

Grow



HELPING GIRLS GROW IN JESUS

"Let your roots grow deep into Jesus."

Colossians 2:7

Module 12: Grow Your Courage



Girls Will learn

You can be brave. Your actions matter.

Key Verse

“For God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love, and self-discipline.” – 2 Timothy 1:7 NLT

Module Components

Create Energy	Get Hands-On	God’s Word	Application	Talk About It	Life Skills
<i>Strength Training</i> Can you list your strengths and weaknesses? <i>Confidence Collages</i> Create a visual representation of the things you are proud of.	<i>Girls and Perfectionism</i> Why do girls strive for perfection more than boys? <i>F-Words</i> Fear and Failure are not bad words. <i>My Brave Is</i> What does it look like for you to be brave?	<i>Courageous Christianity</i> Timothy needed to be brave. As Christians we can choose to be brave too.	<i>(En)courage</i> We can all be CEOs (Chief Encouragement Officers.) <i>Share Your Story</i> One of the most courageous things we can do is tell others about Jesus.	<i>Sanctity of Life</i> Abortion and medically assisted dying are legal in most areas, but are they the right thing to do?	<i>Public Speaking</i> A lot of people find public speaking scary. Try some of these activities to improve your skill and overcome your fear.

Suggested four-week schedule

Week 1: Create Energy, Get Hands-On

Week 2: God’s Word, Application

Week 3: Talk About It

Week 4: Life Skills

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Message to Leaders

What would being brave look like to you? Put another way, “what is your brave?”

Most girls can’t answer this, because they just don’t see themselves as brave. In the US, a 2014 study by Girls Leadership¹ showed that nearly half of girls didn’t think they were brave. (By the way, boys were more likely to say they were braver than girls.) While this could be linked to systemic gender inequalities in our culture, there is also a chance that this stems from a misunderstanding of what bravery is. In the same 2014 study, 59 per cent of teen girls defined bravery as “a heroic act in a dangerous situation” while only 18 per cent of teen girls defined bravery as “standing up for their beliefs and being honest about who they are.”

Even by this definition, bravery doesn’t always come easily. It can be difficult to stand up for our beliefs in a world that often mocks religion, or to be honest about our identity as Christians when doing so risks being ridiculed – or worse. Sometimes it’s so easy to stay in our comfort zone and do what it takes to fit in. But being brave requires us to step outside our comfort zone and to stand out.

Girls need those around them to model bravery. So, what is your brave? What small (or big) action can you do today to model courage to those around you? Spend some time praying about it and then grow your own courage.

Keep in mind that doing the courageous thing isn’t always popular. Sometimes being brave means standing alone in the world. But we can take heart and remember the words God spoke to Joshua: “Be strong and courageous! Do not be afraid or discouraged. For the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.” (Joshua 1:9) ~Laura

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Confidence Collages



What You Need

- One piece of plain paper per girl
- Old magazines
- Glue

What To Do

1. Using magazine clippings, have girls create a collage of words that positively describe themselves.

Strength Training



What You Need

- One copy of Appendix 12-A per girl
- Pens or pencils

What To Do

1. Distribute one copy of Appendix 12-A and a pen or pencil to each girl.
2. Allow 5-10 minutes to list their strengths and weaknesses and answer the two reflection questions.
3. Come together as a large group. Allow each girl to share a few of their strengths, a few of their weaknesses, and the answers to the two reflection questions, as they feel comfortable.

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4. Have a discussion.

Ask – How many of you had longer lists of weaknesses than strengths? Many of us have a harder time listing our strengths than our weaknesses. Why do you think this is? (humility, socialized to be modest, tendency to minimize our value, we are better at seeing our flaws etc.)

Ask – Do you ever use negative self-talk to try to fit in? Why do you do this, and how frequently? How might this be affecting your view of yourself?

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Girls and Perfectionism



What You Need

- One copy of Appendix 12-B per group of girls, plus one extra for the answer key
- Tape or sticky tac

Before You Begin

- Cut out the rectangles on your copies of Appendix 12-B, keeping one intact for as your answer key/

What To Do

1. Divide girls into groups of three to four. Distribute a prepared copy of Appendix 12-B to each group.
2. Allow 5-10 minutes for each group to assemble the Girls and Boys Flowcharts of Perfectionism.
3. Go over the correct answer together.
4. Ask – Do you agree with these flowcharts? Why or why not? How does seeing this make you feel?

F-Words: Fear and Failure



Share – Ellen Duffield in her book ‘The Brave Way’ says,
“It takes bravery to be fully human. To be proud of who we are yet open to growing. To be happy when others are pleased and okay when they are disappointed. To laugh with joy when we get it right and engage with curiosity when we get it wrong. To keep going. To risk failure.”²

Yet, so often teen girls (and adult women also!) struggle with the two F-words: FAIL and FEAR.

Hopefully by now your girls have built a level of comfort with one another such that you can spend some time engaging in the following questions.

Questions for discussion

1. Where have you failed recently? How spectacular a fail was it? What did you learn from it?
2. What would you try if you were less afraid of failing?

MY BRAVE IS

What You Need

- A whiteboard, chalkboard or chart paper
- One copy of Appendix 12-C “My Brave Is” for each girl
- Chalk and/or markers

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What To Do

Share the “Comfort Zone” diagram (right) with your girls by drawing it on a whiteboard or chart paper. Explain that every time we step outside of our comfort zone we feel fear and risk failure. However, if we can bravely push through the fear zone we will enter a place where we can learn and eventually grow! We do not grow by staying inside our comfort zone.

Everyone’s comfort zone is different. In the same way, everyone’s brave is different. What takes courage for one person will be different for another. Keep in mind that the goal when it comes to stepping outside of our comfort zone is to learn and grow; this is not an excuse to take unnecessary risks.

Distribute a copy of Appendix 12-C to each girl. Using markers, have them write what their “brave” would look like – i.e. what they would like to do to step outside of their comfort zone. Some examples may include:

- Running for student council
- Speaking or singing in public
- Trying out for a sports team
- Applying for a new job
- Asking for help when I need it
- Showing my emotions
- Trying new foods

GirlsLeadership.org launched a hashtag #MyBraveIs. If your girls are on social, you may want to encourage them to post a photo of themselves holding their “My Brave Is” declaration as a way of committing to stepping outside of their comfort zone.

OPTION: PRACTICE BRAVERY

If possible, this would be a great time to take the girls to something that would stretch their courage and/or allow them a safe space to try something and fail, then try again. Think of activities such as:

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- An escape room
- Rock climbing
- Canoeing/kayaking
- A moderately difficult hike
- Ax throwing

Take your girls' abilities and your resources into account in deciding which activity to attempt.

Courageous Christianity



2 Timothy 1:3-14

Ask – What is courage? (The ability to do something that frightens you.) Can we give some examples of things that would take courage? (Expect answers such as touch a spider, sky dive, ask someone out, sing in public etc.)

Share that we are going to read a passage from the Bible that is about courage. It isn't a story of little David slaying a giant, or Daniel entering the lion's den, though those all definitely took courage. This one is a bit more subtle than that.

Set the scene for the girls before you read the scripture. In today's scripture passage we get to eavesdrop into a letter between two early followers of Jesus: Paul and Timothy.

At the time of this writing, Paul is in prison in Rome for preaching the good news about Jesus. Things aren't going well, and he isn't sure he is going to make it out of this alive. Timothy, a younger student of Paul, is serving Jesus in Ephesus, a city in modern-day Turkey.

Paul is writing to Timothy to ask him to visit him quickly in Rome, before it is too late. This would have been an arduous journey in the first century AD and could have put Timothy at risk of being put in prison as well. And yet, Paul writes to Timothy and tells him to be brave.

Read 2 Timothy 1:3-14 together.

Paul tells Timothy in 2 Timothy 1:8 NLT, "Never be ashamed to tell others about our Lord. And don't be ashamed of me, either, even though I'm in prison for him." Supporting Paul publicly, Timothy was risking humiliation (because Paul was in prison, some early Christians were questioning his credibility).

For telling others about Jesus, Timothy was risking his safety and security as there was a chance that he, too, could be arrested. The verse continues with Paul telling Timothy to, “be ready to suffer . . . for the sake of the Good News [of Jesus.]” It would have taken great courage to continue to tell others about both Paul and Jesus.

Ask – In this passage, what gives Timothy courage to continue to serve Jesus publicly? (vs. 5 – the strong example of faith of his grandmother and mother; vs. 8 – The strength God gives; vs. 12 – knowing Jesus and trusting him; vs 13. – wholesome teaching; vs. 14 – the power of the Holy Spirit.)

Timothy is being asked to go against what would be normal for his world. Being brave, for Timothy, may mean standing alone, it may mean being ridiculed, it may even mean being imprisoned. But his faith, his trust in Jesus, and the power of the Holy Spirit make him brave.

Say – We’ve been talking about ways that Timothy was encouraged to stand up for Paul and for Jesus, and how that made him stand out in society. As a large group, brainstorm ways that Christians today can “stand out” in their society.

It may be helpful to use a white board or chart paper here to do a Character Map. Divide the paper into four quadrants (see below). Write the words “Work,” “Morals,” “Faith,” and “Attitude” in the quadrants. Have girls think about how they could stand out in these areas of their life. Some examples are given below.³

You may wish to share the video “Courage is...” by Bluefish TV with your girls. As of 2024, this video was also available on YouTube and is also available on RightNow Media: <https://www.rightnowmedia.org/Content/illustration/98357>.

If you do not have access to RightNow Media, invite girls to revisit your definition of courage, and the examples you came up with.

Share that, while jumping out of an airplane takes courage, so do these actions:

- Refusing to cheat on a test, even when you can get away with it
- Going against the crowd when they are doing something wrong, even if it gets you laughed at
- Standing up for the kid who everyone else is teasing
- Doing what is right instead of what is cool
- Living your life for others instead of living for yourself
- Fighting injustice no matter the cost
- Risking your life to spread the good news of Jesus

Ask – How does knowing Jesus give you the courage to stand out in these ways?

OPTION: “YOU MAKE ME BRAVE”

You may want to end this portion by listening to the song “You Make Me Brave” by Bethel Music

(En)courage One Another



One way we can use our voice is through prayer. In prayer, we converse with God, giving thanks for all that we have been given. In prayer, we can also intercede on behalf of others, praying for justice and mercy for those experiencing oppression or loss. The beautiful thing about prayer is that, through using our voice to lift up the needs of others, the Holy Spirit often reveals to us how we can be God's presence on earth and act in ways that will help the very people we are praying for.

What You Need

- Chart paper or poster board for each group of three to four girls
- Markers

What To Do

1. Discuss

The word “encouragement” comes from the word “courage.” It is the action of giving someone support, confidence, or hope. And it can be life giving. When someone is feeling discouraged (literally without courage) a word of encouragement can give them the courage they need to live bravely.

Hebrews 10:24-25 NLT says, “Let us think of ways to motivate one another to acts of love and good works. And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another. . . .”

We are all called to be CEOs – not “Chief Executive Officers” but “Chief Encouragement Officers.” While some of us are naturally good encouragers, for others sometimes giving encouragement is difficult.

Encouragement needs to be genuine. It can't be an empty “good job.” We want to give specific encouragement.

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2. Divide girls into groups of three to four. Pass out a piece of chart paper or poster board, and markers, for each group.

3. Have each group write Hebrews 10:24 in the middle of their paper: “Let us think of ways to motivate one another to acts of love and good works.”

Then allow 5-10 minutes for girls to do just that – think of ways to motivate and encourage one another. This can be words or phrases they can offer, random acts of kindness, or anything else they can think of that would be a form of encouragement.

4. Post lists around the room. Invite one member of each group to present their ideas to the rest of the girls.

Share Your Story



What You Need

- One copy of Appendix 12-D per girl
- Pens or pencils

What To Do

1. Discuss

One of the most courageous things you can do is share your story of faith with someone else.

It can be helpful to think about your story of faith ahead of time so that when the opportunity comes for you to tell them about your relationship with Jesus you will be ready.

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There are many ways to go about telling a story of faith (often called witnessing, or giving a testimony.) The most important thing is to tell the truth about your experience with Jesus (that's why we call it a witness/giving a testimony – I promise to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help me God!)

2. Using Appendix 12-D, allow girls an opportunity to write their testimony. Remind them that it doesn't need to be long – about three minutes is just about perfect.

3. Optional – you may ask girls to practice sharing their testimonies in pairs or as a larger group.

OPTION: YOUR STORY FOR HIS GLORY

Older girls who are gifted in writing may enjoy working through the series *Your Story for His Glory* by Leslie Leyland Fields and Ann Voskamp, available on RightNow Media or for purchase on DVD. Leslie Leyland Fields' book *Your Story Matters* could also be a helpful resource.

Prayer



God, I know that being a Christian is going to require me to do brave things but knowing that you love me and have a purpose for my life gives me courage. Thank you for sending the Holy Spirit to empower me, so that I may be a witness for you in the world around me. Amen.

Public Speaking



A lot of people are afraid of public speaking, and yet being able to do it well can set you up for success. Like any other skill, to become great at public speaking, you need to practice. This collection of activities will teach some basic tips about public speaking while helping them overcome their fear.

If you have access to a worship area with a pulpit, this may be a good place for girls to practice public speaking using a microphone on a stage.

ONE-MINUTE OFF-THE-CUFF

This activity is meant to get girls talking about . . . anything!

What You Need

- A list of topics that your girls would find interesting or funny, written on pieces of paper and then placed in a box. You will need at least one per girl.
- Some sample ideas include “the best restaurant ever would serve _____,” “If plants had feelings...” “If I ruled the world...” “Being young is overrated...” etc.
- A timing device (a phone works well)

What To Do

1. Set the timer to one minute.
2. Have a girl select a topic at random from the box. Start the timer as soon as the girl has read their topic (the point is that they are not to have any prep time.) The goal is to give an impromptu speech on the topic and to not stop for the entire minute.
3. Repeat until each of the girls has had a chance to give an off-the-cuff one-minute speech.

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OPTION: PHOTO STORY

If you would rather, you could use photos instead of topics for girls to use as inspiration for their one-minute impromptu speech. Simply print off some interesting photos, one per girl, and let them come up with a creative story about what they see.

30 SECONDS FILLER-FREE

One of the hardest things to do is to public speak without using filler words like “uh,” “um,” etc. This activity will give girls the opportunity to speak on a topic of their choice for 30 seconds without using any filler words.

What You Need

- A timing device (your phone works well)
- A recording device (a computer, tablet or phone work well)

What To Do

1. Explain what a filler is.(“uh,” “um,” “like” etc.) and that, ideally, we should not be using these while public speaking.
2. Set the timer to 30 seconds.
3. One at a time, girls will have to talk for 30 seconds on any topic of their choice. The only goal is to not use any filler words. Be sure to record the speech.
4. After all girls have gone, watch the speeches again together and make note of each filler word used.

LEARN FROM THE PROS

What You Need

- Something to watch a video on (TV, computer or tablet)
- A whiteboard, chalkboard, or chart paper
- Chalk or markers

The logo for 'Grow' is written in a cursive, handwritten-style font.

Before You Begin

- Look online for a speech that is widely accepted as exceptional. You could turn to a historic speech (such as Martin Luther King Jr's "I have a dream" speech, or you could search the most popular TED Talks of all time.)

What To Do

1. Brainstorm together what you think makes a speech great. Write down your ideas so you can refer back to them later.
2. Watch the speech together.
3. Review your ideas from earlier about what makes a speech great. Did this speech include any of these elements? Having watched the speech, what would you add to this list?

PUBLIC READING

According to research, an excellent spoken presentation is 38 per cent voice, 55 per cent non-verbal communication, and only 7 per cent your content. In other words, what you say is as important as how you say it. This exercise will get girls thinking about the delivery of their presentation rather than the content.

What You Need

- A copy of a children's story – a Dr. Seuss book like "One Fish, Two Fish" would work well
- OR
- A passage of scripture of your choice

What To Do

1. Explain that the quality of a speech is based on much more than your content. In fact, the tone of your voice, your posture, eye contact etc. is as important, if not more important, than what you say.
2. Now that you have watched the pros, it's your turn to work on good posture, eye contact, tone of voice, pronunciation, and all of the other delivery elements (expression, inflection, enunciation etc.) that make a public speaker great. We will do this by doing some public reading.
3. Have girls take turns doing a public reading of either the children's story or the passage or scripture. After each public reading, allow a few minutes for constructive feedback on each reading.

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Strength TRAINING

What are my strengths?

What are my weaknesses?

What strength do you tend to dismiss because it comes easily to you or because you assume everyone can do it?

What area of your life could help you to be successful and build confidence if you could master it?



#MYBRAVELS





Telling my STORY

BEFORE JESUS: What was my life like? What were my attitudes, needs, and problems? Around what did my life revolve the most? From what did I get my security or happiness? etc.

DISCOVERING JESUS: When was the first time I heard about Jesus? What were my initial reactions? When did my attitude begin to change? Why? Ultimately, why did I choose to follow Jesus?

BEING A DISCIPLE: What are the specific changes that my decision to follow Jesus has made in my life, actions and attitudes? How long did it take before I noticed changes? Why am I motivated differently now?



