



## MOODS / Week 4

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### BEFORE GROUP

#### BOTTOM LINE

Guilt doesn't have to be the boss of you.

#### SCRIPTURE

*So now there is no condemnation for those who belong to Christ Jesus. And because you belong to him, the power of the life-giving Spirit has freed you from the power of sin that leads to death (Romans 8:1-2 NLT).*

#### GOAL OF SMALL GROUP

To encourage students to recognize that God loves them no matter what and because of that, they can live free from guilt.

#### THINK ABOUT THIS

Middle schoolers may not feel a lot of guilt about a lot of things. If they do, it's usually about things that seem

minimal. Lying to their parents, fighting with a friend, cheating on an exam, being mean to a sibling—these are the things most middle schoolers experience guilt over in this phase. Even though those things may seem like less than a big deal to us, the weight of the guilt they feel over them is very real to them. Do your best to help them move from only focusing on what they did to feel guilty to thinking about how they can better respond to the guilt they feel. Also remember that for some students, guilt isn't a bad thing. They *need* to feel guilty. They need to understand that what they've done or said is wrong. While it's definitely not your job to make them feel guilty (please don't!), it doesn't have to be a bad thing if, this week, some of your students recognize or experience guilt for the first time.

*This guide is a suggestion, not a formula. Adjust the questions and activities as needed, and don't feel like you need to do, or ask, everything you see here.*

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### DURING GROUP

#### DO THIS (EXPERIENCE) 1

Scatter the provided emoji cards on the floor in the middle of your group and ask your students to select one card to represent how they're feeling today. They'll then go around the group and explain why they picked that card.

#### DO THIS (EXPERIENCE) 2

Put the provided "Feelings Wheel" in the center of your group to use as a conversation aid. Lead a discussion about what words can be used to describe "guilt." Ask a few students to read the "guilt" words from the Feelings Wheel out loud and follow by asking the group if they've ever felt or used these words before.

#### DISCUSS THIS

1. What's one reason middle schoolers may feel guilty . . .
  - a) With their family?
  - b) With their friends?
  - c) On social media?
  - d) At school?
2. What's one helpful way a middle schooler can deal with guilt?
3. What's one unhelpful way a middle schooler can deal with guilt?
4. Does knowing God loves you no matter what change anything for you? Why or why not?

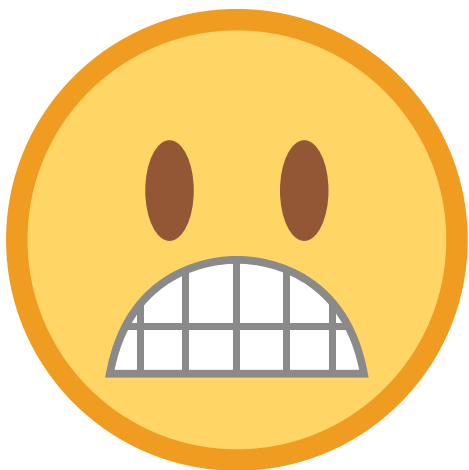
#### DO THIS (EXPERIENCE) 3

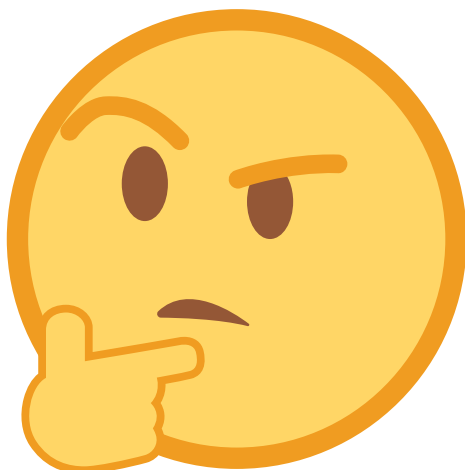
Pass out the provided guided prayer sheet and have students use it to pray in a quiet location in your space. As you lead the XP, remind students that they don't have to write in the blanks today. They can fill them in silently in their minds as they pray quietly to themselves. Then, they can take the prayer sheet home to fill in later or use as a guide for future prayers.

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# MY PRAYER

GOD,

THANK YOU FOR LOVING ME NO MATTER WHAT.

LATELY I'VE BEEN FEELING GUILTY ABOUT \_\_\_\_\_.

IT HAS MADE ME FEEL AND THINK \_\_\_\_\_.

PLEASE HELP ME REMEMBER THAT YOUR LOVE FOR ME DOESN'T CHANGE  
BASED ON WHAT I'VE DONE. BECAUSE OF THAT, I DON'T HAVE TO FEEL  
GUILTY OR BE SO HARD ON MYSELF WHEN I MESS UP.

PLEASE HELP ME USE \_\_\_\_\_ (WHAT I FEEL GUILTY ABOUT)  
TO REMIND ME THAT I CAN CHANGE.

INSTEAD OF LETTING \_\_\_\_\_ (WHAT I FEEL GUILTY ABOUT)  
MAKE ME FEEL BAD ABOUT MYSELF, PLEASE GUIDE ME IN USING IT TO  
MAKE NEW DECISIONS GOING FORWARD.

THANK YOU FOR NEVER GIVING UP ON ME.

THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE GUILT I FEEL AND GIVING ME A CHANCE TO  
START AGAIN.

AMEN

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