

## **Prayer and Faith – Mind, Body, Spirit: Are They Connected?**

### **SESSION FOUR LEADER GUIDE**

**This leader guide is designed to follow each page of the fourth session: “PRAYER AND FAITH – MIND, BODY, SPIRIT: ARE THEY CONNECTED?” with background for the leader and helpful references for expanding the learning. This fourth lesson may be taught as one longer continuous session, such as at a retreat setting, or as separate sessions (approximately one hour) that cover each page of the session. You may wish to have youth view the website, or individual pages, on their own, then gather as a group to discuss and explore the learning. The website is also useful within the classroom as a teaching tool to introduce the material, then youth may revisit it later to reinforce learning at home. While the curriculum offers prompts for guiding conversation and offers direction for teaching the material, it is important to prepare your own answers for questions and notes for discussion. Sharing your personal experience and insight with the group is a valuable resource for these lessons.**

### **OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this session, the students will be better able to:

Express the value of both a scientific and religious approach to health and well-being

Explore the interconnectedness of mind, body, and spirit

## **THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT**

**The conversation between faith/religion and science can be difficult to navigate with youth who live in a world where they are bombarded by a great amount of information and opinions. It is important to first set a safe learning environment where differing opinions are respected and confidentiality is secured.**

**You may also want to consult with parents/guardians prior to beginning this session to alert them to the concepts taught in this session, and invite them to preview the website. Many adults are unfamiliar with ways to talk about both science and religion, or may have beliefs that are challenged by this learning.**

**Within any group of youth you will find a wide range of maturity and development levels. In general, adolescent-aged students (12-14) are able to engage in more complex thinking, reason deductively, and are better able to form concepts about the past, present, and future than their elementary counterparts. As adolescence is achieved, they can synthesize values and beliefs with their own experiences to create meaning and understanding for life. This is also a time when a sense of personal identity is being formed, and this extends to their identity as it relates to the concepts of science and faith.**

## **SUPPLIES FOR SESSION ONE**

- Computer and access to Internet**

- Three sheets of large newsprint and marker
- Paper and pen/pencil (Session Two)

**TO BEGIN:**

Gather youth and provide an overview of lesson(s) to be covered in **PRAYER AND FAITH – MIND, BODY, SPIRIT: ARE THEY CONNECTED?** session(s). If this lesson is held separately from the previous lesson, review the need for a safe and confidential environment (See Lesson 1 - Leader Guide). Ask youth to recall ways for their group to honor one another's opinions and to keep shared ideas in the group. If possible, review these ideas previously listed on a white board, or a computer document and read the completed list. Ask all present, youth and adults, to agree to follow these guidelines for the duration of the learning time together.

**PAGE ONE – PRAYER AND FAITH – MIND, BODY, SPIRIT: ARE THEY CONNECTED?**

Prior to the beginning of the lesson, set-up in the gathering space a large piece of newsprint. Use the marker to divide it into two columns. Label one column **PRAYER** and one column **FAITH**.

Begin the lesson by asking each person to give a definition of prayer. Using the newsprint list each definition or idea in the column labeled **PRAYER**.

Once all have responded, ask the following two questions:

**Who do you, or others, pray to?**

**What do you pray for?**

**Allow all answers and add to the column labeled PRAYER.**

**Next, ask each person to give a definition of faith. Using the newsprint list each definition or idea in the column labeled FAITH.**

**Once all have responded, ask the following two questions:**

**What do you expect from prayer?**

**Does prayer change things? Why or why not?**

**Allow all answers and add to the column labeled FAITH.**

**Review with the class the website information on the area of PAGE ONE prior to the link, and encourage discussion on the information presented.**

**Next: Have the group watch the video clip in the link: "Tim Hawkins Food Prayer Comedy." *Allow discussion following the video as time allows.***

**Review with the class the remaining information on the area of PAGE ONE after the link.**

**Next, discuss with the group why they feel that some Christians and some scientists disagree about the claims of how prayer and faith might or might not affect the physical world or the health of a person. Be attentive to the need for each group member to honor**

**the thoughts, feelings, and opinions of each other. Allow the discussion to continue for as long as interest is maintained. You may continue on with the lesson to PAGE TWO - THE TWO PERSPECTIVES, or bring the session to a close.**

**If the session will end, encourage students to keep track of any conversations they observe or have experienced with friends or family regarding the claims of prayer and faith. Encourage students to bring this information back to future sessions. Be sure to save the large newsprint used to record definitions and answers to the questions about prayer and faith. This will be used for the remaining sessions.**