

Standard 8 Lesson 1: Finding Hope in Life's Circumstances

Time: 45-minute class period

Materials:

Scripture Reference Guide

Helping a Friend Handout

Circumstance Cards- Cut slips of paper or use index cards (enough for each group to have one).

Overcoming Difficult Circumstances Handout (2 Kings 5)

Objectives:

Students will be able to make a list of ways teens become “emotionally paralyzed” by life.

Students will be able to discuss ways to help friends who are struggling.

Students will be able to discuss hope despite difficult circumstances.

Introductory Activity

Ask if anyone can still recite **Philippians 4:6, 7** Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.

And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, shall guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

(This was the Scripture Memory Verse for Standard Seven – Lesson One.)

Activities

Give students Helping a Friend handout and have students read Mark 2:1-5. Students brainstorm ways that teens become “paralyzed” emotionally (life circumstances, relationships, stresses, etc.) and make a list on the board. Discuss how friends can reach out to help their peers in these situations. Write the ideas on Circumstance Cards. Brainstorm ways to help others (Refer to materials in the Teacher Training Manual – Social Work Specialty on Emotional First Aid)

Get students into groups of four. Distribute a Circumstance Card to each group. Ask them to create a skit and role play what they would do to help their friend.

Have students memorize the Scripture Memory Verse for this lesson: **Philippians 4:13** – *I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.*

Read 2 Kings 5 Handout and discuss Naaman's wife's servant girl. Have students fill out the questions on the second page. Discuss their answers as a group

Helping a Friend

Friends can be a lifeline for a hurting friend. When someone is in emotional crisis, we often refer to him or her as being “emotionally paralyzed.” They are unable to bring themselves out of the stress they feel and are immobilized. Peers can be a vital link to intervening on behalf of a friend. In the book of Mark, we read a story of peers who worked together to get their friend to the help he needed.

And when He (Jesus) had come back to Capernaum several days afterward, it was heard that He was at home. And many were gathered together, so that there was no longer room, even near the door; and He was speaking the word to them.

And they came, bringing to Him a paralytic, carried by four men. And being unable to get to Him because of the crowd, they removed the roof above Him; and when they had dug an opening, they let down the pallet on which the paralytic was lying. And Jesus seeing their faith said to the paralytic, “My son, your sins are forgiven.” Mark 2:1-5

What did the friends do to help their friend?

What obstacles did they have to overcome to get their friend to the help he needed?

What could you do to help a friend who is “paralyzed” by life?

What are the obstacles you might have to overcome?

Jesus healed the man, both physically and spiritually. The faithful actions of his friends brought this paralyzed man to Jesus for healing. They acted when their friend was incapable of acting. They worked together to remove the obstacles that had made this man’s physical and spiritual life hopeless. God is the one who can move a person paralyzed physically or emotionally, to hope again. As in the example from Mark 2, God sometimes allows us to play a part in bringing someone to Him for healing.

Overcoming Difficult Circumstances Worksheet

II Kings 5 Israeli Servant Girl

This little girl has no name, but God used her to influence an army captain, his wife, two kings and a prophet of God. Consider how powerfully God used her in spite of her difficult circumstances.

Now Naaman, captain of the army of the king of Aram, was a great man with his master, and highly respected, because by him the Lord had given victory to Aram. The man was also a valiant warrior, but he was a leper.

Now the Arameans had gone out in bands, and had taken captive a little girl from the land of Israel; and she waited on Naaman's wife. And she said to her mistress, "I wish that my master were with the prophet who is in Samaria! Then he would cure him of his leprosy."

And Naaman went in and told his master, the king saying, "Thus and thus spoke the girl who is from the land of Israel."

Then the king of Aram said, "Go now, and I will send a letter to the king of Israel."

And he brought the letter to the king of Israel, saying, "And now as this letter comes to you, behold, I have sent Naaman my servant to you, that you may cure him of his leprosy."

...And Elisha said, "Now let him come to me, and he shall know that there is a prophet in Israel."

And Elisha sent a messenger to Naaman, saying, "Go and wash in the Jordan seven times, and your flesh shall be restored to you and you shall be clean."

II Kings 5:1-14 NASV

Overcoming Difficult Circumstances Worksheet
II Kings 5 Israeli Servant Girl

*After getting over his poor attitude, Naaman did go and God healed him. But, the servant girl is the topic of this activity. She and her parents probably had some dreams for her life that did not include capture and slavery, yet God had great plans for her that have preserved her in the pages of Scripture to this day. Jeremiah 29:11 says, “**I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.”***

What were her difficult circumstances?

Where might those circumstances have placed her on the depression continuum?

What preserved her hope?

Philippians 4:13
“I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.”

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