



Session 5

Hopes and Dreams

Aim: to consider the importance of balance and how we can support one another to live well and pursue our hopes and dreams.

Items needed this week

- Jar, golf balls / rocks, pebbles / marbles, sand and coffee (available to buy from pound stores / garden centres)
- Printed copies of the Personality Questionnaire (pages 1-9 of Appendix 7) for each member of the group. Familiarise yourself with the questionnaire and decide the best way you may want to do this activity.
- A variety of drawing materials, eg A3 paper/card, (watercolour/poster) paints, chalk pastels, pens, pencils, paint brushes, cups/jars to fill with water to clean brushes etc
- Optional: laptop with internet connection or smartphone, and speakers for playing background music
- Post-it Notes, pens
- Riverbank The Course Session 5 PowerPoint Template

Welcome

Give a short summary recapping the previous session. Ask the group how they have been getting on over the past week and whether anyone has any thoughts/reflections. Allow a couple of minutes for sharing.

Icebreaker

‘What’s my job?’

Write a selection of different jobs on Post-it Notes (examples below). Get the women to secretly pick a Post-it Note and then ask the women to get into pairs. After asking permission, they would then need to stick the Post-it Notes on their partner’s foreheads without their partner seeing what profession is written. Taking turns, the woman with the Note stuck

on will be allowed just 10 'yes/no' questions to ask their partner in order to guess what their mystery profession is, and vice versa.

Here are some examples:.

Doctor

Computer Engineer

Ballerina

Model

Nanny

Police Officer

Hairdresser

Politician

Shopkeeper

Photographer

Dentist

Builder

Secretary

Astronaut

Chef

Actress

Activities

BLOB Pictures (Appendix 6)

Hand out printed copies of the two Blob diagrams or project them on a screen.

What do you think some of the other blobs on the diagram symbolise?

There may be a difference in opinions and perspectives of how the different blobs are seen. Encourage further conversation around this.

Jar Exercise

As you tell the story, illustrate it to the group with your own jar. Alternatively you may choose to use the video linked in the Session 5 PowerPoint template.

When things in your life seem almost too much to handle, when 24 hours in a day are not enough, remember the mayonnaise jar - and the coffee.

A professor stood before his philosophy class and had some items in front of him. When the class began, he picked up a very large and empty mayonnaise jar and proceeded to fill it with golf balls. He then asked the students if the jar was full. They agreed that it was.

So the professor then picked up a box of small pebbles and poured them into the jar. He shook the jar lightly. The pebbles rolled into the open areas between the golf balls. He then asked the students again if the jar was full. They agreed it was.

The professor next picked up a box of sand and poured it into the jar. Of course, the sand filled up everything else. He asked once more if the jar was full. The students responded with a unanimous 'yes'.

The professor then produced two cups of coffee from under the table and poured the entire contents into the jar, effectively filling the empty space between the sand. The students laughed.

'Now,' said the professor, as the laughter subsided, 'I want you to recognise that this jar represents your life. The golf balls are the important things - God, your family, your children, your health, your friends, and your favourite passions - things that if everything else was lost and only they remained, your life would still be full. The pebbles are the other things that matter, like your job, your house and your car. The sand is everything else - the small stuff.'

'If you put the sand into the jar first,' he continued, 'there is no room for the pebbles or the golf balls. The same goes for life. If you spend all your time and energy on the small stuff, you will never have room for the things that are important to you. Pay attention to the things that are critical to your happiness. Play with your children. Take time to get medical check-ups. There will always be time to clean the house. Take care of the main things first, the things that really matter. Set your priorities. The rest is just sand.'

One of the students raised her hand and inquired what the coffee represented.

The professor smiled. 'I'm glad you asked. It just goes to show you that no matter how full your life may seem, there's always room for a couple of cups of coffee with a friend.'

Have a think about the things that are the golf balls / rocks in your life.

Before we move on, is there anything anyone doesn't understand from the story? Allow time and space to address any questions or to explain things further.

Encourage the group to write the answers in their notebooks.

What do you want to achieve and prioritise in your week?

Personality Questionnaire (Appendix 7)

Appendix 7 is the Personality Questionnaire, originally adapted from the BBC. Print a questionnaire for each woman (pages 1-9 only) as well

as the instructions on identifying which personality, and two sets of the personality type sheets - one set for your own reference.

When thinking about our hopes and dreams, it can be really helpful to remember that we are each very different. What may seem like an ideal day to one person would not suit another. Today we are going to spend some time discovering what type of person we are, in order to start understanding how we can begin to feel more fulfilled in our lives.

Suggestion: Distribute and go through the questionnaire together. Read each question and the four options below. Give the group a moment to circle/tick their answers before going on to the next question until you reach the end of the questionnaire. Talk through how the group can work out their individual results and 'personality type'. Ask the women to raise their hands as you read through the list of personality types. Hand out sheets to the group based on their personality types.

If you have more than one woman with the same personality type, ask them to sit together to read through the descriptions. You may want to photocopy extra sheets for them to take home if requested - this can be done for the next session.

Feedback on Personality Questionnaire (Appendix 7)

Ask for any feedback or insights from the Hopes and Dreams handout.

The Perfect Day

Ask the group to relax and close their eyes if they're comfortable, and then read the following to them very slowly:

A goal you have set yourself has been achieved - well done! Have a think for a moment about what that goal might be ... how realistic was it? How long did it take?

Things have turned out just as you hoped.

Ask the group to break into smaller groups and discuss the following questions:

- So, how do you feel when this happens?
- What are the changes you made?
- What might you be doing differently?
- Most importantly, how are you planning to celebrate?
- A coffee, a walk, a meal, a full-on party?
- Who will you invite?
- Make a plan to have something to celebrate in a few weeks' time.
- Where do you see yourself and why? Who/where would you like to be and why?

Craft: Drawing Class

Lay out all of the drawing/painting materials.

Did you know that there are many possible benefits of drawing and painting?

- *It could improve your concentration as you focus on details of the piece.*
- *It may sharpen your motor skills, which is your hand-eye coordination, and your critical thinking skills as you make decisions - for example, choosing which drawing tools to use, which colours, which direction to draw or paint on the paper, and so on.*
- *It can be relaxing and therapeutic and it helps you de-stress - it's a calming activity.*
- *It can help boost creativity and self-confidence by encouraging you to let your imagination run wild and wander.*
- *It can also help you exercise your non-verbal communication skills - it inspires you to communicate some of your deepest thoughts and feelings without saying them.*
- *Better problem-solving and perseverance - especially if the final drawing/painting is not quite what you want, but you may develop a determination to fix it until you get the desired results.*

Top tip



You could use Drawing Closer for this activity (available to download at salvationist.org.uk/resources/worship/drawing-closer) or just offer the option for people to create their own artwork.

(Sources: healthfitnessrevolution.com/top-10-health-benefits-painting, prima.co.uk/diet-and-health/healthy-living/news/a35929/5-surprising-benefits-of-drawing)

You are welcome to draw or paint whatever you feel like drawing or painting. There is no right or wrong way of doing this. This is our time to be as imaginative and creative as we want.

Feel free to play light instrumental music softly in the background - you can find a playlist on YouTube by simply doing a Google search. If there are children present, why not get them involved too.

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Reflect and respond

Spend some time reflecting on this session using the questions below:

- *What went well?*
- *Even better if ...?*
- *Is there anything else you'd like to say?*

Invite the group to write the answers to these questions in their notebook and follow up with them individually. Alternatively, have a time of open sharing

After the session, consider if there are any immediate changes to make based on the feedback. Record all other comments for future reference for your leader's feedback at the end of the programme.

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Preparation for Session 6

Towards the end of the session, ask the group to bring in some food and drink which will be shared at the end of next week's final session. Be aware that this might not be affordable for everyone, so keep it as optional. Give out Appendix 8 and encourage the group to reflect and fill out the questions before Session 6.

Don't forget to spend some time reflecting on this session - you may choose to refer back to the aim.