

Meeting Topic: Failure

Goals:

- To understand that it is ok for us to fail.
- To accept that we are not alone in our failures.
- To understand that from failure we grow and learn.

Main Ideas/ Understandings:

- Failing is part of our everyday life. Sometimes we work so hard for our accomplishments that when they fail through we feel depressed and broken, we don't ever want to try again. But failing is sometimes even better than succeeding, because from failure, we learn.
- Even if we are to fail from accomplishing the tiniest of things to a monstrosity of an event, we aren't the first person to fail. Everyone has failed at some point: your family, friends, leaders, even Jesus.
- The most important part though is that we learn from our failures. Each failure helps us grow into a better person. We learn from our mistakes and what we could possibly do to amend them.

Materials: Can, handouts

Opening: have everyone stand along all the walls of the building. Give the incentive: We will be doing the sitting challenge. If we have even one person is left after 15 minutes we'll throw a party next time. Otherwise we will be doing silent reflections every meeting from next meeting onward. Obviously, all will fail.

Motivation: How does it make you feel that you failed?

Activities/ Questions/ Transitions:

1. Introduce topic- Failure. Failure: lack of success or an unsuccessful person, enterprise, or thing. Discuss how we are so focused on succeeding in life that we sometimes break down when we fail.
2. Activity: Everyone stands in a line and closes their eyes: then give a series of failure topics. For each one that applies, take a step forward. Have everyone open their eyes afterward.
3. Transition: So we have seen how we fail, how does this make you feel? Remember, you are not alone with your failures. Everyone together is part of it.
4. Activity: Pass the Can (twice: first shoes, than shoes/ barefoot)
You pass an empty tin can (with one end cut off) from person to person. Again you may only use your feet and legs to pass the can. The can must sit over every foot in the circle. If the can touches the ground, the group must start over.
5. Transition: Speak of failure of my life. What did I learn from it? How did I grow from it?
6. Small group questions:
 - a. When have you faced failure in your life?
 - b. How does failure affect you?
 - c. How do you cope with failure?
 - d. Do you see failure as a learning experience?
 - e. Does failure sometimes serve the purpose of humbling us? How?
 - f. How can we grow from our failures?
 - g. How can sin be seen as failure? How do we grow from our sins?

Summary Question/ Application:

Reflection on scripture. Bring up several verses of failure in scripture. We are not perfect; failure brings us closer to God.

And when he was gone out into the porch, another maid saw him, and said unto them that were there, "This fellow was also with Jesus of Nazareth." And again he denied with an oath, "I do not know the man." And after a while came unto him they that stood by, and said to Peter, "Surely thou also art one of them; for thy speech betrayeth thee." Then began he to curse and to swear, saying, "I know not the man." And immediately the cock crew. And Peter remembered the word of Jesus, which said unto him, "Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice." And he went out, and wept bitterly. (Matthew 26:71-75)

St. Peter: Corinthians 1:26-29: "Brothers, think of what you were when you were called. Not many of you were wise by human standards; not many were influential; not many were of noble birth. But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong. He chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things—and the things that are not—to nullify the things that are, so that no one may boast before him."

Even though he failed to stay true to Christ, he remembered, learned, and worked to spread the word of God, eventually being the rock of the church and the first bishop.