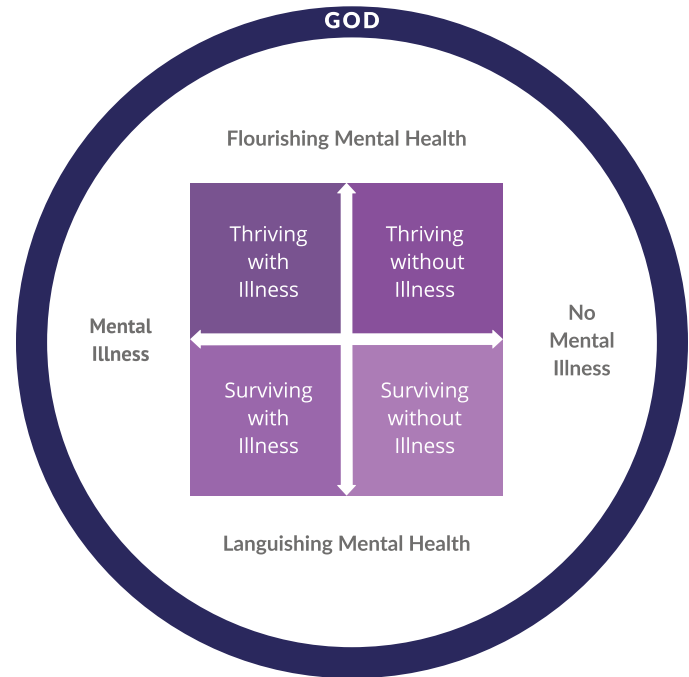
Session 1

WHAT'S GOOD ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH?

What Students Are Learning This Session

In the first session, the presenters in the film discuss how mental health affects everyone. Students will learn that we are all on the mental health continuum together. This is a concept that is also taught in *The Sanctuary Course*—an adult small group resource designed to raise awareness and start conversations in local churches regarding mental health.

The mental health continuum is a model that displays the complex relationship between mental health and illness. It shows that mental illnesses are just one of many factors that impact mental health. Presenters in the first film explain that people living with mental illnesses can still experience positive (or “flourishing”) mental health, and that people living without mental illnesses can still experience poor (or “languishing”) mental health. Because mental health is dynamic, youth will experience both languishing and flourishing over the course of their lives. Most importantly, presenters share that wherever youth find themselves on the mental health continuum, God is with them.



Each film in this series features a young person telling their mental health story in their own words. This session features the story of Ella, who lives with anxiety and depression. Students who resonate with Ella’s experience are encouraged to talk to a trusted adult, doctor, or counselor.

Resources

If you want to learn more about anxiety and depression, we recommend the following educational resources. For more information on each, please see the full list of recommended resources in Appendix B.

Anxiety

- Anxiety and Depression Association of America (ADAA): adaa.org
- Bite Back: biteback.org.au
- Clear Fear: clearfear.co.uk
- MindShift: anxietycanada.com/resources/mindshift-cbt



Depression

- Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance: dbsalliance.org
- mindyourmind: mindyourmind.ca
- Move Mood: movemood.co.uk
- myCompass: mycompass.org.au

Other recommended resources related to the session content:

- *The Sanctuary Course* and *The Sanctuary Course for Catholics* are study guides for adult small groups, designed to raise awareness and start conversations in local churches and parishes regarding mental health. The courses address many of the same themes as *The Sanctuary Youth Series*, and are for anyone who wants to learn about faith and mental health. They are free, and require no previous training or expertise—just a willingness to engage in dialogue with other believers. The first sessions also explore the mental health continuum. Visit <https://sanctuarymentalhealth.org/sanctuary-course/> to learn more.
- We have collaborated with the [Pray As You Go](#) app to create a small collection of prayer exercises about mental health. [Spiritual Sanctuary](#) can provide you space to sit gently with the God of compassion and care as you explore your mental health journey.

Continuing the Conversation at Home

We encourage you to continue the conversation at home by asking your young person questions about the content and the lived experience story that was shared in the film. Initiating these discussions shows that you are invested in what they are learning and are willing to talk about mental health and faith. Young people often need time and space to process their thoughts, and respecting their boundaries regarding when and how they open up can help create a sense of trust and safety. By consistently showing interest, you help normalize discussions about mental health in your home. Over time, this can make your young person feel more comfortable seeking support at home when they need it.

Additionally, one of the great benefits of this series is that young people are going through the content with trusted adults in their community. Just by participating in this series, they are having conversations about this important topic with peers and adults alike.

For more tips on connecting with teens, some parents and caregivers find the guide from Raising Children helpful: [Staying Connected With Pre-Teens and Teenagers](#).



Here are a few conversation starters:

1. What's one thing you remember from today's session? (Note: students are asked this question at the end of every session film, making it a natural starting point for discussion.)
2. I think it's great that you're going through this series and I'd like to learn more about mental health too. I'm wondering, what comes to mind when you hear the words "mental health?" (We invite you to share your own thoughts with them, too.)
3. I heard you learned about the mental health continuum. I read a little bit about it, but was wondering if you could tell me more from your perspective.
4. Where do you think you are on the mental health continuum today? (You could also share where you feel you are today as a way of modeling vulnerability.)
5. Did you resonate with anything that Ella shared in her story? What did she talk about?

Deep Belly Breathing Exercise

Each week your young person is introduced to an evidence-based exercise that is designed to support mental health and wellbeing. This exercise is beneficial for all ages, so we encourage you to try it yourself or even practice it as a family. For example, this exercise might be an effective tool for you to utilize with your young person when they are having a hard time falling asleep, feeling angry and struggling to calm down, or feeling stressed about an upcoming game, interview, or assignment. A copy of the instructions that were shared with your young person is available on the next page.



Session One: Deep Belly Breathing Exercise

Deep belly breathing has been proven to reduce stress. This type of breathing occurs naturally when we're resting or sleeping. It's something anyone can do, anywhere, and it's a great tool to help you regulate (recognize and respond to your emotions so you can experience them and express them in a healthy way). We call it deep belly breathing because we want to breathe deeply, all the way into our bellies. For some people, it helps to visualize a balloon being inflated in their belly.

Deep breathing takes just three steps:



Get comfortable (you can either sit or lie down), close your eyes, and place your hand on your stomach.



Take a deep breath in through your nose for four seconds. As you do, you should notice your stomach expanding as you fill your lungs with air. It's like you're inflating a balloon and as it grows bigger, your stomach expands. Then hold for four seconds.



Now breathe out through your mouth for four seconds. Notice your stomach returning back to its starting position and your body relaxing as you release all the air. Then hold for four seconds before repeating the cycle three or four times.

You may like to try including prayer with your deep breathing. Breath prayers are prayers that can be spoken in a single breath. Christians have been praying this way for centuries. Today, many Christians engage in breath prayers to quiet the heart and mind, and to connect with God in moments of anxiety or grief.

Here is an example you can use. Some of the words are from Psalm 56:3. You can also search "breath prayer" online for more ideas and create your own!

Inhale: The God of peace
Hold for four seconds
Exhale: is with me
Hold for four seconds

Inhale: When I am afraid
Hold for four seconds
Exhale: I put my trust in you
Hold for four seconds



Session 2

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH?

What Students Are Learning This Session

Even though the Bible doesn't explicitly mention mental health, it does provide examples of faithful Christians who land in all four quadrants of the mental health continuum. In session two, the presenters in the film point to examples like the prophet Elijah, King David (described as a man after God's own heart), and Jesus in order to illustrate that even heroes of faith can experience great distress and anxiety. These examples can be comforting to students, as they are reminders that God isn't disappointed or angry at them if they are not flourishing all the time. Moving around on the mental health continuum is a normal part of the Christian life.

The Bible also provides examples of prayers that teach students it's okay to express their doubts, questions, and feelings to God. In this session teens learn about how lament psalms can help them express their frustrations, reaffirm their confidence and trust in God, and seek God's intervention in difficult circumstances. These psalms can build young people's confidence that God is always present, cares deeply for them, and wants to hear their honest thoughts and feelings.

Each film in this series features a young person telling their mental health story in their own words. This session features the story of Nick, who lives with depression and anxiety. The story is not graphic, but it does include references to self-harm and suicidal ideation. Students who resonate with how Nick has described his experience are encouraged to talk to a trusted adult, doctor, or a counselor.

Resources

If you want to learn more about anxiety, depression, self-harm, or suicidal ideation, we recommend the following educational resources. For more information on each, please see the full list of recommended resources in Appendix B.

Anxiety

- Anxiety and Depression Association of America (ADAA): adaa.org
- Bite Back: biteback.org.au
- Clear Fear: clearfear.co.uk
- MindShift: anxietycanada.com/resources/mindshift-cbt

Depression

- Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance: dbsalliance.org
- mindyourmind: mindyourmind.ca
- Move Mood: movemood.co.uk
- myCompass: mycompass.org.au

Self-Harm (also known as non-suicidal self-injury, or NSSI)

- Alumina: selfharm.co.uk
- Calm Harm: calmharm.co.uk
- Self-Injury and Recovery Resources (SIRR): selfinjury.bctr.cornell.edu
- Self-Injury Outreach and Support (SiOS): sioutreach.org



Suicide

- Canadian Association for Suicide Prevention (CASP): suicideprevention.ca
- Centre for Suicide Prevention (CSP): suicideinfo.ca
- The Jed Foundation: jedfoundation.org
- PAPYRUS: papyrus-uk.org
- R U OK?: ruok.org.au

If you are considering suicide or are concerned about someone who may be, crisis lines are free, anonymous, confidential, and available 24/7. In Canada and the US you can call or text 988. For more information about emergency resources, crisis lines, and helplines in other countries, please see Appendix C. You may want to consider printing these numbers off and putting them in a central place in the home for your young person and their friends to see.

Other recommended resources related to the session content:

- *The Sanctuary Course* and *The Sanctuary Course for Catholics* are study guides for adult small groups, designed to raise awareness and start conversations in local churches and parishes regarding mental health. Visit <https://sanctuarymentalhealth.org/sanctuary-course/> to learn more.
- Rev. John Swinton, PhD, is a theologian, former mental health nurse, and Sanctuary ambassador. If you would like to further explore what the Bible says about mental health, his interview with Plough Magazine is a worthwhile read: [*A More Christian Approach to Mental Health Challenges*](#).
- [*Teaching Young People About Lament*](#) is an article from [Fuller Youth Institute](#). It is aimed at youth ministry leaders, but has helpful information about lament, the role it can play in young people's lives, and creative ideas for how to help them engage with this prayer practice.

Continuing the Conversation at Home

1. What's one thing you remember from today's session?
2. What did you learn about what the Bible says about mental health?
3. I heard you learned about lament psalms. Have you heard of those before? What do you remember about them?
4. Did you resonate with anything that Nick shared in his story? What did he talk about?
5. Do you think you have shifted on the mental health continuum since we last chatted about it? (You could also share where you feel you are today.)

Write Your Own Lament Prayer

Each week your young person is introduced to an evidence-based exercise that is meant to support mental health and wellbeing. This week students were invited to write their own lament prayers using a template. We invite you to try it out, and use this as an opportunity to connect with your young person over a shared activity. A copy of the instructions and the template that were shared with students is available on the next page.



Session Two: Write Your Own Lament Prayer

Some people find it helpful to write out their prayers. Lament is a type of prayer we learned about in *The Sanctuary Youth Series*. Lament is a way we can express our grief and sorrow to God. Some of the common elements of lament include calling out to God, complaining about what's happening, expressing our confidence and trust in God, asking God to do something about it, and then typically (but not always) praising or thanking God to end the prayer.

Use the template below to write your own lament prayer. Each sentence has been started for you, but there is space for you to add your own words. If you need some inspiration or suggestions, you can find them above the space provided for writing.

Psalms 3, 5-7, 12, 13, 17, 22, 25-28, 35, 39, 41-44, 51, 54-57, 60, 61, 64, 69, 71, 74, 79, 80, 83, 85, 86, 88, 90, 102, 109, 126, 130, 137, 140-143.

Call Out to God

Suggestions: Jesus □ God □ Father □ Holy Spirit □ Lord □ Yahweh □ Savior of all who seek refuge
□ Lord of peace □ God who provides □ God who sees

Dear... _____



Complaint About What's Happening

Suggestions: Mental health □ Sickness or death □ Fighting with friends or parents □ School □ Work □ My future □ Divorce □ Poverty □ Homelessness □ Climate change □ Natural disasters □ Racism □ Inequality

The world is not right or how it should be. I am particularly worried/sad/angry/upset by ...

Express Confidence and Trust in God

Suggestions: I know you are always with me □ You see what is right □ I call on you because you will answer me □ I turn to you. I trust in you □ I know that you uphold the just cause of the poor, justice for the needy □ You will guard me/us/them; you will protect me/us/them □ I call to you when my heart is without strength; you have been a refuge for me □ You are my light and my salvation—whom shall I fear? You are the stronghold of my life—of whom should I be afraid? □ Even if my father and mother abandon me, you care for me □ I am certain that I will see your goodness in the land of the living □ You are my strength and my shield, my heart trusts in you, and I am helped

But God, ...



Ask God to Do Something About It

Suggestions: Reveal to me the way I should go □ Rescue me; save me because of your faithful love □ The distresses of my heart increase; bring me out of my sufferings □ God, deal kindly with me because of your name; deliver me because of the goodness of your faithful love □ Give your strength to your servant □ Show me a sign of your goodness □ Be a rock of refuge for me where I can always go □ Do not be far from me □ Protect me □ Be gracious to me, according to your faithful love, according to your abundant compassion

So please, Lord, ...

Praise or Thank God

Suggestions: I will thank the Lord for his righteousness □ I will sing to the Lord because he has treated me generously □ Let me experience your faithful love in the morning, for I trust in you □ I will wait for Yahweh; I wait and put my hope in his word □ You are the same, and your years will never end □ Lord, there is no one like you □ You are great and perform wonders; you alone are God □ You, Lord, are a compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger and rich in faithful love and truth □ I will praise your name, because it is good □ I will cast my burden on the Lord, and he will sustain me

... Amen.





Session 3

WHY DO I FEEL THIS WAY?

What Students Are Learning This Session

In this session students learn that there are no bad emotions. Whether pleasant or unpleasant, all emotions give us important information that deserves attention. Sometimes it can be difficult to articulate emotions, which is why students are introduced to an emotion wheel. An emotion wheel is an easy way to grow in our ability to describe how we're feeling. When youth are able to identify and name emotions, it can lead to a deeper understanding of themselves and improve their communication in relationships.

In this session, the presenters use the metaphor of waves to help youth understand the importance of managing their emotions. Just like waves can vary in size and intensity, emotions can range from mild to overwhelming. It's important for young people to recognize that when emotions feel overwhelming, they don't have to face them alone. The presenters encouraged youth to reach out for support—whether to a trusted adult or to a peer—to help them navigate these feelings. Understanding that emotions, like waves, come and go can reassure them that no feeling lasts forever.

Each film in this series features a young person telling their mental health story in their own words. This session features the story of Tyler, who lives with depression and anxiety. This film is not graphic, but it does include references to abuse, sexual assault, and suicidal ideation. Students who resonate with Tyler's experience are encouraged to talk to a trusted adult, doctor, or counselor.

Resources

If you want to learn more about abuse, anxiety, depression, sexual assault, or suicidal ideation, we recommend the following educational resources. For more information on each, please see the full list of recommended resources in Appendix B.

Abuse

- Alumina: selfharm.co.uk
- Calm Harm: calmharm.co.uk
- Self-Injury and Recovery Resources (SIRR): selfinjury.bctr.cornell.edu
- Self-Injury Outreach and Support (SiOS): sioutreach.org

Anxiety

- Anxiety and Depression Association of America (ADAA): adaa.org
- Bite Back: biteback.org.au
- Clear Fear: clearfear.co.uk
- MindShift: anxietycanada.com/resources/mindshift-cbt



Depression

- Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance: dbsalliance.org
- mindyourmind: mindyourmind.ca
- Move Mood: movemood.co.uk
- myCompass: mycompass.org.au

Sexual Assault

- 1800RESPECT: 1800respect.org.au
- Ending Violence Association of Canada (EVA): endingviolencecanada.org
- The NHS: nhs.uk/live-well/sexual-health/help-after-rape-and-sexual-assault
- Rape, Abuse, and Incest National Network (RAINN): rainn.org
- Rape Crisis England and Wales: rapecrisis.org.uk

Suicide

- Canadian Association for Suicide Prevention (CASP): suicideprevention.ca
- Centre for Suicide Prevention (CSP): suicideinfo.ca
- The Jed Foundation: jedfoundation.org
- PAPYRUS: papyrus-uk.org
- R U OK?: ruok.org.au

If you are considering suicide or are concerned about someone who may be, crisis lines are free, anonymous, confidential, and available 24/7. In Canada and the US you can call or text 988. For more information about emergency resources, crisis lines, and helplines in other countries, please see Appendix C. You may want to consider printing these numbers off and putting them in a central place in the home for your young person and their friends to see.

Other recommended resources related to the session content:

- *The Sanctuary Course* and *The Sanctuary Course for Catholics* are study guides for adult small groups, designed to raise awareness and start conversations in local churches and parishes regarding mental health. Visit <https://sanctuarymentalhealth.org/sanctuary-course/> to learn more.
- The podcast [**Raising Teens with Collett Smart**](#) is an excellent resource on a range of topics such as resilient teens, bullying, tweens and puberty, technology, body image, supporting teens in grief, rites of passage, and more. Related to today's topic, you might enjoy these short episodes on [*Emotional Intelligence*](#) and [*Active Listening*](#).

Continuing the Conversation at Home



1. What's one thing you remember from today's session?
2. Have you ever heard emotions described as pleasant and unpleasant, rather than good and bad? What did you think of that description?
3. I heard you learned about how emotions are like waves. What does that mean?
4. Did you resonate with anything that Tyler shared in his story? What did he talk about?
5. Do you think you have shifted on the mental health continuum since we last chatted about it? (You could also share where you feel you are today.)

Emotion Wheel Exercise

Each week your young person is introduced to an evidence-based exercise that is meant to support mental health and wellbeing. In this session, students were invited to select one or two emotions from the wheel that described how they were feeling that day. There are great benefits to communicating openly about emotions, so you may want to familiarize yourself with the emotion wheel and maybe even try using it with your family. For example, you may want to display a copy of the wheel in a common area of your home, where it's easily visible. A copy of the instructions and the wheel that were shared with your young person is available on the next page.



Session Three: Emotion Wheel

The emotion wheel was designed to give us more words to describe our emotions. This can help increase our awareness of just how many emotions there are and how many we may be feeling!

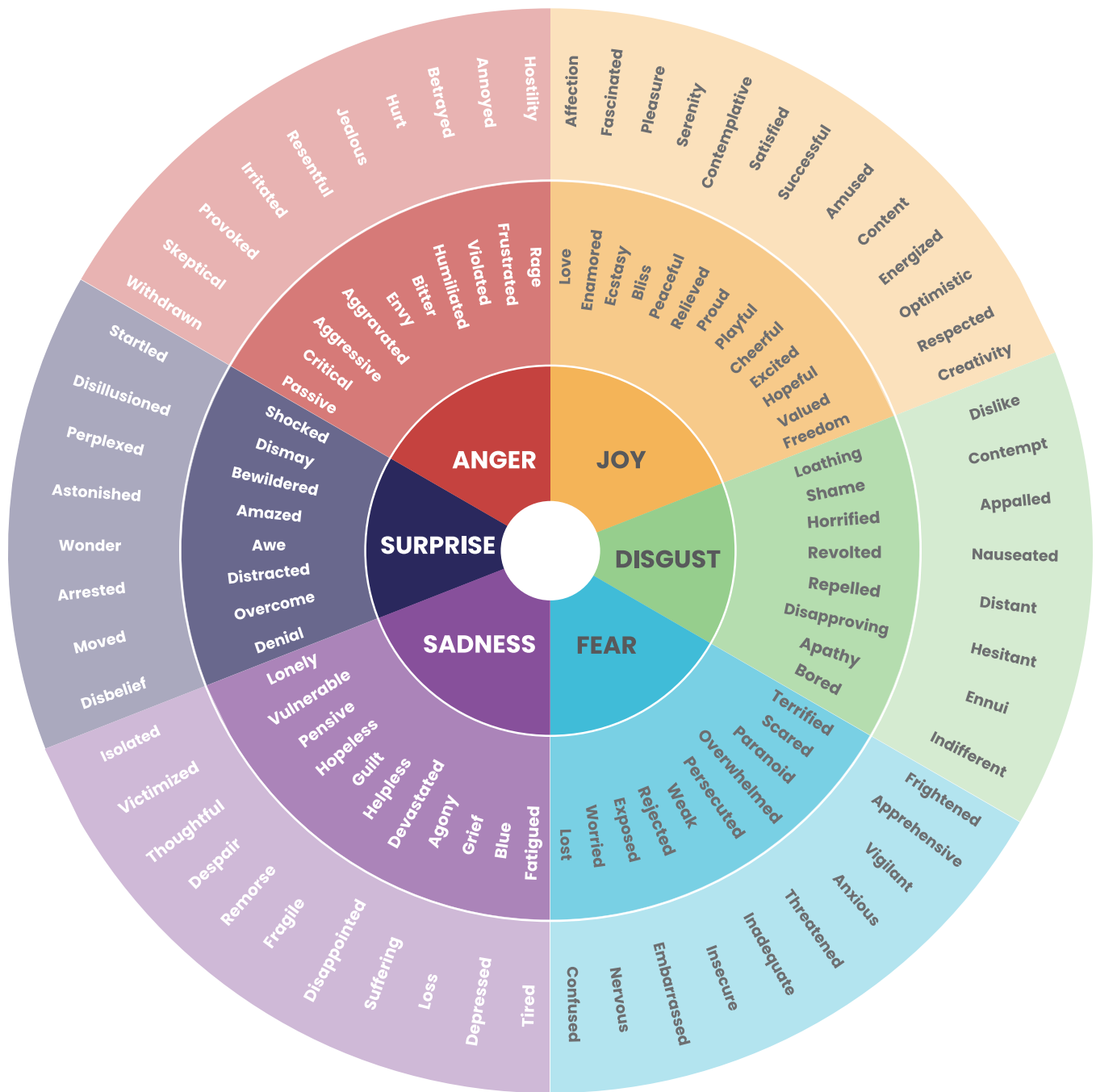
For this exercise, take a moment to look at the emotion wheel on the next page. Spend some time looking at each category and how the emotions within each one may be related. You may want to take note of words that are unfamiliar and look them up.

When you are ready, select one or two emotions from anywhere on the wheel that describe how you are feeling today. For example, you could be feeling both lonely and worried, even though they are in different categories.

Next, ask yourself, “Why am I feeling this way today?” You may think about something that happened at home, school, or online. It may be related to something from today or from something that happened in the last few days or weeks. And remember, it’s okay if you’re not sure why you are feeling this way. Just identifying the emotion is a great first step!

You can also draw a picture that expresses one or both of the emotions you’ve identified. You may like to think about how your body feels when you experience that emotion, or how your face looks, or perhaps you can draw a picture of the moment when you felt that way. If you are comfortable, you can also share your emotion and your reflection with someone you trust.





Session 4

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN WE TALK ABOUT
MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES?

What Students Are Learning This Session

In this session students learn that stigma is a negative view, attitude, or belief about a group of people based on a particular characteristic, such as their mental health. Stigma creates barriers to accessing care, and it can stop people who are languishing from seeking the help they need. The presenters discuss how we can all help reduce stigma by changing the way we talk about mental health challenges to others and to ourselves. Students are introduced to the concepts of person-first language and self-compassion.

Person-first language means acknowledging the person before naming their mental health challenge. For example, instead of saying, “Ali is depressed”—a statement that equates Ali with her diagnosis—teens are encouraged to say, “Ali is experiencing depression,” or “Ali lives with depression.” This helps everyone remember that a person’s diagnosis is just one part of their life, rather than the defining factor.

The presenters also explain the concept of self-compassion—speaking to and treating oneself with the same kindness and support that one would offer to friends and loved ones. Developing self-compassion will not only help change the way youth view themselves, but will help them extend greater compassion towards others.

Each film in this series features a young person telling their mental health story in their own words. This session features the story of Ava, who lives with depression. The story is not graphic, but it does include references to bullying and suicidal ideation. Students who resonate with Ava’s experience are encouraged to talk to a trusted adult, doctor, or counselor.

Resources

If you want to learn more about bullying, depression, or suicidal ideation, we recommend the following educational resources. For more information on each, please see the full list of recommended resources in Appendix B.

Bullying

- BullyingCanada: bullyingcanada.ca
- Bullying No Way: bullyingnoway.gov.au
- Kids Helpline: kidshelpline.com.au/teens/issues/bullying
- Stop Bullying: stopbullying.gov

Depression

- Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance: dbsalliance.org
- mindyourmind: mindyourmind.ca
- Move Mood: movemood.co.uk
- myCompass: mycompass.org.au



Suicide

- Canadian Association for Suicide Prevention (CASP): suicideprevention.ca
- Centre for Suicide Prevention (CSP): suicideinfo.ca
- The Jed Foundation: jedfoundation.org
- PAPYRUS: papyrus-uk.org
- R U OK?: ruok.org.au

If you are considering suicide or are concerned about someone who may be, crisis lines are free, anonymous, confidential, and available 24/7. In Canada and the US you can call or text 988. For more information about emergency resources, crisis lines, and helplines in other countries, please see Appendix C. You may want to consider printing these numbers off and putting them in a central place in the home for your young person and their friends to see.

Other recommended resources related to the session content:

- *The Sanctuary Course* and *The Sanctuary Course for Catholics* are study guides for adult small groups, designed to raise awareness and start conversations in local churches and parishes regarding mental health. Session three of *The Sanctuary Course* covers stigma in more depth. Visit <https://sanctuarymentalhealth.org/sanctuary-course/> to learn more.
- To further explore compassion and self-compassion from a theological perspective, we recommend Ruth Rice's article on the [Sanctuary blog, 'C' is for Compassion](#). The article is an excerpt from her book, *A-Z Of Wellbeing: Finding Your Personal Toolkit for Peace and Wholeness*. See Ruth's website for information: renewwellbeing.org.uk/resources
- *I Had a Black Dog, His Name Was Depression* is one of the best short films that helps us remember a person's identity is not defined by a mental illness. It was produced by the World Health Organization and is worth watching. It is appropriate for all ages.

Continuing the Conversation at Home

1. What's one thing you remember from today's session?
2. I heard the latest session was all about stigma. How did they describe it in the film? Do you think there's still a lot of stigma in society today?
3. What did you think about person-first language and self-compassion? Do you have any ideas about how we can encourage each other to practice these things at home?
4. Did you resonate with anything that Ava shared in her story? What did she talk about?
5. Do you think you have shifted on the mental health continuum since we last chatted about it? What is one emotion from the wheel that you experienced today? (You could also share where you feel you are on the mental health continuum or an emotion that you felt today.)

Progressive Muscle Relaxation Exercise

Each week your young person is introduced to an evidence-based exercise that is meant to support mental health and wellbeing. This progressive muscle relaxation is great for all ages, and is proven to help reduce stress and mitigate physical symptoms of anxiety. You can try it out on your own or as a whole family. For example, think about incorporating this exercise into a family movie or game night, adding it to the bedtime routine, or trying it out before an important performance, test, or athletic competition. A copy of the instructions that were shared with your young person is available on the next page.



Session Four: Progressive Muscle Relaxation Exercise

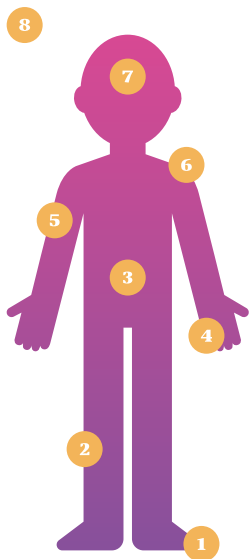
Progressive muscle relaxation is a tool you can practice often and when you're in various situations, like at school or work or lying in bed, trying to fall asleep. As you relax different muscles, it can help bring a sense of calm to your body, reduce body aches, and improve your sleep.

To prepare for this exercise, get comfortable in your seat and place your feet on the ground. If you're sitting on the ground, you can sit cross-legged or have your legs out in front of you. If there's space, you could also lie down and let your body relax. You might like to use the deep belly breathing exercise from session one to help you relax.

Next, you will focus on different parts of your body one at a time and follow these three steps:

1. **Tense** the body part as tight as you can for five seconds.
2. **Relax** and take three deep breaths.
3. **Notice** how that body part feels as you relax.

There are a few different ways to do this exercise. Some people like to start with their feet and move their way up the body, while others like the reverse—starting with the head and moving down to the toes. Below is one order you could follow as you tense, relax, and notice:



- 1 **Feet** (flex your feet like there's something hot you're trying to keep your feet away from)
- 2 **Legs** (take a deep breath in as you point your toes and tense your legs like you're trying to reach something with them)
- 3 **Stomach** (tense your stomach like someone's about to hit it)
- 4 **Hands** (make a fist with your hands and squeeze them as hard as you can)
- 5 **Arms** (flex your biceps and pretend you're a bodybuilder)
- 6 **Shoulders** (lift your shoulders as high as you can, like someone just put ice down your back)
- 7 **Face** (frown like you're really angry or scrunch up your nose like something smells really bad)
- 8 **Whole body** (tense as many muscles as you possibly can at the same time)



Session 5

IF YOU HAVE A MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGE,
CAN YOU GET BETTER?

What Students Are Learning This Session

In this session students learn that anyone experiencing a mental health challenge can have hope that things will get better. For some people, symptoms go away completely over time. And for others, symptoms become less intense as they learn more about themselves and grow in their ability to care for their mental health. Through both of these experiences, God is with them and at work in their lives.

In the series the term *recovery* is used to describe the experience of improving mental health for people living with chronic mental illnesses. Teens learn that although they may still experience some symptoms of illness, recovery means that they have learned how to care for themselves and are able to flourish.

The presenters in the film also discuss the key elements of a mental health plan designed to help everyone flourish. Students are encouraged to make a plan where they **take notice, learn, and connect**. Taking notice of their emotions or changes in behavior will help them recognize when they are starting to languish. Learning can involve consulting trusted websites (like those in Appendix B and C) and reading about mental health. As students learn more, it can give them insights into their own experiences. And connecting with themselves, God, and others, is an important protective factor when it comes to mental health. Students are encouraged to think about a friend, trusted adult, doctor, or mental health professional they can reach out to if they are languishing.

Each film in this series features a young person telling their mental health story in their own words. This session features the story of Nathan, who lives with depression. The story is not graphic, but it does include references to suicidal ideation. Students who resonate with Nathan's experience are encouraged to talk to a trusted adult, doctor, or counselor.

Resources

If you want to learn more about depression or suicidal ideation, we recommend the following educational resources. For more information on each, please see the full list of recommended resources in Appendix B.

Depression

- Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance: dbsalliance.org
- mindyourmind: mindyourmind.ca
- Move Mood: movemood.co.uk
- myCompass: mycompass.org.au

Suicide

- Canadian Association for Suicide Prevention (CASP): suicideprevention.ca
- Centre for Suicide Prevention (CSP): suicideinfo.ca
- The Jed Foundation: jedfoundation.org
- PAPYRUS: papyrus-uk.org
- R U OK?: ruok.org.au

If you are considering suicide or are concerned about someone who may be, crisis lines are free, anonymous, confidential, and available 24/7. In Canada and the US you can call or text 988. For more information about emergency resources, crisis lines, and helplines in other countries, please see Appendix C. You may want to consider printing these numbers off and putting them in a central place in the home for your young person and their friends to see.



Other recommended resources related to the session content:

- *The Sanctuary Course* and *The Sanctuary Course for Catholics* are study guides for adult small groups, designed to raise awareness and start conversations in local churches and parishes regarding mental health. Session four of *The Sanctuary Course* also focuses on the topic of recovery. Visit <https://sanctuarymentalhealth.org/sanctuary-course/> to learn more.
- [5 Ways to Wellbeing for Children](#) is a blog piece by Jane Born, Sanctuary's Editor-in-Chief, about five simple practices that can help the young people in our lives feel good and function well. You'll notice some overlap with the key elements we discussed in today's film. It focuses on children, but the principles apply to teenagers too.
- The [National Alliance on Mental Illness](#) is an alliance across America that includes more than 700 local affiliates and state organizations. NAMI is working in local communities to raise awareness, build advocacy, and provide support and education. Related to the topic of recovery, you may want to read this article, [Serious Mental Illness Recovery: The Basics](#).

Continuing the Conversation at Home

1. What's one thing you remember from today's session?
2. How did they describe recovery in the film? Do you have any questions about what it means for someone living with a mental health challenge to be on a recovery journey?
3. When you feel like you're languishing or not doing so well, what things do you notice about yourself? (Ask about emotions, behaviors, and what they notice in their body—e.g., clenched jaw, headache, butterflies in their stomach, etc.).
4. Did you resonate with anything that Nathan shared in his story? What did he talk about?
5. Do you think you have shifted on the mental health continuum since we last chatted about it? What is one emotion from the wheel that you experienced today? (You could also share where you feel you are on the mental health continuum or an emotion that you felt today.)

Take Notice Exercise

Each week your young person is introduced to an evidence-based exercise that is meant to support mental health and wellbeing. In this session, students were asked to create a plan to support their mental health. The first step in the plan is to **take notice**, and this exercise is designed to help them cultivate awareness. We encourage you to review the instructions and try one of the suggested practices yourself. If you want to practice taking notice as a family, consider going for a walk or listening to music together—there are many ways to engage with this practice. A copy of the instructions that were shared with your young person is available on the next page.



Session Five: Take Notice

In *The Sanctuary Youth Series*, we talked about having a plan that includes ways to take notice, learn, and connect. Taking notice is a form of mindfulness. Mindfulness simply means paying attention to the present moment with openness and curiosity. It's a great evidence-based tool for when we feel anxious or stressed, because it can reduce worries, anxiety, and distress, as well as create a sense of calm, improve concentration, and increase productivity. Mindfulness is something you can do on your own, anytime, anywhere.

You can practice mindfulness in a lot of different ways, using different activities. Below are a couple of examples, but if you want to try a different activity, you can search online for the name of the activity + mindfulness. For example, you might search for dancing + mindfulness, or coloring + mindfulness.

Option 1: Listening to music



1. Before playing any music, take a moment to think about how you're feeling. It might be helpful to look at the emotion wheel again.
2. Next, choose a song to listen to. As you listen, notice your feelings. You don't need to figure out why you feel that way or try not to feel those feelings. Just let them be. You might think something like, "I feel sad. That's interesting."
3. Also think about your body. Are there things your body is doing that are telling you how you might be feeling? Have your hands clenched, has your chest tightened, has your heart started racing? Is your body reacting to the beat? Does the music make you relax? Does it make you want to start tapping your foot or moving your body in some way?
4. Then, repeat steps two and three with a few different songs. Choose songs from different genres or different playlists.
5. To finish, think about the feelings that have surfaced and how the different genres may have impacted them. After this exercise, you may like to find or create a playlist of songs that you find calming for those times when you're feeling stressed or overwhelmed.



Option 2: Walking



1. For this activity, you will go for a five to ten minute walk and set a particular focus. For example, you could choose to pay attention to:
 - Items of a particular color (like green, purple, blue, yellow, red, etc.)
 - Items that are a particular shape (like circles, triangles, rectangles, etc.)
 - What you can hear (like cars, the sound of your feet on the ground, birds, etc.)
 - What you can smell (like rain, dirt, freshly mowed grass, etc.)
 - What you can feel (like the ground beneath your feet, the temperature of the air, wind, etc.)
2. Before you go on the walk, practice some deep breathing. When you're ready, we recommend that you don't listen to music or talk. This will help you connect with your mind, body, and environment.
3. Afterwards, you might like to write down what you noticed, talk to someone about how it made you feel, or spend some time praying and thanking God for the good things you noticed.

Deep breathing takes just three steps:



Get comfortable. You can either sit or lie down. Close your eyes and place your hand on your stomach.



Take a deep breath in through your nose for four seconds. As you do, you should notice your stomach expanding as you fill your lungs with air. It's like you're inflating a balloon and as it grows bigger, your stomach expands. Then hold for four seconds.



Now breathe out through your mouth for four seconds. Notice your stomach returning back to its starting position and your body relaxing as you release all the air. Then hold for four seconds before repeating the cycle three or four times.



Session 6

HOW CAN I HELP MY FRIEND?

What Students Are Learning This Session

In this session, students learned about the importance of relationships and community, as highlighted in the Bible. They explored how being supported by family, friends, youth leaders, and others can help them feel part of a caring community. Having this kind of support reinforces the idea that they are valued for who they are and that a diagnosis or mental health challenge does not define them.

Another key message from this session was the importance of setting healthy boundaries when supporting friends. While friends have an important role to play in helping each other, no one person has to take on the burden of supporting a friend by themselves. When youth know their limits, they can keep themselves and their friends safe. If a student is worried about a friend or feeling unsure about what to do, they are encouraged to seek the advice of a trusted adult.

Each film in this series features a young person telling their mental health story in their own words. This session features the story of Sonya, who lives with depression. The story is not graphic, but it does include references to suicidal ideation. Students who resonate with Sonya's experience are encouraged to talk to a trusted adult, doctor, or counselor.

Resources

If you want to learn more about depression or suicidal ideation, we recommend the following educational resources. For more information on each, please see the full list of recommended resources in Appendix B.

Depression

- Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance: dbsalliance.org
- mindyourmind: mindyourmind.ca
- Move Mood: movemood.co.uk
- myCompass: mycompass.org.au

Suicide

- Canadian Association for Suicide Prevention (CASP): suicideprevention.ca
- Centre for Suicide Prevention (CSP): suicideinfo.ca
- The Jed Foundation: jedfoundation.org
- PAPYRUS: papyrus-uk.org
- R U OK?: ruok.org.au

If you are considering suicide or are concerned about someone who may be, crisis lines are free, anonymous, confidential, and available 24/7. In Canada and the US you can call or text 988. For more information about emergency resources, crisis lines, and helplines in other countries, please see Appendix C. You may want to consider printing these numbers off and putting them in a central place in the home for your young person and their friends to see.



Other recommended resources related to the session content:

- *The Sanctuary Course* and *The Sanctuary Course for Catholics* are study guides for adult small groups, designed to raise awareness and start conversations in local churches and parishes regarding mental health. If you would like to learn more about caring for others, *The Sanctuary Course* explores the topics of companionship (session five) and caregiving (session six). Visit <https://sanctuarymentalhealth.org/sanctuary-course/> to learn more.
- The Kelty Mental Health Resource Centre (BC Children's Hospital) provides mental health and substance use information and resources. In particular, we recommend this article, [*Talking to Youth About Mental Health*](#). It shares tips for starting the mental health conversation, how to respond if a youth turns to you for support, what to do if a youth shares thoughts of suicide with you, and taking care of yourself.
- If you'd like to learn more about the daily examen (also known as the Ignatian Examen), we recommend [*The Daily Examen*](#) on the Ignatian Spirituality website.

Continuing the Conversation at Home

1. What's one thing you remember from today's session?
2. Are there any friends you're supporting at the moment? How is that going for you? Is it starting to feel too heavy? What changes might you notice in yourself if it were getting too heavy? (Remind them that they can come to you or another trusted adult anytime.)
3. If you wanted to talk to someone about your mental health or the mental health of your friend, who are three people you could reach out to? (Encourage them to name at least one adult.)
4. Did you resonate with anything that Sonya shared in her story? What did she talk about?
5. Do you think you have shifted on the mental health continuum since we last chatted about it? What is one emotion from the wheel that you experienced today? (You could also share where you feel you are on the mental health continuum or an emotion that you felt today.)

Daily Examen

Each week your young person is introduced to an evidence-based exercise that is meant to support mental health and wellbeing. You may be familiar with the daily examen, a way of praying that many Christians have utilized for centuries. It is similar to the take notice exercise from session five in that it invites you to be more attentive to things around and within you. If you haven't already, we recommend that you try out the daily examen on your own or together with your young person. A copy of the instructions that were shared with students is available on the next page.



Session Six: Daily Examen

There's a prayer exercise that Christians have been doing for a long time which can help you see where God is at work in your life. It's called the daily examen. The examen invites you to do five things at the end of each day:

1

Become aware of
God's presence
(Prepare)

2

Review the day
with gratitude
(Thank)

3

Pay attention to
your emotions
(Reflect)

4

Ask for
forgiveness
(Apologize)

5

Pray for the
next day
(Look Ahead)

You can go through these five steps like a prayer, or you might like to use the boxes below to write or draw about the things that come to mind. Be as creative as you like!

Drawing Space



1 Prepare

God is always with us but we are often distracted. Take a few moments to do some deep breathing. As you focus on your breath, you might like to remind yourself of God's presence by praying this breath prayer:

- Inhale: The God of peace
- Exhale: is with me.

Take a moment to ask God to open your eyes to see where he has been at work in your day.

Deep breathing takes just three steps:



Get comfortable. You can either sit or lie down. Close your eyes and place your hand on your stomach.



Take a deep breath in through your nose for four seconds. As you do, you should notice your stomach expanding as you fill your lungs with air. It's like you're inflating a balloon and as it grows bigger, your stomach expands. Then hold for four seconds.



Now breathe out through your mouth for four seconds. Notice your stomach returning back to its starting position and your body relaxing as you release all the air. Then hold for four seconds before repeating the cycle three or four times.



2 Thank

Research has shown that consciously practicing gratitude can reduce feelings of stress and anxiety. Think back on your day and name one to three things you are grateful for. Take a moment to thank God for those gifts.

3 Reflect

Once again, think back on your day and this time, name one to three emotions that you felt. Feel free to look at your emotion wheel for this step. Spend a moment telling God about these emotions.



4 Apologize

As you reflect on your day, you may have noticed times when you wish you had responded differently. Where necessary, ask God for forgiveness.

“For you, O Lord, are good and forgiving, abounding in steadfast love to all who call on you.”

— PSALM 86:5, NRSV^{UE}

5 Look Ahead

The final step is to spend a moment thinking about tomorrow. As you do, pay attention to how you're feeling and let God know. Ask him for help, guidance, an awareness of his presence, and hope.



Session 7

WHAT CAN I DO TO TAKE CARE OF
MY MENTAL HEALTH?

What Students Are Learning This Session

In this session, students learned that self-care is for everyone. While stress is a normal part of life and can even be beneficial at times, prolonged or excessive stress can negatively affect mental health. This is why it's important to be intentional about self-care. Students reflected on God's call to love their neighbors as *themselves* (Mark 12:29-31), and learned that God values their self-care just as he values their caring for others.

Students also learned that while there are many activities that can be considered self-care, the reason behind the activity matters. For example, playing the guitar may feel like homework when practicing for church or an upcoming performance, but at other times it can feel restful when the goal is just to have fun. Students were encouraged to identify self-care activities that help them connect with others, themselves, the world, and God.

Each film in this series features a young person telling their mental health story in their own words. This session features the story of Emmalynne, who lives with anxiety. Students who resonate with Emmalynne's experience are encouraged to talk to a trusted adult, doctor, or counselor.

Resources

If you want to learn more about anxiety, we recommend the following educational resources. For more information or resources related to social media, please see the full list of recommended resources in Appendix B.

Anxiety

- Anxiety and Depression Association of America (ADAA): adaa.org
- Bite Back: biteback.org.au
- Clear Fear: clearfear.co.uk
- MindShift: anxietycanada.com/resources/mindshift-cbt



Other recommended resources related to the session content:

- *The Sanctuary Course* and *The Sanctuary Course for Catholics* are study guides for adult small groups, designed to raise awareness and start conversations in local churches and parishes regarding mental health. Self-care for adults is explored in-depth in session seven. Visit <https://sanctuarymentalhealth.org/sanctuary-course/> to learn more.
- One of the ways Christians ground themselves is through prayer. Sanctuary and [The Porter's Gate](#) created an album about mental health and faith, and a team favorite is the song "[Centering Prayer](#)." This song invites us to meditate on God and allow him to draw us into the present when we might be feeling stressed or overwhelmed. And as part of your self-care, we invite you to listen to the whole album, [Sanctuary Songs](#).
- Raising young people can be tough, and it's easy to be hard on yourself. This article will provide you with some tips on looking after yourself: [The Parents and Carers' Guide to Looking After Yourself](#). This resource is from [YoungMinds](#), a UK charity whose mission is to make sure all young people get the mental health support they need, when they need it.

Continuing the Conversation at Home

1. What's one thing you remember from today's session?
2. What did you learn about stress and self-care? What things cause you stress? (You can ask them about different areas of their life, e.g., home, school, social situations, etc.)
3. What things do you like to do that make you feel more energized or rested? (Ask them about how they connect with other people, themselves, the world, and God.) Are there ways I can support you to do some of those things regularly?
4. Did you resonate with anything that Emmalynne shared in her story? What did she talk about?
5. Do you think you have shifted on the mental health continuum since we last chatted about it? What is one emotion from the wheel that you experienced today? (You could also share where you feel you are on the mental health continuum or an emotion that you felt today.)

5-4-3-2-1 Grounding Exercise

Each week your young person is introduced to an evidence-based exercise that is meant to support mental health and wellbeing. In this session, students were guided through a grounding exercise that invites them to focus on the world around them through their five senses. This type of exercise can be done anywhere, anytime, and can help regulate emotions and decrease stress. If interested, you can practice it on your own or try it together with your teen. A copy of the instructions that were shared with students is available on the next page.



Session Seven: 5-4-3-2-1 Grounding Exercise

Grounding exercises help us take notice of the world around us in the moment that we are experiencing it. This particular exercise can be done anywhere, anytime, but it is especially useful when your thoughts and feelings are distressing and you want to shift your focus and *regulate* (recognize and respond to your emotions so you can experience them and express them in a healthy way). It helps clear the mind, slow you down, and can give you a greater sense of calm.

Step One: Begin With Deep Breathing

To start, do some deep belly breathing for thirty seconds to a minute.

Step Two: Engage Your Senses

Then, take some time to notice what you can sense in your immediate surroundings—what you can see, feel, hear, smell, and taste. You can write these things down, draw them, or just think about them in your head. It's best to focus on one sense at a time, and you may want to take a deep breath between each sense to help slow you down. There's no right or wrong order, but here is one way you can take notice of each sense. Stop and name:



5

things you can
see



4

things you can
feel



3

things you can
hear



2

things you can
smell



1

thing you can
taste

Step Three: Additional Techniques

There are many ways to practice grounding exercises. Here are some other exercises you can try:

- Counting: choose an item, look around, and count as many of those items as you can see. For example, you could count pieces of furniture, road signs, or light bulbs.
- Categories: choose a category and name all the things you can see in that category. For example, how many yellow things can you see?
- Touch: touch a physical object close to you and notice the texture. For example, how does the carpet, a piece of clothing, or an item of furniture feel?



Session 8

HOW DOES THIS ALL CONNECT?

What Students Are Learning This Session

In this final film, the presenters use the illustration of trees in a forest to talk about the importance of community. In a forest, nearly every tree is linked through their roots. They exchange carbon, water, nutrients, and even alarm signals to warn one another about impending danger. By growing close together, trees can also help shelter one another through the various stresses of life—extremes of heat and cold, drought, wind, and heavy rain. Just as connection is important for trees to thrive, so it is for humans.

A central theme in this series is the importance of connection. We were designed for community and relationships, and while we may not share a root system, we are all on the mental health continuum together. Through the exploration of each question in this series, students have been reminded that they're not alone. Parents and caregivers play a crucial role in this as well, helping to support young people as they navigate seasons of languishing and flourishing. Finally, students are reminded that God is also always present, providing comfort and offering guidance in challenging times.

Each film in this series features a young person telling their mental health story in their own words. This session features the story of Judah, who lives with depression, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). The story is not graphic, but it does include references to abuse, disordered eating, and bullying. Students who resonate with Judah's experience are encouraged to talk to a trusted adult, doctor, or counselor.

Resources

If you want to learn more about abuse, anxiety, bullying, depression, disordered eating, or PTSD, we recommend the following educational resources. For more information on each, please see the full list of recommended resources in Appendix B.

Abuse

- Alumina: selfharm.co.uk
- Calm Harm: calmharm.co.uk
- Self-Injury and Recovery Resources (SIRR): selfinjury.bctr.cornell.edu
- Self-Injury Outreach and Support (SIOS): sioutreach.org

Anxiety

- Anxiety and Depression Association of America (ADAA): adaa.org
- Bite Back: biteback.org.au
- Clear Fear: clearfear.co.uk
- MindShift: anxietycanada.com/resources/mindshift-cbt



Bullying

- BullyingCanada: bullyingcanada.ca
- Bullying No Way: bullyingnoway.gov.au
- Kids Helpline: kidshelpline.com.au/teens/issues/bullying
- Stop Bullying: stopbullying.gov

Depression

- Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance: dbsalliance.org
- mindyourmind: mindyourmind.ca
- Move Mood: movemood.co.uk
- myCompass: mycompass.org.au

Disordered Eating

- Beat Eating Disorders: beateatingdisorders.org.uk
- Butterfly Foundation: butterfly.org.au
- The National Eating Disorders Association (NEDA): nationaleatingdisorders.org
- The National Eating Disorder Information Centre (NEDIC): nedic.ca
- Worth Warrior: worthwarrior.co.uk

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

- Anxiety Canada: anxietycanada.com
- Headspace: headspace.org.au
- National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH): nimh.nih.gov
- THISWAYUP: thiswayup.org.au

Other recommended resources related to the session content:

- *The Sanctuary Course* and *The Sanctuary Course for Catholics* are study guides for adult small groups, designed to raise awareness and start conversations in local churches and parishes regarding mental health. Visit <https://sanctuarymentalhealth.org/sanctuary-course/> to learn more.
- To further explore the importance of friendships and community, you may like to go through Sanctuary's YouVersion devotional, **[Belonging and Mental Health](#)**. In this five-day devotional plan, various authors explore how mental health can impact our community experience, illuminating what Scripture has to say about belonging.
- If you're interested in hearing about how loneliness is impacting us (especially young people), learning practical tips to connect with others, and exploring the usefulness and pitfalls of social media, we recommend watching this discussion between Vivek Murthy, Jon Scheyer, and Kate Bowler on YouTube: **[We Are Made To Connect](#)**.



Continuing the Conversation at Home

1. What's one thing you remember from today's session?
2. I heard you learned that people are like trees. Can you tell me more about that? Did you know trees thrive when other trees are around? Who helps you thrive when they're around you? (You may like to share about some of the people that help you thrive too.)
3. I'm curious to know if this series has helped you notice some of the ways that God supports you. (You may like to share some ways you feel God supports you.)
4. Did you resonate with anything that Judah shared in his story? What did he talk about?
5. Do you think you have shifted on the mental health continuum since we last chatted about it? What is one emotion from the wheel that you experienced today? (You could also share where you feel you are on the mental health continuum or an emotion that you felt today.)

Gratitude Container Exercise

Each week your young person is introduced to an evidence-based exercise that is meant to support mental health and wellbeing. As a way to wrap up this series, students were invited to spend some time reflecting on what they're grateful for after going through the past eight sessions. We encourage you to ask them about what they said and begin a discussion at home of ways you could incorporate gratitude into your time together as a family. A copy of the instructions that were shared with students is available on the next page.



Session Eight: Gratitude Container Exercise

Gratitude is something that can be practiced every day by anyone, anywhere, and it has great mental health benefits. It can help reduce feelings of envy, resentment, frustration, and regret. It can reduce depression and stress, and increase happiness and contentment. People who practice gratitude often sleep better and feel better about themselves too!

There are a number of ways to practice gratitude, but here are instructions for one method that was introduced in *The Sanctuary Youth Series*. You will need an empty container (like a jar, bowl, or box), a few pieces of paper, and something to write with (like a pen or pencil).



First, think about one to three things you are grateful for today. Write each thing down on a piece of paper and put it into the container. As you do so, we invite you to thank God for the things you wrote down. If you're feeling grateful for someone—who they are as a person or maybe something they did that meant a lot—you might like to reach out to them and let them know.

We also recommend that you put the container by your bed or somewhere in your room where you will notice it. Then continue to add to it as a weekly or daily habit. Over time, you will see the container fill with things you are grateful for.

This practice is also helpful for those days when it feels challenging to think of something to write down. On those days, you might want to go through the pieces of paper in your container and read some of the things you've written before. This may remind you of something you're still grateful for. It can also give you hope that just as there have been good things in your past, there will be good things in your future too.



Thank You

We are grateful that your young person has participated in *The Sanctuary Youth Series*. Would you consider taking five minutes to share your experience as a parent/caregiver with us? The feedback you provide helps us improve our resources and better serve the needs of churches, schools, and faith communities. Additionally, it helps us demonstrate impact to our donors and community. You can find the five-minute survey at: sanctuarymentalhealth.org/feedback



Appendix A: Key Terms and Definitions

We believe language matters when it comes to talking and writing about mental health. So, over the years we have sought to develop thoughtful, precise, and empowering language that reflects our commitment to listen to the broader cultural conversation around mental health. Given the constant evolution of language, we also recognize that this list of terms and definitions is subject to change.

- **Mental Health:** *Mental health* refers to emotional, psychological, and social wellbeing; mental health is not determined by the presence or absence of mental illness, and it is dynamic in nature (i.e., subjective experiences of wellbeing change over time).
- **Mental Wellbeing:** The terms *mental wellbeing* and *mental health* are often used synonymously; *mental wellbeing* refers to high levels of positive emotional, psychological, and social functioning.
- **Wellbeing:** *Wellbeing* in its broadest sense encompasses objective and subjective indicators of health and happiness, including physical health, income, housing, access to education, and the psychological resources and skills that enable people to feel good and function well in life.
- **Mental Health Challenge:** This term describes mild to moderate experiences or symptoms of languishing mental health, regardless of the presence or absence of mental illness; the term may not be appropriate when referring to severe mental illnesses.
- **Mental Illnesses:** *Mental illnesses* affect emotions, thoughts, and behaviors; they are formally diagnosed based on the nature, degree, and longevity of impairment experienced.
- **Severe Mental Illnesses (SMIs):** *SMIs* are mental disorders resulting in acute functional impairment.
- **Lived Experience:** The personal experience of living with a mental health challenge or severe mental illness.
- **Recovery:** For people who live with a mental illness for a long time, we use the word *recovery* to describe their experience of getting better. Recovery means that although you still experience some symptoms of illness, you have learned how to care for yourself, and are able to flourish. A recovery journey means you are still able to achieve your goals and enjoy a meaningful life full of community, faith, and purpose.
- **Self-Care:** *Self-care* is any activity that you do on purpose in order to take care of your mental, emotional, and physical health. It's less about *what* you do and more about *how* and *why* you're doing it.



Appendix B: Recommended Resources for Topics Mentioned in The Sanctuary Youth Series

Sanctuary Mental Health Ministries is a Canadian charity with offices in North America and the UK. The list of resources contained in this appendix reflects our history, partnerships, and location as an organization, and is by no means exhaustive. If you are looking for local mental health services or information in another language, we encourage you to search online or reach out to your local churches/parishes and health care providers for referrals and additional resources.

Abuse

The laws to protect children and youth from abuse and neglect vary across countries, and even states or provinces, so it's important to familiarize yourself with your local laws and services. If you have concerns about a child's safety and wellbeing, you should report it to your local child protection services (and in some instances it is mandatory you do so). If you suspect a child is in immediate danger, call emergency services or your local police.

- **Australia:** For contact details for each state and territory, visit the Australian Institute of Family Studies' resource sheet, "Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect":
aifs.gov.au/resources/resource-sheets/reporting-child-abuse-and-neglect
- **Canada:** For provincial and territorial resources, visit the Canadian Child Welfare Research Portal:
cwrp.ca/provincial-and-territorial-assistance
- **New Zealand:** For information and resources, visit the Ministry of Justice:
justice.govt.nz/family/keep-children-safe
- **United Kingdom:** For information about reporting, visit the United Kingdom government website:
gov.uk/report-child-abuse
- **United States:** Call the Childhelp National Abuse Hotline (available 24/7): 800-422-4453 or visit childhelphotline.org

Bravehearts: bravehearts.org.au

Bravehearts is actively involved in child protection research and reform. They use their research to help prevent, respond to, and ultimately reduce the incidence of child sexual abuse in Australia.

Canadian Centre for Child Protection: protectchildren.ca

The Canadian Centre for Child Protection is a national charity dedicated to the personal safety of all children. Their goal is to reduce the sexual abuse and exploitation of children, assist in the location of missing children, and prevent child victimization through a number of programs, services, and resources for Canadian families, educators, child-serving organizations, law enforcement, and other parties.



Childhelp: childhelpline.org

Childhelp exists to meet the physical, emotional, educational, and spiritual needs of abused, neglected, and at-risk children in the United States. On their website you can find information about abuse for teens and parents, a guide to reporting abuse, and counselors available 24/7 (call or text 1-800-422-4453).

Domestic and Family Violence

Common Grace: commongrace.org.au/domestic_violence

Common Grace provides resources to equip individuals, churches, and communities to pursue Jesus and justice together, for the flourishing of all people and all creation. They have a section dedicated to the topic of domestic and family violence, including SAFER. SAFER is an online resource produced to help churches support and prioritize victims of domestic and family violence, and learn how to deal with perpetrators.

Government of Canada: [Find Family Violence Resources and Services in Your Area](#)

A comprehensive list of national services and resources for women, youth and young adults, Indigenous people, and older adults. This website also includes crisis lines and services in your province or territory for people experiencing any type of family violence, as well as other helpful related links.

National Domestic Violence Hotline: thehotline.org

24/7, 365 days a year, the National Domestic Violence Hotline provides essential tools and support to help survivors of domestic violence in the United States. Highly-trained, expert advocates offer free, confidential, and compassionate support, crisis intervention information, education, and referral services in over 200 languages. Anyone in the US needing support can call 1-800-799-SAFE (7233) or text 'START' to 88788.

Restored: restored-uk.org

Restored is a Christian charity working to raise awareness of domestic abuse, support survivors, and equip the Church to do the same. Their website includes a number of resources and forms of support for individuals and churches in the UK.

Ridley College, Responding to Domestic Violence:

certificate.ridley.edu.au/courses/responding-to-domestic-and-family-violence

Ridley College is a theological college in Melbourne, Australia. They provide a free online course that will give you a better understanding of Domestic and Family Violence (DFV) and help you think through it theologically. Across six interactive lessons, you will learn how it affects Christians and Christian communities, strengthen your theological framework, learn how to practically respond, and gain confidence responding pastorally to people experiencing violence, and people choosing to use violence.



Anxiety

Anxiety and Depression Association of America (ADAA): adaa.org

ADAA provides evidence-based educational resources on a number of mental illnesses, including general anxiety disorder, panic disorder, phobias, selective mutism, and social anxiety. On their website you'll find blog posts, videos, webinars, and their Find Your Therapist Directory.

Bite Back: biteback.org.au

Bite Back is **Black Dog Institute's** free, self-guided online wellbeing and resilience program for young people (appropriate for ages twelve to eighteen, but with a particular focus on ages thirteen to sixteen). It includes six weekly challenges to help improve mental fitness, increase happiness, reduce stress, improve friendships, and improve focus. Evidence shows that using Bite Back can decrease symptoms of depression and anxiety and increase wellbeing.

Clear Fear: clearfear.co.uk

Clear Fear is an app to help children and young people manage the symptoms of anxiety. It was developed for teenage mental health charity **stem4** by a clinical psychologist, in collaboration with young people. Please note the app is an aid in treatment but does not replace it.

MindShift: anxietycanada.com/resources/mindshift-cbt

MindShift is an app by **Anxiety Canada** that uses scientifically proven strategies based on Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) to help people learn to relax and be mindful, develop more effective ways of thinking, and use active steps to take charge of their anxiety. A new feature, the community forum, now enables you to find and offer peer-to-peer support.

Bullying

BullyingCanada: bullyingcanada.ca

BullyingCanada is Canada's only wrap-around mental health service for bullied youth. They work one-on-one with youth, their parents, and local supports. They run workshops and offer Lifeline: Bullied Youth Support Network, which provides 24/7 support for youth who need support. Call or text (1-877-352-4497) or email (support@bullyingcanada.ca).

Bullying No Way! bullyingnoway.gov.au

Bullying No Way provides resources, advice, and support for bullying prevention and education. Information is directed at young people (being bullied or bullying others), schools, and families. Topics explored include understanding, responding to, preventing, and teaching about bullying and includes guidance on what to do if you or your child is being bullied.



Kids Helpline: kidshelpline.com.au/teens/issues/bullying

The Australian Kids Helpline offers support and education. This page explains what bullying is and is not, types of bullying, and guidance on what to do, how to respond, and how to cope. On this website you can also find information about cyberbullying.

Stop Bullying: stopbullying.gov

Stop Bullying is an initiative of the United States government and provides information on bullying, cyberbullying, prevention, resources, and guidance on what to do and where to go for help. The website offers information directed at youth, parents, and educators.

Depression

Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance: dbsalliance.org

This site provides hope, help, support, and education to improve the lives of people who have mood disorders. On their website you can find information about mood disorders, resources, and guidance on treatment options for all ages. They also have a program called Mood Crew to help parents/caregivers talk to their children about feelings.

mindyourmind: mindyourmind.ca

mindyourmind works with young people aged fourteen to twenty-nine to co-create interactive tools and innovative resources to build capacity and resilience. They also offer guidance about getting help and helping others, wellness tips, and information about various mental health challenges, including depression.

Move Mood: movemood.co.uk

Move Mood is an app to help teenagers manage low mood and depression using evidence-based treatment. It was developed for teenage mental health charity [stem4](http://stem4.org) by a clinical psychologist, in collaboration with young people. Please note the app is an aid in treatment but does not replace it. Their website also has valuable information about a number of topics young people may be worried about, including depression.

myCompass: mycompass.org.au

myCompass is a free, customizable self-help tool developed by the [Black Dog Institute](http://blackdoginstitute.org.au). It will help you learn new tools to deal with thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. It has fourteen interactive learning activities. Each includes up to three ten to fifteen minute sessions you can complete in your own time. When used correctly, myCompass enables lasting improvements to mood, anxiety, and stress levels. *An Australian postcode is needed to register.



Bipolar Disorder

bpHope.com: bphope.com

For those facing a recent diagnosis, managing daily symptoms, or supporting a loved one with bipolar disorder, bpHope provides evidence-based information and support. They have a section devoted to caregivers of children and teens living with bipolar. Learn about the treatments for bipolar disorder and get family support.



Although bipolar disorder isn't mentioned in *The Sanctuary Youth Series*, we include it here as symptoms of depression can be present in bipolar.

Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance: dbsalliance.org

This site provides hope, help, support, and education to improve the lives of people who have mood disorders. On their website you can find information about mood disorders, resources, and guidance on treatment options for all ages. They also have a program called Mood Crew to help parents/caregivers talk to their children about feelings.

Healthline: healthline.com/health/bipolar-disorder

Healthline is dedicated to making health and wellness information accessible, understandable, and actionable so that readers can make the best possible decisions about their health. Their content is created, fact-checked, and reviewed by qualified writers, editors, clinicians, and other contributors. This article covers everything you need to know about bipolar disorder, including how it may present in children and teens.

International Bipolar Foundation (IBPF): ibpf.org

The IBPF focuses on mental health awareness, in addition to education, resources, and supportive connections for all who are touched by bipolar disorder. They also highlight and honor the multitude of remarkable contributions that those living with bipolar disorder continue to offer throughout our world. They offer information specific to bipolar in youth and have a library of webinars.

Eating Disorders/Disordered Eating

Beat Eating Disorders: beateatingdisorders.org.uk

Beat exists to encourage and empower people experiencing an eating disorder to get help quickly. They can be contacted online or by phone: (0808-801-0677). They also support family and friends, equipping them with essential skills and advice.

Butterfly Foundation: butterfly.org.au

Butterfly Foundation is the national charity for all Australians impacted by eating disorders and body image issues, and for the families, friends, and communities who support them. They provide innovative, evidence-based support services, treatments, and resources. Their free and confidential support helpline is 1800 33 4673.



The National Eating Disorders Association (NEDA): nationaleatingdisorders.org

NEDA works to advance research, build community, and raise awareness to support Americans experiencing an eating disorder or supporting someone who is. Their helpline is: 1-800-931-2237. You can also text 'NEDA' to 741741 for 24/7 crisis support.

The National Eating Disorder Information Centre (NEDIC): nedic.ca

NEDIC is a bridge between community and care for people affected by eating disorders in Canada. They offer information, resources, referrals, and support through their toll-free helpline (1-866-633-4220) and live chat platform, and serve individuals living with an eating disorder as well as the people who care for them.

Worth Warrior: worthwarrior.co.uk

Worth Warrior is an app to help young people manage low self-worth, poor body image, and related eating disorders. It's recommended for ages twelve and above. It was developed for teenage mental health charity [stem4](#) by a clinical psychologist, in collaboration with young people. Please note the app is an aid in treatment but does not replace it.

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

Anxiety Canada: anxietycanada.com/disorders/post-traumatic-stress-disorder-2

Anxiety Canada seeks to reduce the barrier of anxiety so people can live the life they want. They provide information about anxiety in children, youth, adults, and older adults. They also provide information about PTSD, as well as a resource called My Anxiety Plan (MAP), which is designed to provide children/teens with practical strategies and tools to manage anxiety.

headspace: headspace.org.au/explore-topics/for-young-people/post-traumatic-stress-disorder

headspace is an Australian mental health foundation that helps young people access vital support. They also provide information for young people. Their website explores various topics young people face, including PTSD.

National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH): nimh.nih.gov

The National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) is the lead federal agency for research on mental illnesses in the United States. The mission of NIMH is to transform the understanding and treatment of mental illnesses through basic and clinical research, paving the way for prevention, recovery, and cure. On this website you can find a lot of information on PTSD, including its signs and symptoms, treatment suggestions, and further resources.

THISWAYUP: thiswayup.org.au/learning-hub/post-traumatic-stress-explained

THISWAYUP seeks to reduce the burden of mental illness by providing accessible online treatment for anxiety disorders and related mental health conditions. You will find helpful information and programs about a range of mental illnesses, including PTSD. The online PTSD treatment course is available for free with the approval and supervision of your clinician.



Self-Harm and Non-Suicidal Self-Injury (NSSI)

Alumina: selfharm.co.uk

Alumina is a free, online, seven-week course for young people (ten to seventeen years old) in the UK struggling with self-harm. Each course has up to fourteen young people, all accessing the sessions (with their camera and mic off) from their own devices across the UK. It is run by friendly, trained counselors and volunteer youth workers. No referral needed, but for ages ten to twelve, permission from the adult you live with is required.

Calm Harm: calmharm.co.uk

Calm Harm is designed to help people resist the urge to self-harm by providing a range of activities to help users regulate strong emotions and promote self-care behaviors. It can be used by individuals aged thirteen years and over.

Self-Injury and Recovery Resources (SIRR): selfinjury.bctr.cornell.edu

This website comes from the Cornell Research Program on Self-Injury and Recovery, and is dedicated to sharing resources related to self-injury and associated conditions. SIRR also aims to translate the growing body of knowledge about self-injury into resources and tools useful for those seeking to better understand, treat, and prevent it. They also offer online courses for a fee.

Self-Injury Outreach and Support (SiOS): sioutreach.org

SiOS is an international outreach organization providing current information and helpful resources about self-injury to individuals who self-injure, those who have recovered, as well as their caregivers and families, friends, teachers, and the health professionals who work with them. It is part of a collaboration between McGill University and the University of Guelph in Canada.

Sexual Assault

1800RESPECT: 1800respect.org.au

1800RESPECT is the national domestic, family, and sexual violence counseling, information, and support service for Australia. 24/7 counseling is available via call, text, online chat, or video call. You will also find information about seeking support for yourself, supporting someone else, and information about healthy relationships.

Ending Violence Association of Canada (EVA): endingviolencecanada.org

Through research, education, policy change, and advocacy, the EVA identifies and promotes the solutions necessary to address the root causes of sexual violence. Their site provides links and contact info for support centers and crisis lines in every province.



The NHS: [nhs.uk/live-well/sexual-health/help-after-rape-and-sexual-assault](https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/sexual-health/help-after-rape-and-sexual-assault)

On the NHS website you can quickly find your local sexual assault referral centre (SARC) using a town, city, or postcode in England. The website also provides information on sexual assault, guidance on supporting someone else, and what to do if you're worried about a child. For resources outside of England, check with your local health service, such as:

- **NHS 24 Scotland** for services in Scotland
- **NHS 111 Wales** for services in Wales
- **HSCNI Online** for services in Northern Ireland

Rape, Abuse, and Incest National Network (RAINN): rainn.org

RAINN is the United States' largest anti-sexual violence organization. In addition to operating the National Sexual Assault Hotline, RAINN also carries out programs to prevent sexual violence, help survivors, and ensure that perpetrators are brought to justice. If you need help, their hotline is available 24/7: 1-800-656-HOPE (4673).

Rape Crisis England and Wales: rapecrisis.org.uk

If you think you may have had something sexual happen to you without your consent—recently or in the past—Rape Crisis England and Wales are here to help you think through your options and next steps. They offer support for all ages, as well as guidance for those wanting to support a survivor of sexual violence.

Social Media and Technology

Andy Crouch: andy-crouch.com

Andy Crouch's writing explores faith, culture, and the image of God in the domains of technology, power, leadership, and the arts. We recommend two of his books on this topic, *The Life We're Looking For: Reclaiming Relationship in a Technological World*, and *The Tech-Wise Family: Everyday Steps for Putting Technology in Its Proper Place*. You may also like to check out the *Tech-Wise Family Course*, which equips families to design home-lives where technology plays a supporting role instead of a consuming role.

The Anxious Generation: anxiousgeneration.com

This website provides resources and research to supplement the book, *The Anxious Generation*, by social psychologist Jonathan Haidt. Haidt lays out the facts about the epidemic of teen mental illness that hit many countries at the same time. He describes steps that parents, teachers, schools, tech companies, and governments can take to end the epidemic of mental illness and restore a more humane childhood.

eSafety Commissioner: esafety.gov.au

The eSafety Commissioner (eSafety) is Australia's independent regulator for online safety. They are the world's first government agency dedicated to keeping people safer online. They provide a range of resources in a number of languages. Some of their resources include webinars, safety guides, videos, conversation guides, and family tech agreement templates.



National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI): nami.org

NAMI is an alliance across America which includes more than 700 local affiliates and state organizations. They are working in local communities to raise awareness, build advocacy, and provide support and education. We recommend their article, [Social Media and Your Family](#). The article provides some tips to help you and your family navigate social media together. Further resources are listed at the end of the article, including resources from major tech companies and social media companies.

The Prevention Project: thepreventionproject.ca

Hosted on a unique platform that is freely accessible to all, The Prevention Project offers fun, engaging, and groundbreaking multimedia resources that are designed to equip children and youth from grades three to twelve with the skills to navigate online interactions and in-person relationships in a safe and healthy way. There are also recommended resources for parents and educators. It was developed by the [Exploitation Education Institute](#) and the [Ally Global Foundation](#).

The US Surgeon General's 2023 Advisory: Social Media and Youth Mental Health: surgeongeneral.gov/ymh-social-media

This advisory describes the current evidence of the impacts of social media on the mental health of children and adolescents. It states that we cannot conclude social media is sufficiently safe for children and adolescents and outlines immediate steps we can all take to mitigate the risk of harm to children and adolescents. Scroll to the bottom of the webpage for additional resources.

Suicide

Canadian Association for Suicide Prevention (CASP): suicideprevention.ca

CASP provides information and resources to communities to reduce the suicide rate and minimize the harmful consequences of suicide-related thoughts and behaviors. Some suggested articles: [Suicide Grief in Children and Adolescents](#), [Toolkit for People Who Have Been Impacted By Suicide Loss](#), and [Talking To Children About A Suicide](#).

Centre for Suicide Prevention (CSP): suicideinfo.ca

CSP is an education center and a branch of the Canadian Mental Health Association. They equip Canadians with the information, knowledge, and skills necessary to respond to people considering suicide. They educate online, in print, and interactively. Their library of over 50,000 suicide-specific items, the largest English-language collection of its kind, informs the work CSP does. They also offer workshops.

The Jed Foundation: jedfoundation.org

The Jed Foundation is a nonprofit that protects emotional health and prevents suicide for teens and young adults in the United States by giving them the skills and support they need to thrive today and tomorrow. They also provide information and guidance for friends and adults who want to help.



PAPYRUS: papyrus-uk.org

PAPYRUS Prevention of Young Suicide is the leading UK charity dedicated to the prevention of suicide and the promotion of positive mental health and emotional wellbeing in young people. Their 24/7 suicide prevention helpline, HOPELINE247, is staffed by trained suicide prevention advisers.

R U OK?: ruok.org.au

R U OK? is a public health promotion charity that encourages people to stay connected and have conversations that can help others through difficult times in their lives. R U OK? contributes to suicide prevention efforts by building the motivation, confidence, and skills of the help-giver—the person who can have a meaningful conversation with someone who is struggling with life.



Appendix C: Additional Recommended Resources

Sanctuary Mental Health Ministries is a Canadian charity with offices in North America and the UK. The list of resources contained in this appendix reflects our history, partnerships, and location as an organization, and is by no means exhaustive. If you are looking for local mental health services or information in another language, we encourage you to search online or reach out to your local churches and health care providers for referrals and additional resources.

Emergency Resources

If a critical situation arises, attend your nearest hospital emergency department or call your local emergency number.

- **Australia:** 000
- **Canada:** 911
- **European Union:** 112
- **New Zealand:** 111
- **United Kingdom:** 999
- **United States:** 911

Crisis Lines

If you are considering suicide or are concerned about someone who may be, crisis lines are free, anonymous, confidential, and available 24/7.

- **Australia:**
 - 13 11 14 (Lifeline)
 - 13 92 76 (13YARN, for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders: 13yarn.org.au)
- **Canada:**
 - 988 (National Suicide Prevention Lifeline three-digit dialing code)
 - 1-833-456-4566 (Crisis Services Canada)
- **New Zealand:**
 - 1737 (National Mental Health and Addictions Helpline)
 - 0800-543-354 (Lifeline Aotearoa)
- **United Kingdom:** 116 123 (Samaritans)
- **United States:**
 - 1-800-273-8255 (National Suicide Prevention Lifeline)
 - 988 (National Suicide Prevention Lifeline three-digit dialing code)



Helplines

A helpline or warmline is a free and confidential number young people can call if they need someone to talk to. Typically a helpline will connect you to a counselor or trained supporter and a warmline will connect you with peer support. Note, neither should be used in a crisis or emergency. To find free, confidential support from a helpline or hotline near you, visit Find A Helpline (International): findahelpline.com

- **Australia:**
 - 1800-55-1800 (Kids Helpline: kidshelpline.com.au)
 - 1800-650-890 (headspace: headspace.org.au)
- **Canada:**
 - 1800-668-6868 (Kids Help Phone: kidshelpphone.ca)
 - 1-855-242-3310 (Hope for Wellness for Indigenous people across Canada: hopeforwellness.ca)
- **European Union:** 116-111 (see childhelplineinternational.org/helplines/116-111-eu)
- **New Zealand:**
 - 0508-927-654 (Lifeline warmline: lifeline.org.nz)
 - 0800-376-633 (Youthline: youthline.co.nz)
- **United Kingdom:** 0800-1111 (Childline: childline.org.uk)
- **United States:** (search the directory for your closest line: warmline.org/warmdir.html)

General Information: Youth Mental Health

The content of the websites listed below reflects the views of their respective organizations and does not always represent the views of Sanctuary.

Family Smart: familysmart.ca

Family Smart is a Canadian charity that helps children and young people by helping their families and other caring adults. They provide practical help, service navigation, and peer support to families and caring adults to build their connections, knowledge, and capacity to better support their kids' mental health.

headspace: headspace.org.au

headspace is an Australian mental health foundation that helps young people access vital support through online and phone counseling services, vocational services, and school programs. They have information directed at youth and those who may be part of a young person's support network.

Kelty Mental Health Resource Centre

— Podcast: keltymentalhealth.ca/podcast

Through real stories, expertise, and practical tips, this podcast helps families promote their mental health and wellness, navigating important topics to meet parents/caregivers and their children where they are in their journey.



— The SELF Toolkit

keltymentalhealth.ca/sites/default/files/resources/Adolescent%20Toolkit%20Provincial.pdf

The SELF Toolkit is a worksheet for young people to work through to help them identify things that tend to cause them stress, what stress looks like for them, and what tools they can try to help them feel better.

Kids Helpline: kidshelpline.com.au

In addition to running Australia's only free, confidential 24/7 online and phone counseling service for young people, the Kids Helpline website offers helpful information about a range of topics young people face, including mental health. There's information for young people and those wanting guidance on how best to support young people.

Mental Health Literacy: mentalhealthliteracy.org

Mental Health Literacy creates and delivers high quality mental health literacy information, research, education, and resources. Their materials are provided in a variety of mediums that include videos, animations, brochures, e-books, face-to-face training programs, and online training programs. Their materials are specifically designed to meet the needs of children, youth, young adults, families, educators, community agencies, and health care providers.

mindyourmind: mindyourmind.ca

mindyourmind works with young people aged fourteen to twenty-nine to co-create interactive tools and innovative resources to build capacity and resilience. They also offer guidance about getting help and helping others, wellness tips, and information about various mental health challenges, including depression.

National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI): nami.org

NAMI is an alliance across America which includes more than 700 local affiliates and state organizations. They are working in local communities to raise awareness, build advocacy, and provide support and education. This organization also offers information and resources addressing the cultural dimensions of mental health.

ReachOut: au.reachout.com

ReachOut helps young people connect on their terms. From one-to-one peer support and moderated online communities, to tips, stories and resources, ReachOut offers a wide range of support options that allow young people to engage in the ways they want to, when they want to.

stem4: stem4.org.uk

The UK's leading digital mental health charity for children and young people. They offer a suite of evidence-based mental health apps that support various mental health conditions, as well as mental health literacy programs in schools and mental health training of parents and carers. Their free offerings help thousands of young people manage anxiety, self-harm, depression, and eating disorders across the UK every single day, whilst also learning to build resilience and become safe online.



Young Minds: youngminds.org.uk

Young Minds provide young people with the tools to look after their mental health, and they empower adults to be the best support they can be to the young people in their lives. Through sharing information, training, resources, and real stories, young people feel less alone when it comes to their mental health.

Youth Mental Health Canada (YMHC): ymhc.ngo

YMHC is a national network dedicated to transforming mental health and suicide prevention through evidence, strength, and hope-based educational resources, initiatives, services, workshops, and training. As a registered community-based, youth-driven, and educator-led charitable non-profit organization, they have a strong focus on young people, family, school, and community engagement.

Training

Be There Certificate: betherecertificate.org

Learn to support someone struggling with their mental health through this free online course created by [Jack.org](https://jack.org) in partnership with Born This Way Foundation. It's designed to increase mental health literacy, and provide you with the knowledge, skills, and confidence needed to safely support others. It takes less than two hours to complete the six interactive lessons.

Mental Health First Aid (MHFA): mhfa.com.au

MHFA is a community mental health education program designed to improve mental health literacy, decrease stigma, and equip participants with the knowledge and skills to respond when faced with a mental health crisis. Their course, Mental Health First Aid Supporting Youth, is specifically designed for members of the public who have frequent contact with young people (ages twelve to twenty-four). Originally released in Australia, versions of the program can now be found in more than twenty-five countries, and over four million people have been trained worldwide. For more information, search for MHFA training opportunities in your region.

The QPR Institute: qprinstitute.com

QPR stands for Question. Persuade. Refer. Anyone can learn these three steps and help prevent suicide. QPR helps to reduce suicidal behaviors and save lives by providing innovative, practical, and proven suicide prevention training. They believe that quality education empowers all people, regardless of their background, to make a positive difference in the life of someone they know. Training is available in-person and online.

YoungMinds: youngminds.org.uk

YoungMinds provides young people with the tools to look after their mental health, and empowers adults to be the best support they can be to the young people in their lives. Through sharing information, training, resources, and real stories, young people feel less alone when it comes to their mental health. They offer online webinars and training courses (for a fee).



Mental Health Ministries

Association of Catholic Mental Health Ministers: catholicmhm.org

The Association of Catholic Mental Health Ministers is committed to making mental health ministry available in every parish. This organization produces worship and liturgical resources, provides links to educational materials, offers a directory of mental health ministries, and trains laity and clergy in peer support.

Association of Christians in Counselling and Linked Professions: acc-uk.org

ACC is a UK-wide counseling organization that offers advice, support, and resources. They also provide training to support and promote the work of pastoral care in churches.

Gateway to Hope: mentalhealthgateway.org

Gateway to Hope offers educational courses that train congregations to develop effective situational responses, build and sustain support groups, and create a safe and loving environment for people living with mental health challenges.

Grace Alliance: mentalhealthgracealliance.org

Grace Alliance began as an organization dedicated to reinventing the mental health support group. In addition to their thriving Grace Groups program, they now offer workbooks and training for individuals, families, and congregations engaged in mental health recovery.

Hope for Mental Health: hope4mentalhealth.com

Hope for Mental Health is a ministry of Saddleback Church. In addition to running local support groups and offering online resources and training, Hope for Mental Health has developed a church-initiated mental health strategy that outlines the practical steps congregations can take to support those living with mental health challenges.

Key Ministry: keyministry.org

Key Ministry offers tools, resources, and training to churches who want to support individuals impacted by mental health challenges, trauma, and hidden disabilities.

Mind & Soul Foundation: mindandsoulfoundation.org

Mind & Soul Foundation is led by a team that includes a psychologist, a priest, and a psychiatrist. Together, they develop integrated resources aimed at educating, equipping, and encouraging Christians as they seek to understand mental health and support individuals living with mental health challenges.

Renew Wellbeing: renewwellbeing.org.uk

Renew Wellbeing is a UK ministry that partners with churches who want to open safe spaces in their communities. Renew spaces offer hobbies and activities, prayer, and relationships with local mental health service providers.

Spiritual First Aid: spiritualfirstaid.community

Spiritual First Aid is a six-session certificate course that teaches peer-to-peer spiritual and emotional care and trauma-informed best practices. You will gain practical helping skills through activities and role-play simulations. All content is on-demand so you can complete it at your own pace.



Appendix D: Presenting The Sanctuary Youth Series to Your Faith Community

We're so glad that you're interested in this series. If you would like your church, parish, or school to run *The Sanctuary Youth Series* and they have not done so yet, here is some information that can help you present it to your faith community as a programming option.

If you haven't done so already, familiarize yourself with the learning outcomes of *The Sanctuary Youth Series*. This will help you communicate clearly about the series.

Learning Outcomes

Sanctuary's youth resource is designed to raise awareness and reduce stigma by starting conversations about mental health in youth groups and schools. By the end of this series, young people will have:

- Increased their mental health literacy
- Tackled the stigma surrounding mental illnesses
- Learned how to care for their own mental health
- Developed positive attitudes towards help-seeking
- Cultivated a greater understanding of God and explored what it looks like to follow God in seasons of flourishing and languishing mental health
- Engaged in spiritual practices of companionship

Next, we recommend that you speak to the appropriate leaders in your church, parish, or school. You may want to send an initial email and then follow up with a call or when you see them in-person. You will find an email template that you can use on the next page.

After initially reaching out, you might also like to introduce them to the complementary adult resource, *The Sanctuary Course* or *The Sanctuary Course for Catholics*, which covers the same themes, uses much of the same language, and teaches the same framework for understanding mental health and faith. Both resources utilized together will aid intergenerational conversations and see a broader range of ages equipped to support mental health and wellbeing in your community. More information can be found here: <https://sanctuarymentalhealth.org/sanctuary-course/>



New Message



To

Subject

Dear [name],

I've come across a free, high-quality resource that I believe would be beneficial for youth in our community.

As you may already know, mental health is a critical topic for youth. Research consistently reports high rates of mental illnesses among young people, with studies suggesting that half of all lifetime mental health challenges emerge by age fourteen. Statistics like this show us how important it is to address these topics early on.

The Sanctuary Youth Series provides a valuable opportunity for our church/parish/school community to support the mental wellbeing of our youth. It's a free, dynamic, interactive, evidence-based curriculum that helps young people explore questions about faith and mental health over eight sessions. I believe this is a meaningful resource that could make a significant difference in our church/parish/school community. In addition to delivering age-appropriate content that offers both theological and psychological perspectives, the series fosters important conversations between young people and the trusted adults in their lives. Research consistently shows that young people who feel connected to adults are more resilient when navigating mental health challenges. Young people want to talk about mental health, but they don't always know how to begin. *The Sanctuary Youth Series* will engage students in conversations that will raise awareness, reduce stigma, foster resilience, and increase help-seeking. It also offers our students the opportunity to hear from other young people of faith as they share their lived experiences of mental health challenges.

I understand that running a series on mental health and faith might feel daunting, which is why Sanctuary has created a series that is designed to be simple to implement and requires no prior training or expertise to facilitate. All of the educational content is presented in the films (which are downloadable from the Sanctuary Mental Health Ministries' portal) and all the instructions and guidance you need to run *The Sanctuary Youth Series* are found in the facilitation guide. Each session includes games, a film with a lived experience story, discussion questions, evidence-based practices, and prayers.

I encourage you to consider using this valuable resource. It could have a profound impact on our students.

For more information, visit Sanctuary's website: <https://sanctuarymentalhealth.org/youth-series/>

Warm regards,
[your name]

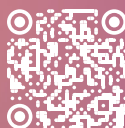


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