



difference.

# Host Guide

## Secondary Schools



# Stay connected

If you have any questions, don't hesitate to get in touch with us at the email address below. You can also sign up to our mailing list or follow us on social media to hear our latest news and how you can get involved.

✉ [hello@rln.global](mailto:hello@rln.global)

🖱 [difference.rln.global](https://difference.rln.global)

📷 [difference.rln](https://www.instagram.com/difference.rln)

📘 [difference.rln](https://www.facebook.com/difference.rln)

✂ [@DifferenceRLN](https://twitter.com/DifferenceRLN)



# Contents



## Overview

4

### Session 1

## Introduction

14

### Session 2

## Crossing Divides

26

### Session 3

## Navigating Disagreement

34

### Session 4

## Pursuing Justice

44

### Session 5

## Practising Forgiveness

56

### Session 6

## Belonging Together

68

## Appendix

77

**Let's get started...** 

# Overview

## Aim

We live in world which is messy, hurting and divided. For young people growing up and working out who they are, it can be hard to know how to handle conflict, differences, fear of saying the wrong thing, and the ups and downs of friendships.

Young people need the opportunity and support to build good relationships with themselves, their peers and the world around them. Through *Difference*, young people will develop formational habits to encounter others well and navigate difficult situations. By participating in this programme, students will gain the tools and skills to engage constructively and respectfully to build a flourishing and welcoming school community.

These resources have been developed in collaboration with the Church of England Education Office.

## Before you begin

We're so excited you've chosen to run the *Difference* course!

If you haven't already, you'll need to create an online account so you can access everything you need, including films and slides for every session.

This is free and simple to do - head to **[difference.rln.global/sign-up](https://difference.rln.global/sign-up)**

# Difference teaches three habits

*Difference* offers three formational habits that can transform everyday relationships. These habits draw on the wisdom of expert peacemakers and Jesus' encounters in the Gospels.

Our habits matter. 45% of our daily actions are habitual<sup>1</sup> and neuroscientists have estimated that up to 95% of our behaviours are controlled (at least in part) by the subconscious mind.<sup>2</sup>

There is a close relationship between what we believe and what we do, and if we can shape our habits we can build practices that have a deep and lasting impact on our actions, our thoughts and our character.

## The three habits are:



Be Curious



Be Present



Reimagine

These habits aren't a three-point plan where one follows another, there is no correct order in which to practise them - they feed into each other.

## Let's take a closer look at the three habits →

<sup>1</sup> David T. Neal, Wendy Wood, and Jeffrey M. Quinn, 'Habits – A Repeat Performance', Duke University, 2006

<sup>2</sup> e.g. Lakoff and Johnson 1999, in Martin 2008





# Be Curious

## Wonder Why

Find out more

Take an interest

Ask respectful questions

*'God created human beings, making them to be like himself.'* (Genesis 1:27a)

**Listen to others' stories and see the world through their eyes.**

In Genesis 1, we read that every person is made in the image of God, with value and a unique story of deep worth. When we are curious enough to seek out that story, we affirm that person's innate value. Demonstrating a true interest in who the other person is and how they have experienced the world can make it possible to begin to tread trickier territory together, because the other person knows they have been heard and honoured.

Curiosity about the other also leads us to discover some of the limitations of our own story and perception. It cultivates humility, acknowledging that we don't have all the answers without diminishing the value of what we bring.





# Be Present

## Be Real

Show up

Stick around

Listen well

*'The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us.'* (John 1:14a)

**Encounter others with authenticity and confidence.**

Our encounters are often the places we first notice complexity, division and difference, and they are the focus of so many of Jesus' teachings. Being present in encounters means showing up and sticking around – making time for the other, dedicating our attention to them and encountering them as they are.

The Christian faith teaches that God became human and chose to be part of a hurting world. God's response to injustice and hurt is to step into the context in a totally new way, teaching us what it means to be present. Being present is about how we show up, not just the act of showing up. It means having the courage to bring our whole, unique selves, not just the version of ourselves we want others to see. Bringing our vulnerabilities and insecurities, as well as our convictions and our strengths, into our encounters can open up new depths of relationship.





# Reimagine

## Hope Together

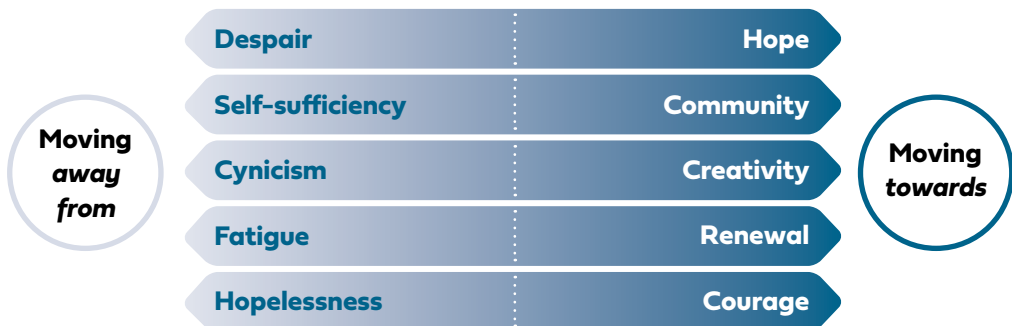
[Seek hope](#)[See beyond](#)[Find a new story](#)

***'I am making everything new!'***  
(Revelation 21:5)

**Finding hope and opportunity in the places where we long to see change.**

Our worlds are shaped by our imagination, and when divisions and conflict seem intractable and we face repeated disappointment, it can sometimes be hard to find hope or to imagine an alternative where healing, restoration and thriving relationships are possible.

Yet we read in Revelation 21 that God is making all things new. The habit of reimagining encourages us to be renewed by the Holy Spirit and for God to stretch our understanding of what is possible. It is rarely a solo experience and often done in community. For relationships to be restored, the systems and structures with which we are familiar may need to shift in new and reimagined ways.





# Sessions

The *Difference* course for secondary schools has six sessions:

## 1 Introduction

In complex and divided times, we can build habits that enable us to relate better to others and pursue a just and flourishing world for all.

## 2 Crossing Divides

Sometimes our own assumptions or prejudice divide us from others – we can challenge these assumptions by being curious about the story we don't know.

## 3 Navigating Disagreement

It is possible to have good relationships even when we disagree – instead of being afraid of disagreement and being cancelled, we can develop empathy for those we disagree with.

## 4 Pursuing Justice

Justice is an important part of peacemaking – we are invited to recognise that the world is not as it should be, and to join with others to pursue a just and flourishing world.

## 5 Practising Forgiveness

Forgiveness is complex but transformational. Having recognised a hurt, we can begin to see if a better relationship is possible in the future.

## 6 Belonging Together

We flourish when we recognise our interconnectedness and the unique value we each have.

# Before the session

## Read

Read the guide for the session, paying close attention to the instructions, pastoral notes and the session theme.

## Set up

Prepare your room and ensure you have the materials you need for the activities. Make the session feel welcoming.

## Accessibility

The materials are designed to be accessible but it is important to read through the sessions and consider whether anything needs adapting according to the needs of your students.

# Session structure

Each session of the course follows the structure below:

## Intro

Create a welcoming space for students as they arrive. This is an opportunity to consolidate from the last session and share the aims of this session.

 **5 minutes**

- Session theme
- Recap and feedback from previous week



## Story

Stories matter, so we start with a section called **Story**. This includes a film exploring the session theme from the perspective of young people, and two Bible options: either a gospel account from Jesus' life or a short Bible verse. There are questions to guide your discussion with students.

🕒 20 minutes

- Film
- Bible
- Discussion



## Space

The middle section of each session is called **Space**. The spaces we create can have a powerful impact on the relationships we build. In this section students engage with their own experiences through an activity, which may be an interactive exercise or guided reflection. This section helps embed the habits of being curious, being present and reimagining.

🕒 20 minutes\*

- Activity

\*Session 1 has a longer Space section



## Sanctuary

Lastly the session ends with moment of **Sanctuary**. This is a time to reflect, through a creative activity. It enables students to reflect on their learning and how to apply it. If appropriate for your setting, this section is also an opportunity to pray.

🕒 10 minutes

- Vision board
- Top takeaway
- Prayer and reflection



# During each session

Each session has a set of notes to help you host it, giving guidance on what to say, questions to ask and activities to run.



## Film

Films exploring the session theme from the perspective of young people. Films are available on the training and resources dashboard on our website.



## Activity

Instructions for activities in the Space section of each session. Optional additional activities are included in the appendix at the back of this guide.



## Vision board

Throughout the course, you will build up a 'vision board' – a creative collage which students add to each week as they reflect on the session themes.

You'll need a large piece of paper or card (the size of a giant poster - the bigger the better). Students will add to the collage in every session, so leave enough space for adding elements in future activities and make sure you bring it to every session. By the end of the course, you and your group will have a unique visual reminder of all that you have learnt and explored together.





## Bible

Option to explore either a Gospel account from the life of Jesus or a short Bible verse related to the session theme.



## Prayer and reflection

Prayers/reflections to read out to your group, or to put into your own words.



## Top takeaway

A moment for students to share what they want to remember from the session.

# Host pointers

Use these elements to help...



## Timings

Each section of the session has a heading including timings.



## Slides

Within each session there are optional slide prompts. Slides are available to download from the training and resources dashboard.



**00:00**

Add your own time stamps to help keep each section of your session on track.



## Important

Some sessions contain particularly important guidance designed to enable themes to be explored as safely and beneficially as possible.

# The sessions →

# Session 1

# Introduction

## Key learning

In a divided and complex world, it can be hard to relate to each other well but we can build three reconciling habits which help us.

## Application

Explore the three habits as a response to division and fracture.

## Habits focus

The three habits are the framework for the course and for creating a healthy group culture.

## Before the session

### You will need:

- A very large sheet of paper or card (A1 or bigger) for your vision board (see p12)
- Felt-tip pens



### Set up your room

Students will need to be able to gather round the vision board to reflect together.



## Aim of the course and the session

Welcome students to the *Difference* course and tell them what it's about:

- We live in a complicated, messy and divided world where it can be hard to relate to each other well.
  - Conflict is a normal part of home and school life but can be hard to navigate.
  - We might fear saying the wrong thing or not know how to handle differences.
  - Our communities can feel polarised or fragmented.
- Through *Difference*, we'll explore three habits: **Be Curious**, **Be Present** and **Reimagine**.
  - These reconciling habits come from the life of Jesus and the wisdom of expert peacemakers.
  - These habits can help us respond well to situations and build relationship with people, even when this feels difficult.
- There will be six sessions looking at the topics of crossing divides, navigating disagreement, justice, forgiveness and hope.

In this session we are going to:

- Reflect on where we see division and broken relationships in the world today.
- Introduce three habits that helps us build good relationships with others and respond to difficult situations.
- Build a healthy group culture.

## Story



### Intro film

Short film unpacking the themes of *Difference* through the voices of young people.



## Vision board

**Identify the ways difference, division or disagreement impacts young people.**

1. Lay out the very large piece of paper or card which you are going to use for your vision board.
2. Ask students to think of an example of difference, division or disagreement which matters to young people and which they have been aware of in the last month. (It might help if you give an example e.g. climate injustice, bullying.)
3. Ask students to write or draw these on the vision board, building up a 'graffiti wall' of responses (remember you will add to this vision board every session so leave enough space for future activities).
4. After a few minutes, invite students to look at all the responses and invite a few reflections.



## Key learning

**Please highlight the points below:**

- We live in a world where there is division, disagreement and it can be difficult to relate well to each other.
- Many of the problems we see in the world and experience in our own lives are caused by broken relationships – with God, with others, with ourselves and with creation.
- In this course we will be building three habits that can help us respond to these situations and build stronger relationships.



## Bible story

### John 10:10b

**Share the verse (explaining that these are Jesus' words):**

"I have come in order that you might have life—life in all its fullness." (*Good News translation*)

**Question for discussion:**



What is needed for everyone to flourish and to live life in all its fullness?



How do our relationships with others affect impact this?



## Key learning

**Please highlight the points below:**

- This verse shows us the abundant vision God has for human life – we were designed to receive life as a gift and flourish in it.
- We are made for relationship – other people help us experience life in all its fullness.
- When relationships are damaged, or where there is injustice or hostility, we don't experience life to the fullness of its potential.

Throughout this course we will be exploring and building three habits which help us build relationships with others and navigate a complex and divided world. They are the habits of being curious, being present and reimagining - let's consider them now with three short activities.



Optional film

 **1 min**

## Introduction to the habits



Activity

 **10 mins**

## Be Curious: Against the clock!

Understand what being curious is about and how it helps us relate better to others.

**Start here**



**1**

Introduce the habit, **Be Curious**, covering the key points on p6.

**2**

Each student pretends they have a buzzer, which they are ready to push and make a buzzing noise.

3

Willing contestants have to speak for a minute on the topic of 'being curious' without hesitating, going off-topic or repeating themselves – if anyone hears them do these things, they must press loudly on their pretend buzzer! It's now the next person's turn.

4

After a few rounds, write a word cloud on a whiteboard or flipchart, capturing the students responses. Ensure that the word cloud includes ideas related to:

- Understanding
- Not judging
- Finding out more
- Taking an interest
- Looking deeper
- Wondering why
- Being respectful



## Key learning

**Please highlight the points below:**

- When we seek to understand and listen to someone else's story, we can build relationships and show them that we value them.
- This makes us less likely to react fearfully or judgementally.
- We are curious in a respectful manner, rather than a nosey or intrusive way.



## Activity

🕒 10 mins

# Be Present: Take the register

Understand the habit of being present and how it helps us relate better to others.

**Start here**



**1**

Introduce the habit, **Be Present**, covering the key points on p7.

**2**

**Ask the students:**

Why do we take a register at the start of the lesson?

**If it doesn't come up, highlight:**

- We know who is present.
- We can ensure that everyone who should be here, is here.
- We can follow up to make sure that those who are not present are safe and okay.
- We can ensure that students get to their lessons on time and so learn the value of good timekeeping.

**3**

**Ask the students:**

What does a register not do?

**If it doesn't come up, highlight:**

- It doesn't ensure people are ready to listen and learn.
- It does not mean everyone is happy, confident or wants to be there.
- It does not mean that everyone feels physically or emotionally well.



- It does not mean there will not be distractions e.g. a wasp in the classroom, or a fire drill.
- It does not help us understand what someone thinks, feels or believes.

**4**

**(Optional) Ask the students:**

**What's the difference between a disagreement on social media and a conversation in person?**

**If it doesn't come up, highlight:**

- In person, we can see facial expressions and body language so we understand better what the other person is trying to communicate.
- We sometimes find it harder to say hurtful things when we can see the other person's face.
- Social media can enable people to access and listen to different points of view.



## **Key learning**

**Please highlight the points below:**

- The habit of being present is about encountering others authentically. It's about choosing to be ourselves.
- It is also about enabling other people to do the same, and be themselves.
- When we're really present with another person, it's easier to build a good relationship with them.



## Activity

🕒 5 mins

# Reimagine: Reimagining monsters

Understand the habit of reimagining and how it helps us relate better to others.

**Start here**



1

Introduce the habit, **Reimagine**, covering the key points on p7.

2

Give everyone in the class a blank piece of A4 paper and ask them to fold it into thirds.

3

On **Go**, start a 30-second timer and ask the students to draw the head of a monster on a third of the paper, with the neck up to the fold line.

On **Stop**, students fold the paper over and give it to someone else in the class.

4

On **Go**, start a 30-second timer and ask the students to draw the torso of a monster including 'arms' but not the legs, up to the second fold line.

On **Stop**, students fold the paper over and pass on to someone else in the room.

5

On **Go**, start a 30-second timer and ask the students to draw the 'legs' of a monster.

On **Stop**, students can open the paper and see their amazing monstrous creations.



## Key learning

**Please highlight the points below:**

- Imagination enables us to be creative.
- This is even more true when we join with others and imagine together.
- We are confined by our own imaginations, but with others we can reimagine something new.

## → Optional extra activity ⌚ +10 mins

Find '**Walk**' in Appendix 1 on p78.

# Sanctuary



00:00



10 mins

Establish a healthy group culture

## Introduction

Introduce the importance of setting a healthy group culture, highlighting the following points:

- During the *Difference* course, we'll explore things that matter to us.
- We won't agree on everything and that's ok – we need to be able to disagree with respect.
- We might talk about things that we find difficult – it's important to listen and not judge.
- No topic is neutral – something that is not hard for you may be very hard for someone else.
- Let's communicate honestly how we're feeling and let others, or the school staff team, know if we feel uncomfortable.

# Explore some guidelines

Choose either Option 1 or Option 2

## Option 1

Invite students to come up with some group guidelines and attitudes which will make the group safe enough to share personal thoughts, opinions and experiences.

You may like to use the guidelines below, which are based on the three *Difference* habits:



### Be Curious

- Ask a respectful question if you hear something you disagree with.
- Avoid judging others.
- Listen carefully in order to understand others’ perspectives.



### Be Present

- Try to stay engaged and avoid distraction.
- Be honest.
- Don’t interrupt people.
- Notice the thoughts and feelings you have during conversations.



### Reimagine

- Be prepared for others to surprise you.
- Don’t treat other people as a spokesperson for their culture or community.
- Remember that God is present in our conversations.

## Option 2

If you already have some group guidelines that the students use, look at these and ask:

- If we're going to talk about things that might be personal to us, do these guidelines give us a safe space to do so? Why? Why not?
- If we're going to have conversations where we might disagree with each other, do these guidelines help us to do that without falling out?
- What guidelines might we need to add to help us do these things?
- How can the three habits of Being Curious, Being Present and Reimagining help us have a healthy group culture?



## Closing prayer

Loving God, as we begin the *Difference* course together, inspire us to be curious, to be present and to reimagine as we seek a world where everyone can flourish. In Jesus' name. Amen

## Notes

End of session 1

## Session 2

# Crossing Divides

### Key learning

Sometimes our own assumptions or prejudice divide us from one another.

### Application

Challenge our assumptions and engage with others who are different from us.

### Habits focus

Be curious by listening to the story we don't know.

**i Important:** Explain to your group that this session is about the people we avoid for the wrong reasons – because our own assumptions and opinions mean we hold them at arm's length. It is **not** about any situations where distance is needed for us to stay safe – for example, in situations of abuse, or where others put us in danger.

## Before the session

### You will need:

- Sticky notes
- Marker pens
- A suitable wall or room divider on which to attach the sticky notes (or hardback books or boxes such as shoeboxes)
- Your group's vision board



### Set up your room

Decide where and how to 'build the wall' for the **Space** activity.

# Intro

 00:00

 5mins

 Slide 1

## Aim of the session

This session is called **Crossing Divides**.

### In this session we are going to:


- Discover the assumptions or prejudices we have about others.
- Explore how we can engage better with people who are different from us.
- Practise being curious by asking questions and taking an interest in others.



## Recap

Recap the previous session and remind the group of the three habits of being curious, being present, and reimagining.

Ask your group what they remember from the previous session and if they have any examples of actions or stories from the past week related to the theme.

 Slide 2

# Story

 00:00

 20 mins



## Film

### Discuss:

**What do we learn about crossing divides in this film?**

Draw out examples of where the students see the habit of being curious - asking questions; taking an interest in others; overcoming assumptions; choosing not to judge another person.

 Slide 3

 Slide 4



## Option 1



### Bible story

#### The woman at the well

**Read the retelling of the passage to your group.** You can find this in Appendix 2 on p80, at the end of this guide. You may like to invite young people to take on the roles of Jesus and the Samaritan woman.

#### Questions for discussion:



What was the first thing Jesus did when he met the woman in the story?



Why was it unusual for Jesus and the woman to have a conversation?



What questions did Jesus and the Samaritan woman ask each other? Could they have had such a long conversation without asking questions?



### Key learning

#### Please highlight the points below:

- Jesus and the Samaritan woman were able to cross the religious, cultural and gender divides that separated them. They did this by being curious – asking each other questions during their conversation.
- Jesus and the Samaritan woman were present – they took time to listen to each other.
- Also draw on the **Key learning** from the Bible verse on p29.

## Option 2



### Bible verse Genesis 1:26a

**Share the verse:**

“So God created human beings, making them to be like himself.” *(Good News translation)*

**Question for discussion:**



Why is this important in our relationships with people who are different from us?



Where do you see similar principles and values in other faiths, worldviews or cultures and community traditions?



### Key learning

**Please highlight the points below:**

- This verse tells us that every person is of deep value – their story is worth listening to.
- When we are curious – wondering what life is like for the other person, asking respectful questions in order to understand them better – we show them that they matter.



## Activity part 1

 10 mins

# Discovering our walls

Discover the ways prejudices divide us from others.

Start here



**i Important:** Remind students that this activity is about the people we avoid for the wrong reasons, because our own assumptions and opinions mean we hold them at arm's length, sometimes without us even realising it. It is **not** about removing boundaries protecting us from harmful, abusive or bullying situations.

**Give every participant a sticky note and use the following instructions to guide your group:**

**1**

Think of a person or group of people you keep your distance from – people you don't engage with or feel uncomfortable with because they're different. For example, people with different dress style, age, music taste, beliefs, backgrounds, political views, friendship groups. (You won't have to name them aloud.)



**Note to facilitator:** This is about people we keep at arm's length for the wrong reasons. Give your own example – this will model the boundaries of this activity for the students. It may be helpful to name cliques or groups which exist in your school or context.

**2**

Reflect:

- Why do you find it hard to engage with them?
- How do you feel when you think about them?  
(e.g. "I feel nervous", "I feel excluded", "I feel disrespected")

3

Call out words to describe how you feel when you think of these people.

4

On your sticky note, write how you might respond negatively to the people you have in mind. *E.g. "I walk away", "I ignore/block them", "I make jokes at them" "I keep the conversation short", "I don't follow them".*

5

Come up and stick your sticky notes on the wall or divider. These negative actions and behaviours are like bricks that build a wall and create divides between us and other people.

(When everyone has finished, invite the group to gather around the wall of sticky notes. Ask someone to read the words aloud.) What do you notice?



## Key learning

**Whilst standing around the wall of sticky notes please highlight the points below:**

- It's normal for human beings to stick with people like ourselves. We often find ourselves in echo chambers – but this can lead to presumptions and prejudices about those who are not like us.
- Our reactions can build a wall between us and others (sometimes these may not be fair or justified).
- This wall can become so high we stop seeing the person on the other side – we only see the image we've created of them.
- In this activity, we have been curious – asking questions to discover more about ourselves and others.

## → Optional extra activity ⌚ +10 mins

Find 'Thoughts, feelings, responses' in Appendix 3 on p82.



## Activity part 2

# Dismantling our walls

🕒 10 mins

Find the steps we can take to overcome our prejudice.

Start here



**Standing around the wall of sticky notes, guide your group as follows:**

1

Now imagine that you are that person or group of people that you were thinking of. Try to step into their shoes.

- How do you think that other person/group of people might feel this week?
- What might make it hard for them to engage with people who are different from them?

2

**Reflect:** What one step could you take this week to encounter someone on the other side of your wall?

**Invite:** Call out your ideas. [As people share these steps aloud, take down the sticky notes one by one, thus removing some of the 'bricks' in the 'wall'.]



## Key learning

**Please highlight the points below:**

- It can be difficult to shake off our own opinions about someone and instead wonder what it is like for them.
- Simple actions can help us overcome the assumptions we make about others and help us recognise everyone's high value and worth.
- In this activity, we have been curious – wondering what another person's experience is like.



## Vision board

**Guide your group through this activity using the instructions below:**

1. Draw or stick a brick on the vision board.
2. Inside the brick, write the action you thought of to encounter the person on the other side of your 'wall'.



## Top takeaway

**Ask your group (to write down or say aloud):**

What is something you want to remember from this session? Give them a minute to reflect before answering.



## Prayer and reflection

**Please use this as a prayer or guide for reflection:**

Loving God, fill us with your Spirit now.

**We think about what we have learnt about asking questions and wondering about another person's experiences.**

Help us to **be curious** about others' stories – listening as often as we speak.

**We think about the stories we have heard about encountering others different from ourselves.**

Give us the courage to **be present** – showing up and sticking around.

**We think about the things we have learned about crossing divides in this session.**

Inspire us to **reimagine** what's possible – finding hope, knowing that you can transform all things.

In Jesus' name. Amen

## End of session 2

## Session 3

# Navigating Disagreement

### Key learning

It is possible to have good relationships even when we disagree.

### Application

Not be afraid of conflict but learn to navigate it honestly and with empathy.

### Habits focus

Be present by developing empathy for those we disagree with and having the confidence to share our perspective too.

## Before the session

### You will need:

- Two signs – one saying 'Agree' and one saying 'Disagree'
- Sticky tack
- Your group's vision board



### Set up your room

You will need space for the students to walk from one side of the room to the other. On one side stick up the sign that says 'Agree', on the other stick the 'Disagree' sign. Look at the statements on p38 and p39 – choose and tailor these for your group.



# Intro

 00:00

 5mins

 Slide 1

## Aim of the session

This session is called **Navigating Disagreement**.

### In this session we are going to:


- Explore how to disagree well in a culture where this is hard to do.
- Discover how to listen well and find our own voice.
- Practise being present by developing empathy for those we disagree with, and building our confidence to share our own perspective.



## Recap

Recap the previous session and remind the group of the three habits of being curious, being present, and reimagining.

Ask your group what they remember from the previous session and if they have any examples of actions or stories from the past week related to the theme.

 Slide 2

# Story

 00:00

 20 mins



## Film

### Discuss:

**What do we learn about navigating disagreement in this film?**

Draw out examples of the following: being authentic; being willing to walk towards conflict instead of running away; understanding the thoughts and feelings of someone else; choosing not to judge another person.

 Slide 3

 Slide 4

## Option 1






### Bible story

#### Jesus and the woman at the well

In this session, we return to the story of Jesus and the Samaritan woman. **Read the retelling of the passage to your group.** You can find this in Appendix 2 on p80, at the end of this guide. You may like to invite students to take on the roles of Jesus and the Samaritan woman.

#### Questions for discussion:

-  Did Jesus and the woman avoid difficult topics or express their different opinions and experiences?
-  What helped them have a good conversation even though they had different views?
-  How would applying the lessons we learn from Jesus and the Samaritan women help us when we have disagreements?



### Key learning

#### Please highlight the points below:

- This is the longest recorded conversation that Jesus had in the Bible – they stuck with the conversation even though it might have been awkward and was sometimes tricky.
- Jesus and the Samaritan woman showed how to be present – they expressed themselves authentically and also listened to one another.
- Also draw on the **Key learning** from the Bible verse on p37.

## Option 2



### Bible verse Luke 6:31

**Share the verse:**

"Do to others as you would have them do to you." (NRSVA)

**Question for discussion:**



How would applying this help us when we have disagreements?



Where do you see similar principles and values in other faiths, worldviews or cultures and community traditions?



### Key learning

**Please highlight the points below:**

- We all want to be heard, respected and not judged – doing this for people we disagree with helps us strengthen the relationship.
- The habit of being present involves listening well and taking time to understand the other person.



## Activity

# Agree or disagree?

Discover our responses to disagreement and how we can empathise with those we disagree with.

**Start here**

**1**

## Light-hearted statements

- Select one or two light-hearted statements below:
  - Dogs are better than cats
  - Money should be spent not saved
  - x singer is a better performer than x singer
  - x computer game is better than x computer game
  - x social media platform is better than x social media platform
  - Bowling is better than swimming
  - Sweets are better than chocolate
  - Snow is better than sun
  - Maths should be optional in school
- Read out the statements and ask the students:
  - Decide if you agree or disagree and then move to the sign that says 'Agree' or 'Disagree'.
- Invite one person from each side to explain their view.

- Ask the group to reflect on the following:
  - Think about how you felt when you listened to people explaining their opinions. Were you preparing your counter argument - or wondering why they think that?
  - If they agreed with you, were you relieved to hear someone back you up, did it embolden your view?
  - Were you making any assumptions about this person as they shared their view?" If they believe that, then they probably also think this.
  - If they disagreed with you, what was your body language doing, did you feel defensive?

## 2 Polarising statements

- Read one or two polarising statements from the list below and invite students to move accordingly.
  - Everyone should be vegan.
  - Social media benefits society.
  - The climate crisis is more important than raising the minimum wage.
  - Exams are pointless.
  - All teenagers should be able to vote
  - Going to university isn't worth the money.
  - Killing other people is never justified.
  - There's no point in individual lifestyle changes because the planet is already ruined.
  - Globalisation is a force for good.
  - It is easier being a young person today than it was for our parents.
  - Teenagers have too much choice.
  - The richest person in the world could end world hunger.
  - TikTok influencers have more impact on young people than teachers.
  - People had more morals 50 years ago than today.
- Invite one person from each side to explain their view.  
(Remind the students to think about how they are listening.)

### 3 Step into the other person's shoes

- Read another polarising statement from the list and invite students to move accordingly.
- This time, instead of asking volunteers to share their opinion, ask all the students to move to the opposite position.
- Say:
  - Imagine you are stepping into the shoes of someone who holds the opposite view to you. (It's not easy, so don't worry if you can't do it straight away.)
  - Be curious about their point of view and why they might think that.
  - Ask yourself:
    - Q** 'What experiences, relationships or beliefs may be influencing their view?'
    - Q** 'Where do you think they might be coming from?'
- Ask for a volunteer from each side to share the opinion that is opposite to theirs, and the reasons behind that opinion.

*Note: Model an example here for your group.*

- Ask the volunteer:
  - **How does it feel to try and understand the opposite point of view?**

### 4 Think about a disagreement in your own life

- Standing where they are, invite students to think of a disagreement in their own life (either with someone or with a view in society). It doesn't need to be a big one - something you can think of in this short time.

*Note: Give an everyday example of your own which demonstrates to the students at what level to share.*

- Invite students to spend a moment quietly reflecting on their own view:

- What do you think and feel? What has led you to have this view and perspective?
- Now invite students to walk to the opposite of their own position. (If they're at one extreme, walk to the opposite extreme – if they're near the middle, you won't need to move much!)
- As they did earlier, invite students to 'step into the shoes' of the view they disagree with:
  - Be curious about where they are coming from.
  - Quietly reflect on what they may be thinking and feeling. Try to understand their perspective.



## Key learning

**Please highlight the points below:**

- Disagreement and conflict are a normal part of life. Yet it can be hard to navigate disagreement (in our friendships, families, online).
- Each of us has a voice worth listening to, even if we disagree with each other.
- Fear of being cancelled, or saying the wrong thing can make it hard to find our voice, or to listen to someone who we think is wrong.
- It's valuable to notice how you usually respond in disagreement (e.g. avoiding conflict, trying to prove you're right) and to realise that others may respond differently.
- Handling disagreement well has the potential to strengthen friendships when we try to understand how the other person feels and what may have led them to their opinion.

## → Optional extra activities ⌚ +10 mins each

Find '**Blind spots**' in Appendix 4 on p83 and '**Cancel culture**' in Appendix 5 on p84.



## Vision board

**Guide your group through this activity using the instructions below:**



- 1.** Draw an iceberg on the vision board, like this:
- 2.** Explain:
  - Did you know that only 10% of an iceberg is visible? The other 90% is below the water.
  - When we disagree, we often see only the opinion of the other person – this is like the 10% of an iceberg that is visible above the surface.
  - Below the water is another 90% of the iceberg. These might be our motivations, experiences, needs, hopes and fears – the many complex elements that lead a person to hold a position or view.
- 3.** Guide your group as follows:
  - Think about when people disagree.
  - What are the things we can see? (e.g. who people hang out with, what they post on social media, the opinions they share, the clubs they attend) – write these in part of the iceberg above the water.
  - What things might be happening that are harder to see? (e.g. life experiences or feeling afraid or hurt) – write these in the part of the iceberg below the water.





## Key learning

**Please highlight the points below:**

- Let's try and understand the 90% 'below the water' when we disagree. Is there a disagreement this could help you with?
- Perhaps there is someone you often disagree with – thinking about the iceberg below the water may help you understand them more.



## Top takeaway

**Ask your group (to write down or say aloud):**

What is something you want to remember from this session?  
Give them a minute to reflect before answering.



## Prayer and reflection

**Please use this as a prayer or guide for reflection:**

Loving God, fill us with your Spirit now.

**We think about what we have learnt about empathising with the person we disagree with.**

Help us to **be curious** about others' stories – listening as often as we speak.

**We think about someone who we often disagree with and what we have learn about building good relationships even when we disagree.**

Give us the courage to **be present** – showing up and sticking around.

**We think about the things we have learned about navigating disagreement in this session.**

Inspire us to **reimagine** what's possible – finding hope, knowing that you can transform all things.

In Jesus' name. Amen

# End of session 3

## Session 4

# Pursuing Justice

### Key learning

Justice is an important part of peacemaking.

### Application

Recognise the existence of injustice in the world and join with others in pursuing a just and flourishing world.

### Habits focus

Reimagine the possibilities when we join with others to pursue a just and flourishing world.

## Before the session

### You will need:

- Newspapers (go through them beforehand to check that there's nothing that would be inappropriate for your group)
- Scissors
- Glue
- Blank paper for the vision board activity in Sanctuary
- Your group's vision board




### Set up your room

During the **Space** activity, students will gather round the vision board.

# Intro

 00:00

 5mins


 Slide 1

## Aim of the session

This session is called **Pursuing Justice**.

**In this session we are going to:**

- Recognise the existence of injustice.
- Explore how we respond to situations of injustice.
- Practise reimagining by discovering the power of coming together to pursue a just and flourishing world.

 Slide 2



### Recap


Recap the previous session and remind the group of the three habits of being curious, being present, and reimagining.


Ask your group what they remember from the previous session and if they have any examples of actions or stories from the past week related to the theme.

## Story

 00:00

 20 mins

 Slide 3

 Slide 4



### Film

**Discuss:**

**What do we learn about justice in this film?**

You might like to draw out examples of the following: the power of coming together, seeking hope, telling a new story.

Choose either Option 1 or Option 2

## Option 1






### Bible story

#### Jesus and Zacchaeus (Luke 19:1-10)

**Read the retelling of the passage to your group.** You can find this in Appendix 6 on p85, at the end of this guide. You may like to invite students to read out the roles of Jesus, Zacchaeus and the crowd.

#### Questions for discussion:

-  In what ways had Zacchaeus contributed to injustice?
-  Zacchaeus gives half his money to the poor and repays those he's cheated four times as much. Is this a fair response? Why is making amends an important part of justice?
-  How do you think Jesus' actions help Zacchaeus to change his behaviour?



### Key learning

#### Please highlight the points below:

- Zacchaeus had treated people badly and misused his powerful position within the Roman tax system. By changing his behaviour, Zacchaeus was challenging the unjust system he was part of.
- The experience of being seen by Jesus, even though he had done things wrong, helped Zacchaeus find the courage to put things right.
- When Zacchaeus made amends for the injustice he contributed to, he was able to be part of his community again.
- Also draw on the **Key learning** from the Bible verse on p47.

## Option 2






### Bible verse Micah 6:8

**Share the verse:**

“[W]hat does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?” (NRSVA)

**Question for discussion:**

-  What do you think it means to ‘do justice’ and why is this important?
-  What have kindness and humility got to do with justice?
-  Where do you see similar principles and values in other faiths, worldviews or cultures and community traditions



### Key learning

**Please highlight the points below:**

- Doing justice is about treating others well and pursuing a world where everyone can flourish.
- The way we pursue justice matters – we should seek to challenge injustice while not harming others.
- Humility encourages us to listen deeply to those who have experienced injustice and to recognise when we get things wrong.
- We can sometimes feel awkward about naming injustice for fear of offending another person – this verse shows that doing justice and being kind go together.



## Activity

# What would you do?

 10 mins

Discover different examples of justice and injustice, and how we respond to them.

**Start here**

**1**

Use the slides to show these scenarios to students. Ask them for their responses and how they arrived at them.

### Scenario one

You visit your gran's house and scoff down a massive doughnut you find in the fridge. You then discover from your mum that your gran has been saving it for her tea.

**Do you:**

- a) Own up immediately?
- b) Say nothing and hope she doesn't notice?
- c) Leave the wrapper and a smear of cream in the dog's bowl and try to blame Rover?
- d) Buy your gran another doughnut and try to put it in her fridge without her seeing?

### Scenario two

Your mate brings a new player to football club. You think he says that her name is Dani, but when you call her that, she looks at you weirdly. Then you realise that your mate might have said 'Sammy' or even 'Jenny'.

**Do you:**

- a) Never speak to her, pass the ball to her or even acknowledge her existence?
- b) Ask her what her name is and then apologise if you got it wrong.
- c) Think of a nickname for her and attempt to get everyone to call her it?
- d) Sneak up to your mate and ask her what her name is and then write it on your hand so you don't forget?

### Scenario three

You go shopping and get a load of new clothes for not very much money. Then you see a video on social media about the collapse of a factory in Cambodia, a factory which made garments from the shop where you bought your new clothes.

**Do you:**

- a) Take the clothes back and ask to speak to the manager?
- b) Do nothing – Cambodia is thousands of miles away and you don't know anyone who lives there.
- c) Do nothing, but feel guilty about it?
- d) Find out about the supply chain of the shop and what their policy is about workers' rights and modern-day slavery?

Your mate gets stopped leaving a shop by a security guard, who asks to see their receipt for what they've got in their bag. They look humiliated and outside the shop they tell you that this is the third time this has happened to them this month, even though they've never stolen anything in their life.

**Do you:**

- a) Work together to start a campaign about the discrimination your friend has experienced?
- b) Tell them they're making it up – it's never happened to you?
- c) Tell them to forget about it. If they've never stolen anything, they've got nothing to worry about?
- d) Go back to the shop and demand an explanation from the security guard?

**2**

**Use these questions to unpack students' responses:**

- Q** Even if you could see there was an option that was the right thing to do, was it easy to choose that option?
- Q** Did you think of other ways to act in each situation? What would you have done differently?
- Q** What stops us from confronting the problems in the world, especially if we are part of the problem?





## Key learning

**Please highlight the points below:**

- Justice is an important part of building a world where everyone can flourish.
- Some of these examples may feel very familiar – others may be quite different from anything you've experienced.
- While we might not cause an injustice, we have the power to respond in ways that reinforce or challenge injustices.



## Activity Newspapers

10 mins

**Identify where there is injustice in our world today.**

**Start here**



**1**

Gather students around the vision board.

Share out the newspapers, magazines, paper, scissors, pens and glue.

**2**

Invite participants to look at the newspapers and magazines and find headlines or pictures that show issues of justice or injustice in the world

Ask the students to cut these out and stick them on to the vision board.

3

Gather participants around the large piece of paper and invite them to reflect on what they see, using some of these questions:

- What injustices do you notice?
- How do you feel when you see these?

4

Share this quote from Nelson Mandela:

**“We can change the world and make it a better place. It is in our hands to make a difference.”**

Explain that, although there are many injustices in the world, when we come together we are able to bring hope and change. There is injustice but there is also hope.

Ask students to share anyone they know who has inspired them by joining with others to bring positive change in the world.



## Key learning

**Please highlight the points below:**

- The stories in these newspapers reflect the fact the world isn't as it should be – injustice and inequality are real.
- We cannot fix everything but we can do a little bit of good where we find ourselves.
- By coming together, we can make a positive difference. This is reimagining – pursuing hope of a better future by joining with one another.

## → Optional extra activity ⌚ +10 mins

Find **'You be the judge'** in Appendix 7 on p86.



## Vision board

**Guide your group through this activity using the instructions below:**

- 1.** Give out a piece of paper to each person in your group.
- 2.** Place your hand on the paper and draw round it. (If your group is small enough, students could draw round their hand directly on the vision board.)
- 3.** Inside the hand, complete the sentence: 'I long for a world where...' (e.g. '...where all are treated fairly', '...where climate change is reversed').
- 4.** Cut out the hand and stick it on the vision board.
- 5.** One person writes the title 'We long for a world where...'



## Key learning

**Please highlight the points below:**

- There is power in coming together in our shared hope to see justice and peace in the world.
- Pursuing that better future together is an act of reimagining.



## Top takeaway

**Ask your group (to write down or say aloud):**

What is something you want to remember from this session?

Give them a minute to reflect before answering.



## Prayer and reflection

**Please use this as a prayer or guide for reflection:**

Loving God, fill us with your Spirit now.

**We think about the stories we have heard about the transformation of injustice.**

Help us to **be curious** about others' stories – listening as often as we speak.

**We think about what we have learnt about recognising the injustice experienced by many.**

Give us the courage to **be present** – showing up and sticking around.

**We think about the things we have learned about pursuing justice in this session.**

Inspire us to **reimagine** what's possible – finding hope, knowing that you can transform all things.

In Jesus' name. Amen

## Notes

**End of session 4**

## Session 5

# Practising Forgiveness

### Key learning

Forgiveness is complex but transformational.

### Application

Recognise a hurt and try to see if a better relationship is possible.

### Habits focus

Be present by recognising hurt. Reimagine the possibilities of relationship where forgiveness is lived out.

## Before the session

### You will need:

- A clip from a film or TV show about forgiveness, a screen and speaker to show the clip(s). Some possible clips include:
  - Spider-Man and the Sandman, Spider-Man 3 (2007) – the Sandman had killed Peter Parker's uncle; Peter discovers the reason why and forgives him.
  - Thomas and Peter Rabbit apologise to Bea, Peter Rabbit (2018) – Bea blames Thomas for blowing up the rabbit burrow, but it turns out Peter was the one who pressed the button.
  - Shrek and Donkey, Shrek (2001) – Donkey and Shrek both feel badly treated by one another, but they have an important, truth-revealing conversation which helps to heal their relationship.
- To print out the 'Myth-busting' activity worksheet in Appendix 10 on p90.
- Paper clip/pebble/paper

- A sign saying 'Would' and a sign saying 'Wouldn't'
- Your group's vision board



## Set up your room

Put the signs saying 'Would' and 'Wouldn't' in different areas of the classroom – students will move between them.

**i Important:** Exploring the idea of forgiveness can be profound and valuable but it also has the potential to draw out reminders of painful experiences. Therefore, it is important to approach this topic with sensitivity. Participants may have experienced significant trauma and it is important that the session feels safe for everyone. Your role is not to tell anyone that they should forgive a particular person or a particular situation. No-one should feel compelled to forgive – suggesting that we should forgive someone who has harmed us can be traumatic in itself. The activity exploring what forgiveness is not is particularly important here. It may be helpful to focus on 'small forgiveness' (the forgiveness of minor wrongs) as a way of understanding the value and benefits of forgiving.

Be prepared in case the session draws out difficult emotions. Students need to know that they can take time out if they need to. If a student discloses anything which raises a safeguarding concern it is vital that you respond to this in accordance with your school's safeguarding policy.

## Intro

 00:00

 5mins

## Aim of the session

This session is called **Practising Forgiveness**.

### In this session we are going to:

- Explore the idea of forgiveness – what it is and what it is not.
- Recognise the complexity of forgiveness.
- Practise reimagining by seeing how our relationships can be transformed by forgiveness.



## Recap

Recap the previous session and remind the group of the three habits of being curious, being present, and reimagining.

Ask your group what they remember from the previous session and if they have any examples of actions or stories from the past week related to the theme.



## Activity Holding on

🕒 2 mins

- Ask each person to find a small object that they can hold easily in one hand (e.g. paper clip, piece of scrunched-up paper).
- Challenge them to hold on to this for as long as they can while you continue with the rest of the session. (Explain that the point of this will become clear later on!)





## Film

### Discuss:

**What do we learn about forgiveness in this film?**

You might like to draw out examples of the following: recognising a hurt, saying sorry, finding hope.

Choose either Option 1 or Option 2

## Option 1



## Bible story

### The father and his sons (Luke 15:11-32)

**Read the retelling of a parable told by Jesus to your group.** You can find this in Appendix 8 on p87, at the end of this guide. You may like to invite students to take on the roles of the father and each of the sons.

### Questions for discussion:



Where do you see forgiveness in the story?



Which character do you find it easiest to understand or identify with?



We don't know if the older brother forgave his younger brother in the end or not. What do you think would have made it easier for him to forgive and make a fresh start with his brother?



## Key learning

**Please highlight the points below:**

- When the younger son decided to seek his father's forgiveness, this meant changing direction and stopping the behaviour that was hurting others.
- The father's decision to forgive was a free choice, not under pressure from others.
- The older son names the hurt that he is feeling and has an honest conversation with his father. This is an important part of being present.
- We may identify with different characters at different times. Sometimes hurts are done to us – sometimes we hurt others. Recognising this can stop us judging others unfairly.
- Also draw on the **Key learning** from the Bible verse on p61.

## Option 2






## Bible verse Ephesians 4:32

**Share the verse:**

**"Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you." (NIV)**

**Question for discussion:**

-  Is forgiveness important in friendships? Why/why not?
-  What do you think about the idea that God forgives?
-  Where do you see similar principles and values in other faiths, worldviews or cultures and community traditions?



## Key learning

**Please highlight the points below:**

- God is kind and compassionate and forgives us – we are invited to respond by forgiving others.
- Being kind does not mean pretending nothing has happened – it is good to recognise a hurt has been done to us.
- Forgiving others – doing good to them – doesn't mean trust is restored but it does mean the cycle of hurt can stop.
- Sometimes we are the ones who are asked to forgive – sometimes others are asked to forgive us. Recognising this can stop us judging others unfairly.

## Space

 00:00

 **25 mins**



## Activity Letting go

 **2 mins**

- Ask students if they are still holding on to the object they started holding at the beginning of the session.
- Ask: If you have already let go of the object, why is that?
- Invite those who haven't yet done so to let go of the object.
- Ask: What does it feel like to let go of this object?



## Key learning

Please highlight the points below:

- Choosing to let go of hurt and resentment is not just a gift to the other person – it can be liberating and a release for us too.



## Activity Myth-busting

⌚ 8 mins

Start here



Ask students to turn to their worksheets.

1

Tell the students:

Archbishop Desmond Tutu was a South African priest and activist and his daughter Mpho Tutu is also a South African priest and activist. They wrote a book together exploring forgiveness. In that book, they explain that there are five things that forgiveness is not.

2

Talk through these together and students complete the sentences in worksheets:

- Forgiveness is not **[easy]**, it takes **[hard work]** and **[determination]**.
- Forgiveness is not **[weakness]**, it takes **[courage]** and **[strength]**.
- Forgiveness is not the same as **[letting someone off a punishment]**, but it does mean not seeking **[revenge]**.
- Forgiveness is not **[forgetting]**. We can only **[let go]** of the past if we bravely **[remember]** it.
- Forgiveness is not **[quick]**, it can take **[a long time]**.

difference.

3

- Having explored what forgiveness is not, challenge students to come up with a definition of 'forgive' as group.
- Now look up 'forgive' in a dictionary.
- Discuss: Which is a better description – the one we came up with or the one in the dictionary?



## Key learning

**Please highlight the points below:**

- Sometimes there is a misconception that forgiveness is about brushing hurt under the carpet – it is the opposite. Forgiveness involves naming the hurt.
- Forgiveness is not the easy option but it can transform our relationships.
- Forgiveness is an important part of everyday relationships - so that the hurt from the past can be addressed and enabling us to move towards the future we want for the relationship.



## Activity Would you forgive?

🕒 15 mins

Start here



*Note: If you would prefer not to show film clips, there is an alternative version of the activity using scenarios instead. Details can be found at the end of this guide - see Appendix 9 on p88.*

**Before the session:**

- Find one or two clips from movies or TV shows on forgiveness (examples on p56).
- Put up signs saying 'Would' and 'Wouldn't' in two different areas of the room.

1

Play the video clip (explaining the context of the clip first).

2

- Invite the group to imagine that they are in the shoes of the person being asked to forgive.
- Ask participants to move to the appropriate sign that reflects whether they would or would not forgive.
- Ask a couple of people for feedback on why they chose that position.

3

Once they have finished, open up a group discussion. You might want to draw out some of the following themes:



Does forgiveness require an apology?



What if the person who has hurt us is not sorry, or unwilling to apologise?



What makes it difficult to say sorry?



Are there times we should forgive?



## Key learning

**Please highlight the points below:**

- We've seen how forgiveness is presented in a movie – this can be oversimplified, unrealistically quick and not representative of the way things are.
- Forgiveness is complex – we will not all respond in the same way to the same situations.
- Saying sorry and forgiving is an important part of our everyday relationships and friendships.
- Making amends for hurt caused can help trust to be restored.
- Forgiveness doesn't always mean maintaining proximity with the person who has hurt us.



## Vision board

**Guide your group through this activity using the instructions below:**

1. Ask a volunteer to write the definition of 'forgive' that they came up with on the vision board.
2. Reflect silently:
  - Is there anyone that you would like to say sorry to?
  - Is there anyone that you would like to forgive?
3. Share this quotation from Archbishop Tutu:

'When I cultivate forgiveness in my small everyday encounters, I am preparing for a time when a much larger act of forgiveness will be asked of me, as it most certainly will... When I develop a mindset of forgiveness, rather than a mindset of grievance, I don't just forgive a particular act; I become a more forgiving person... What was once a reason for rupture and alienation becomes an opportunity for repair and greater intimacy.'<sup>1</sup>
4. Remind students how to access support if anyone is finding any of this difficult and would like to talk further about forgiveness.



## Top takeaway

**Ask your group (to write down or say aloud):**

What is something you want to remember from this session?

Give the group a few minutes to reflect before answering.

<sup>1</sup> Tutu, Desmond and Tutu, Mpho, *The Book of Forgiving: The Fourfold Path for Healing Ourselves and Our World*, William Collins, 2014.





# Prayer and reflection

Please use this as a prayer or guide for reflection:

Loving God, fill us with your Spirit now. We thank you that you love and forgive everybody.

**We think about the stories we have heard about forgiveness.**

Help us to **be curious** about others' stories – listening as often as we speak.

**We think about what we have learnt about recognising a hurt.**

Give us the courage to **be present** – showing up and sticking around.

**We think about the things we have learned about forgiving and seeking forgiveness.**

Inspire us to **reimagine** what's possible – finding hope, knowing that you can transform all things.

In Jesus' name. Amen

## Notes

End of session 5

## Session 6

# Belonging Together

### Key learning

We need one another in order to flourish.

### Application

Recognise our unique worth and value our interconnectedness with each other.

### Habits focus

Reimagine a world where all collectively flourish.

## Before the session

### You will need:

- A ball of string
- Your group's vision board



### Set up your room


For the **Walk** activity in **Space**, you'll need room for your students to move forward side by side in one line.

For the **Interweaving Stories** activity in **Space**, students will ideally sit in a circle.

# Intro

 00:00

 5mins

 Slide 1


## Aim of the session

This session is called **Belonging Together**.

### In this session we are going to:

- Recognise the value of each one of us and the unique contribution we have to make.
- Explore how we are connected to each other.
- Practise reimagining by celebrating the ways our uniqueness and differences can enrich one another.

This session draws deeply on the idea of ubuntu - Appendix 12 on p92 explains this in more detail.

 Slide 2



## Recap


Recap the previous session and remind the group of the three habits of being curious, being present, and reimagining.

Ask your group what they remember from the previous session and if they have any examples of actions or stories from the past week related to the theme.

# Story

 00:00

 20 mins

 Slide 3




## Film

### Discuss:

**What do we learn about hope in this film?**

You might like to draw out examples of the following: the power of coming together, seeking hope, telling a new story.

 Slide 4



## Bible passage

### 1 Corinthians 12: 15-22, 26





**Share the passage:**

“Suppose the foot says, “I am not a hand. So I don’t belong to the body.” By saying this, it cannot stop being part of the body. And suppose the ear says, “I am not an eye. So I don’t belong to the body.” By saying this, it cannot stop being part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, how could it hear? If the whole body were an ear, how could it smell? God has placed each part in the body just as he wanted it to be.

If all the parts were the same, how could there be a body? As it is, there are many parts. But there is only one body. The eye can’t say to the hand, “I don’t need you!” The head can’t say to the feet, “I don’t need you!” In fact, it is just the opposite. The parts of the body that seem to be weaker are the ones we can’t do without...

If one part suffers, every part suffers with it. If one part is honoured, every part shares in its joy.”

**Question for discussion:**

-  What do you think the writer (St Paul) is trying to say here?
-  What do you think of the idea of a community being like a body?
-  What would change if we recognised our need of one another?
-  Where do you see similar principles and values in other faiths, worldviews or cultures and community traditions?



## Key learning

**Please highlight the points below:**

- We are each unique, with a contribution to offer that only we can make.
- We need one another in order to flourish.
- Other people are not difficulties to be overcome but gifts, without whom we are poorer.
- It may be helpful to share one of these quotations from Archbishop Desmond Tutu, who describes the idea of 'ubuntu':

*Either:*

**"Ubuntu speaks particularly about the fact that you can't exist as a human being in isolation. It speaks about our interconnectedness...**

**I can be me only if you are fully you. I am because we are, for we are made for togetherness, for family. We are made for complementarity. We are created for a delicate network of relationships, of interdependence with our fellow human beings, with the rest of creation.**

**I have gifts that you don't have, and you have gifts that I don't have. We are different in order to know our need of each other. To be human is to be dependent."**

*or*

**"I am human because I belong, I participate, I share."**



## Activity

# Interweaving stories

Experience our interconnectedness and need of one another.

**Start here**



**1**

Students sit or stand in a circle.

Say, or summarise, the below:

- During this course, we have reflected on our high value – each made in God's image.
- We've explored our uniqueness and the ways in which we are different from one another and the ways we can navigate these differences well.
- We've also thought about the power of coming together in a world which is not always as it should be.
- We flourish when we recognise both our uniqueness and our interconnectedness with one other.

**2**

Invite students to reflect (and/or share) about this idea of interconnectedness as follows:

- How have you relied upon someone this week?
- Has someone done something for you this week that you appreciated?
- How could you show someone you value them this week?

3

Explain that students will now have a theme to discuss. They will take it in turns to say what they associate with the theme – it could be an experience, an opinion or something else. They don't need to have any deep knowledge or expertise.

Give the students a theme to discuss e.g.

- Hope
- Flourishing
- Travel
- Social media
- Local fast food eatery
- Sport

*Note: this isn't a long activity so choose a topic which students can discuss comfortably in a short period of time without opening up painful experiences which cannot be explored fully here.*

4

- Ask for a volunteer to start and give them the ball of string.
- Students take it in turns to share their reflection on the theme. The other students practise the habits of being curious and being present – seeking to understand others and listening deeply.
- Students wrap the string around their hand, then pass the ball of string to the person who wants to speak next. Overtime the string will weave together.

5

After five minutes, draw the conversation to a close and ask students to reflect.

Repeat with another topic, continuing to pass the ball of string around..



## Key learning

Please highlight the points below:

- Our individual understanding is incomplete without the perspectives of others
- Our stories are interwoven.
- In this activity, we have been:
  - **Being curious** – seeking to understand others
  - **Being present** – listening deeply to others' contributions
  - **Reimagining** – seeing our perspective and understanding grow through joining with others.

### → Optional extra activity ⌚ +10 mins

Find '**Belonging**' in Appendix 11 on p91.

# Sanctuary

 00:00

⌚ 10 mins



## Top takeaway

**Ask your group (to write down or say aloud):**

What is something you want to remember from this session?

Give the group a minute to reflect before answering.





## Vision board

**In this final session, use this time to invite students to reflect on what they have learnt and explored throughout the course by looking at the vision board.**

- 1.** Invite students to share what they have most valued from the course.
- 2.** Ask a volunteer to write the three habits across the vision board.
- 3.** Invite each student to say (or write on the board) one action they would like to take in order to practise one of the three habits:

**Be Curious, Be Present, Reimagine.**



## Prayer and reflection

**Please use this as a prayer or guide for reflection:**

Loving God, fill us with your Spirit now.

**We think about the fact that our stories are woven together.**

Help us to **be curious** about others' stories – listening as often as we speak.

**We think about our need for one another if we are all to flourish.**

Give us the courage to **be present** – showing up and sticking around.

**We think about the things we have learned throughout this course.**

Inspire us to **reimagine** what's possible – finding hope, knowing that you can transform all things.

In Jesus' name. Amen

# End of session 6



# Appendix



## Activity Walk

🕒 10 mins

Recognise the richness of our diversity  
and the things which unite us.

**Start here**



**1**

Invite your group to stand somewhere with space to move forward collectively, side by side, in a straight line.

**2**

Give the participants the following instructions, encouraging them to be honest in their responses (choose four to five statements, ending with the one about being a human being).

- Move forward if you enjoy Marvel films.
- Move forward if you have a pet.
- Move backwards if that pet is a dog.
- Move forward if you enjoy drawing.
- Move backwards if you like making music.
- Move forward if you like taking part in sports.
- Move backwards if you have a hero.
- Move forward if you are the class joker.
- Move backwards if you believe in aliens.
- Move forward if you have cried this year.
- Move forward if you like to win/are competitive.
- Move forward if you feel worried today/feel hopeful today.
- Jump the air /clap if you are a human being.

3

Ask the group what they notice about the process.



## Key learning

**Please highlight the points below:**

- We are all different and unique, and of deep value.
- This means that there is a contribution that only you can make because there is only one of you!
- In this activity we have practised being present – owning and sharing who we really are.



## Jesus and the woman at the well

### **A retelling based on John 4:3-42**

The sun was high in the sky as Jesus and his friends approached the town of Sychar. His friends, the disciples, looked around warily. They were travelling from Jerusalem back home north to Galilee, but to get there, they had decided to go through Samaria, the land of the Samaritans. Jews and Samaritans did not get on.

They needed lunch, so the disciples went to the town to get some food. Jesus sat down by a well to rest. It was hot and he was tired.

A woman came to the well. Unusual... as most people would avoid the heat of the middle of the day.

The Samaritan woman looked at Jesus nervously and then lowered a bucket down into the well.

"Will you get me a drink of water?" Jesus asked.

The woman stopped what she was doing. Was this man really talking to her? She wasn't meant to talk to men who weren't her family, but her curiosity got the better of her.

"You're a Jew," she said. "I'm a woman. A Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for water when our two peoples will have nothing to do with each other?"

"Well," replied Jesus. "There are two things you don't know: what God wants to give you and who is asking you for a drink. If you did, you'd be asking me for the water that gives life."

The woman looked at Jesus. He didn't even have a bucket. "Where are you going to get this life-giving water?"

"Everyone who drinks this water—" Jesus gestured at the well "—will get thirsty again. But the water I have will give you eternal life. You'll never be thirsty again!"

The woman almost dropped her bucket. She exclaimed: "Give me some of that water!"

Then I'll never have to come to this well again!"

But then Jesus changed the subject: "Go and get your husband," he said.

Oh no. Should she lie or tell the truth? She'd been divorced and abandoned so often, she'd almost lost count.

She hesitated and then said: "I don't have a husband."

"That's right," said Jesus. "You don't. In fact, you've been married five times and the man you're living with is not your husband."

"You're a prophet!" she exclaimed. "My ancestors worshipped in one way, but you Jews say you can only worship in Jerusalem."

"You Samaritans don't really know who you worship," said Jesus, "but Jews do and God will use us to save the world. But now is the time when the Spirit is leading people to worship the Father in truth!"

"But we're waiting for the Messiah," the woman replied. "When he comes, he'll explain everything to us."

"I am the one you are all waiting for – Jews and Samaritans. The Messiah," Jesus said.

Just then, the disciples returned. They were shocked to find Jesus talking to a Samaritan woman. But they didn't say anything. They had already seen Jesus have surprising conversations, ignoring social boundaries and stepping into the unknown (or so it seemed to them).

The woman threw aside her bucket, pushed past the disciples and ran through Sychar, telling everyone in the town that she had found the Messiah. And a lot of Samaritans put their faith in Jesus, because of what the woman said.



## Activity

🕒 10 mins

# Thoughts, feelings, responses

Steps we can take to overcome our prejudice.

**Start here**



**1**

Ask students to draw the outline of a person e.g.



Think about how someone feels in a situation where they feel different from everyone else. (You might think about characters from stories or films, personal experiences or use your imagination.)

**3**

Draw around the person:

- Thoughts (how they might think about themselves, and others)
- Feelings (emotions, how they feel)
- Responses (what these thoughts and feelings make them do)

**4**

Share any reflections with the group, particularly the 'responses'.



## Key learning

**Please highlight the following:** Considering the thoughts and feelings of others can help us empathise with them. Empathy is an important part of overcoming prejudices.





## Activity Blind spots

🕒 5 mins

Start here



1

Show students a picture of a rear-view mirror in a car (you may also want to illustrate by bringing in a mirror and demonstrating a 'blind spot').

2

Ask:

- Do you know what a blind spot in a car is?
- What have blind spots got to do with how we approach disagreements?



## Key learning

**Please highlight the points below:**

- In disagreement, it's helpful to notice our own motives and desires because these affect how we interact with others.
- We may have preconceptions, misunderstandings, prejudices or lack awareness.
- A 'blind spot' may also be something that we do because we always have done, or which we have never thought to question.



## Activity Cancel culture

Explore the impact of cancel culture

🕒 10 mins

**Start here**



1

Share these quotes with your group:

- “Cancelling people pushes them away and makes them more likely to find spaces where bad views are the norm...Cancel culture, as I see it, involves the shutting down of different perspectives” (Matt Haig)
- “Being called out has made me a better person. Not being cancelled has enabled me to be accountable, learn from my mistakes, and go on to share those lessons with others and do good with my privilege” (Jameela Jamil)
- “[Cancel culture creates a] culture of accountability which...needed to come into being.” (Lisa Nakamura)

2

Ask your group for their views on cancel culture and on these quotes. Do they agree or disagree?



## Key learning

**Please highlight the following:** We live in a culture in which it is difficult to sustain relationships when we disagree.



# Jesus and Zacchaeus

## A retelling based on Luke 19:1-10

The city of Jericho was alive with the buzz of someone special passing through. It seemed like everyone was talking about him – a teacher called Jesus. Even Zacchaeus, the tax collector, had heard the rumours of Jesus' visit. Greedy little Zacchaeus.

Zacchaeus had sold out to the Romans, or so everyone in Jericho thought. He collected the taxes on behalf of the unpopular Roman government. Not only was Zacchaeus a collaborator with the Roman rulers, he was a cheat. He used the cover of his Roman guards to demand more money than the Romans wanted. And he kept the extra for himself.

Well, the rumours were true – Jesus arrived. But the crowds were so large and Zacchaeus so short that he couldn't see a thing. So he decided to shin up a tree to try and get a better look.

When Jesus got to the tree, he looked up and saw Zacchaeus, dangling there in the branches.

"Zacchaeus! Come down! I want to stay with you today!"

Zacchaeus clambered down the tree, scraping his knees and elbows as he went. And he welcomed Jesus into his house.

The crowd was in uproar!

"Zacchaeus is a sinner!"

"Jesus is actually going to his house!"

"I can't believe it!"

But later that day, Zacchaeus emerged from his house and now proclaimed: "I will give half of all my property to the poor!"

What?

"I will pay back four times as much as I have taken from everyone I've cheated!"

People wondered, 'Is this the same man? Zacchaeus, the grubby little cheat?'

Jesus smiled and said to Zacchaeus: "Today you and your family have been saved. You are truly a member of God's people. The Son of Man came to look for and save people who are lost."

Lost people like Zacchaeus.



## Activity You be the judge

🕒 10 mins

Start here



1

Give each student two pieces of paper.

Students:

- write a silly 'crime' on one piece of paper (e.g. eating the last biscuit but leaving the packet in the tin or taking your phone charger without asking)
- write a 'punishment' for that crime on another piece of paper (e.g. having to buy biscuits for everyone or a week without a mobile phone)

2

Fold up each crime and put the papers into one bowl; do the same with the punishments and put them in the other bowl.

Ask a volunteer to pull out one crime and one punishment.

The volunteer reads them out and all the participants, as a group, chat about if the punishment fits the crime or not. Hold a vote to decide if the punishment is appropriate.



## Key learning

**Please highlight the following:** Each of us has different perspectives on justice and injustice. This may be shaped by our experiences.



# The father and his sons

## A retelling based on Luke 15:11-32

One day the younger son went to his father and said: "I can't be bothered waiting until you have died. Give me my share of the inheritance now."

So the father divided all his property in two and gave half to his younger son. Soon afterwards, the younger son packed up everything and went to a foreign land. There, he wasted all his money on having a good time, until he had nothing left.

Then a famine hit the land. There was no food anywhere, but that didn't matter, because the younger son had no money to buy it anyway. Finally, he got a job feeding some pigs. Given half the chance, he would have gladly eaten the pig's food, he was so hungry.

Finally, he realised what he had done: "The people who work for my father have more to eat than I do. I know, I'll go back home and ask my father for a job. I'll say: 'Father, I have done the wrong thing by you and by God. I'm not worthy to be called your son. Give me a job on your farm instead.'"

So he set off, retracing the steps he had taken months earlier, but no first-class travel this time.

His father had waited every day, looking out for the return of his son. While the son was walking home, still a long way off in the distance, his father saw him. He sprinted, running up to his son and throwing his arms around him.

The father was hugging his son so tightly that the son could hardly get out his apology. He finally got there in the end: "I am not worthy to be called your son." But instead of being sent away by the father, his dad ordered his workers to prepare a huge celebration.

"Bring us the best food! A new set of clothes! New shoes! Jewellery to wear!"

Meanwhile the elder son got home after a long day working in the fields. He heard the noise of the party coming from the house and he asked one of the workers what was going on.

"Your brother has come home and your dad arranged a massive party!"

The elder brother was so angry that he could barely speak, and he refused to go into the house. His father came out and begged him to join them, but his son shouted:

"I have slaved away for you for years. But this son of yours wastes half your money, then comes home and you throw him a party?"

The father looked at him, then said: "Son, you are always with me and everything I have is yours. But we should celebrate because it's as if you're brother had died but has now come back to life. He was lost but now is found!"



## Activity

# Would you forgive?

An alternative to the film clip activity

**Start here**



**1**

Invite students to turn to their worksheets.





Students read each of the nine scenarios (also included below).

- A good friend accidentally breaks something that belongs to you. The thing they broke was really special to you and your friend is very sorry.
- Someone you don't know very well at school loses their temper with you; they are not sorry. Later you find out that a member of their family is unwell.
- Your boyfriend/girlfriend was seen holding hands with someone else. They denied it at first but has now said sorry.
- Your two-year-old younger brother was sick on your favourite shirt – it is stained and ruined.
- You and your best friend have fallen out. You have both done things wrong but neither wants to say sorry first.
- You are very badly injured in a car accident. The driver whose fault it was died in the accident.
- Your house is broken into, and a lot of your possessions are stolen. The burglars are never caught.

- In an important cup match someone on your team commits a foul. The other team get a penalty and your team loses.
- A family member has a big birthday coming up. You had planned to get them a present, but you carelessly spent all your money on yourself. Now you feel really guilty.

**2** On their worksheets they note down if they would or would not forgive, with an explanation.

**3** Once they have finished, take some examples and discussion. You might want to draw out some of the following themes:

-  Does forgiveness require an apology?
-  What if the person who has harmed us is not sorry?
-  What if they are unable or unwilling to apologise?
-  Are there times we should forgive?



## Key learning

**Please highlight the points below:**

- Forgiveness is complex – we will not all respond in the same way to the same situations.
- Saying sorry and forgiving is an important part of our everyday relationships and friendships.
- Making amends for hurt caused can help trust to be restored.
- Forgiveness doesn't always mean maintaining proximity with the person who has hurt us.



## Myth-busting



Use the following words to complete the sentences:

hard work

quick

punishment

a long time

determination

easy

courage

remember

strength

weakness

revenge

forgetting

let go

- 1 Forgiveness is not \_\_\_\_\_, it takes \_\_\_\_\_  
and \_\_\_\_\_.
- 2 Forgiveness is not \_\_\_\_\_,  
it takes \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
- 3 Forgiveness is not the same as letting someone off a  
\_\_\_\_\_, but it does mean not seeking  
\_\_\_\_\_.
- 4 Forgiveness is not \_\_\_\_\_. We can only  
\_\_\_\_\_ of the past if we bravely \_\_\_\_\_ it.
- 5 Forgiveness is not \_\_\_\_\_, it can take  
\_\_\_\_\_.





## Activity Belonging

🕒 10 mins

Start here



1

Ask students to reflect on one of the following quotes:

- "I am human because I belong, I participate, I share."  
(Archbishop Desmond Tutu)
- "Today, if we have no peace, it is because we have forgotten that we belong to each other - that man, that woman, that child is my brother or my sister." (Mother Teresa)
- "Ubuntu speaks particularly about the fact that you can't exist as a human being in isolation. It speaks about our interconnectedness ...

I can be me only if you are fully you. I am because we are, for we are made for togetherness, for family. We are made for complementarity. We are created for a delicate network of relationships, of interdependence with our fellow human beings, with the rest of creation.

I have gifts that you don't have, and you have gifts that I don't have. We are different in order to know our need of each other. To be human is to be dependent."  
(Archbishop Desmond Tutu)

2

What do they think of these ideas? What difference would it make if we put these ideas into practice?



## Ubuntu

Throughout the Difference course, students reflect on the preciousness of each person and the ways we can better reflect that in our relationships. Our uniqueness can sometimes bring friction until we learn to navigate our differences well.

Session six, *Belonging Together*, focuses on our deep interconnectedness alongside the unique worth of each one of us. These ideas of our unique worth and our interconnectedness – and their importance to the work of reconciliation – were explored in depth by Archbishop Desmond Tutu through the lens of ubuntu:

'In our African weltanschauung, our worldview, we have something called ubuntu. In Xhosa, we say, "Umntu ngumtu ngabantu." This expression is very difficult to render in English, but we could translate it by saying, "A person is a person through other persons." We need other human beings for us to learn how to be human, for none of us comes fully formed into the world. We would not know how to talk, to walk, to think, to eat as human beings unless we learned how to do these things from other human beings. For us, the solitary human being is a contradiction in terms.

Ubuntu is the essence of being human. It speaks of how my humanity is caught up and bound up inextricably with yours. It says, not as Descartes did, "I think, therefore I am" but rather, "I am because I belong." I need other human beings in order to be human. The completely self-sufficient human being is subhuman. I can be me only if you are fully you. I am because we are, for we are made for togetherness, for family. We are made for complementarity. We are created for a delicate network of relationships, of interdependence with our fellow human beings, with the rest of creation.

I have gifts that you don't have, and you have gifts that I don't have. We are different in order to know our need of each other. To be human is to be dependent.'<sup>1</sup>

'Ubuntu teaches us that our worth is intrinsic to who we are. We matter because we are made in the image of God. Ubuntu reminds us that we belong in one family – God's family, the human family.'<sup>2</sup>

Ubuntu reflects the fact that we need one in other in order to flourish. But it also contains within it an invitation to a deeper humanity with one another, in pursuit of a just world for all. As Archbishop Tutu explains:

In traditional African society, ubuntu was coveted more than anything else—more than wealth as measured in cattle and the extent of one’s land. Without this quality a prosperous man, even though he might have been a chief, was regarded as someone deserving of pity and even contempt. It was seen as what ultimately distinguished people from animals—the quality of being human and so also humane.

Those who had ubuntu were compassionate and gentle, they used their strength on behalf of the weak, and they did not take advantage of others—in short, they cared, treating others as what they were: human beings. If you lacked ubuntu, in a sense you lacked an indispensable ingredient of being human.’<sup>3</sup>

This is a powerful invitation to all students as they end the course in session six, looking ahead to how they can shape the world for the better.

1 Tutu, Desmond, *God is Not a Christian*, Random House, 2011, p22.

2 Ibid, p24.

3 Ibid, pp22-23.

# Notes



# difference.

🖱 [difference.rln.global](https://difference.rln.global)

✉ [hello@rln.global](mailto:hello@rln.global)

**RLN** DIFFERENCE IS A PART OF THE  
RECONCILING LEADERS NETWORK



ARCHBISHOP OF  
CANTERBURY'S  
RECONCILIATION  
MINISTRY