

Why Self Harm Works!

Description: Logically it does not make sense, but emotionally it makes perfect sense. We cause our own pain and suffering because someone else caused us pain and suffering? In this candid talk about self-harm, we will learn from the Garden of Eden and determine to make better choices.

Key Verses: Genesis 1:26-3:24

Prompt: Find an old *Choose Your Own Adventure* book. Tell your students about how these stories work. Read to them the opening pages, where they come to their first choice. Ask them to make a group decision. As you flip pages, let them know that life is like these books. There's always a choice.

Play: Video of Esther Pacheco, "Self-harm"

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Process: Select from the following questions to help students remember, rekindle and reengage.

- ⏪ Esther opens by saying, "We all like to have power, influence, and impact in our lives." Then she asks a question worth considering: ***Where do we get our power?***
- ⏪ **Refer to** Genesis 2-3. ***What does the story of human beginnings tell us about the origin and nature of human power? What happened to our power after Adam and Eve's rebellion?***
- ⏪ "God puts hope into the curses of Genesis Three," Esther observes. ***Why is this important?***
- ⏪ Esther uses a sandbox as an illustration for the chaos in our lives. Plastic bags stood for our power to contain our chaos. ***What are the different stressors we face as a baby? How do our stressors and our ability to manage them change as we age? What are healthy and unhealthy ways to get stressors out of our "power bags"?***
- ⏪ ***How does self-harm provide an illusion of power?***
- ⏪ Esther compares life to algebra, having many unknown variables. She says, "Your life is one big, giant problem. You have problems left and right. And you have to figure out the solution to the problems in your life." ***What three affirmations does she provide to help solve our problems?***
- ⏪ Esther references Victor Frankl's book *Man's Search for Meaning*. ***What is the setting for this book and what does this book show about the importance of choosing hope?***
- ⏪ Our chaos makes us feel isolated. ***How should we respond to feelings of isolation?***
- ⏪ Confession has its limits, Esther warns. ***What must we keep in mind when we confess our self-harm to others? How does Esther respond when people tell her they harm themselves?***
- ⏪ Stress stems from trying to control matters that aren't ours to control. ***How is this true for you?***

Pray: Read Romans 5:1-5. Remind students no matter their challenges, they can always choose to hope in God. Give them a minute of silence to ask God to build their hope before closing aloud.