

DEVELOPMENTAL ASSET™ #37
✘ Personal Power ✘

YOUNG PERSON FEELS HE OR SHE HAS CONTROL OVER
"THINGS THAT HAPPEN TO ME."

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Hard Choice

Luke 15:11-32 "How many of my father's hired hands have bread enough..."

- What are things you can easily change about yourself? What would be difficult or impossible?
- How do your choices add or take away from your freedom to live well?
- What choices make you feel empowered? Where does empowerment come from?
- What examples come to mind of a family member, or a friend, or someone else who was able to take control of a situation that seemed out of control? What did that person have to do?
- What in your life do you feel in control of? Why?
- Describe a time when situations in life seemed, or maybe were, out of your control.
- How did the choices the son makes, in the parable of The Lost Son, give or take away from his freedom or personal powers to live well?
- If it had been you deciding to go back to your family what would you have worried about? Hoped for? Been concerned about?
- What would have been your thoughts, reactions, and feelings when the father welcomed you back?
- What does it mean to trust God?
- "Let go and let God?" What does that mean? Easy? Hard? How is it done?
- How do you cope when you can't control things?



So What?

Stand in a circle, shoulder to shoulder, hands pointing forward. One person stands in the middle, eyes shut and arms crossed. The person stiffens and falls back trusting the group to pass him or her gently around. Take turns being in the middle.

Just as within the circle, when things feel out of our control, we need God to catch and guide us. From the experience and discussion, what thought stands out as most important to you?



Candle Time

Have a bunch of unusual objects in the middle of the circle. Ask each member to choose an object that represents something in life that he or she has no control of. Ask that person to clutch tightly as he/she names what this is. Invite him/her to open his/her hands and lift the object upward as an offering to God, asking for God's guidance.



EXPLORE

Phil. 3:13-14	...I press on toward the goal...
Matthew 5:14 -16	...let your light shine before others...
Romans 12:1-8	...discern what is the will of God—what is...
1 Kings 17:7-16	...And she went and did as Elijah said. ... ate for many days.....
John 18:4	...Jesus, knowing all that was to happen to him, came forward...
Luke 1:26-38	...Then Mary said, "... let it be with me according to your word"...



Leader Page

Discussion Goal

Set or reach an expectation.

Background

Our response to God's love and grace is to live every day and in every way in acts of grateful worship. In Romans 12, Paul tells the Romans not to make choices like other people around them, but to let the Holy Spirit transform their minds to think only of the work of Christ and how they apply to life. Life and the everyday choices become an offering of thanksgiving. They allow God's will to be done within and through them.

In the parable of the "Lost Son" the young man takes his inheritance and leaves. A series of bad choices results in seemingly leaving him powerless, broke, and broken. In his desperation he discovers he still has choices. The choice of returning home was not easy. Doing so caused him to admit his arrogance, his misjudgments, poor choices, and the mess he had made of his life. In his brokenness he discovers a father of love and hope.

Sometimes circumstances and choices spiral or force us into desperate unwanted situations, or unmanageable patterns of living. Options seem nonexistent or out of reach, especially when these options require admitting, guilt, weaknesses or wrong doings. Yet there are choices, personal power and hope. Youth do not need to live in despair. Finding positive choices and options gives control and is a "living sacrifice" honoring the God who creates us and gracefully wants the best for each person.

Motivate

Get the group into a circle. Ask one person to leave the group and make three subtle changes about him or her self that the group could physically see. Examples may be things like tucking in a shirt, untying a shoe, or combing hair in a different direction. Invite the person to come back into the middle of the circle, and invite everyone to guess what the changes are. You may want to repeat this with two or three others.

Start the discussion with the first question, inviting conversation about the things people have control in changing and things they don't. The group may talk about the illustration first, but lead them into discussion about bigger life topics that we can and can't control.

Option

In the book, "The Prisoner of Azkaban" from the Harry Potter series, written by J.K. Rowling, there are some terrifying monsters that are out to attack Harry Potter. These include the Dementors and the Boggarts, and the only way to defeat these enemies is by positive, hopeful thoughts. Read some excerpts from this book about the way Harry defeats these monsters by his thoughts.

- How do hope-filled thoughts affect the choices you make?
- How can our thoughts control our actions?
- How can thoughts be empowering or defeating?



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