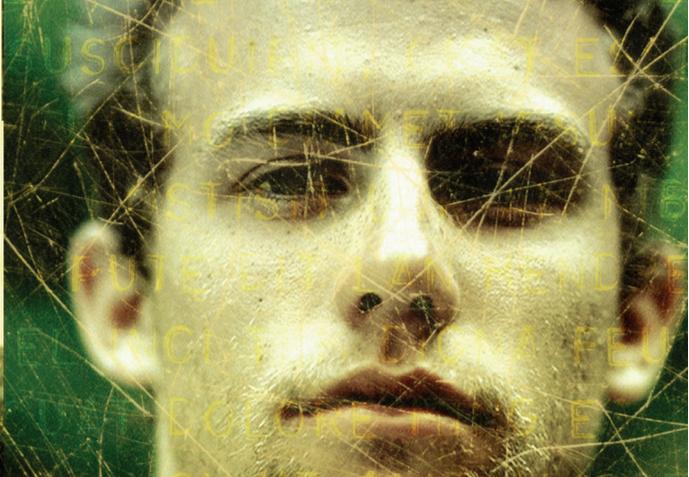
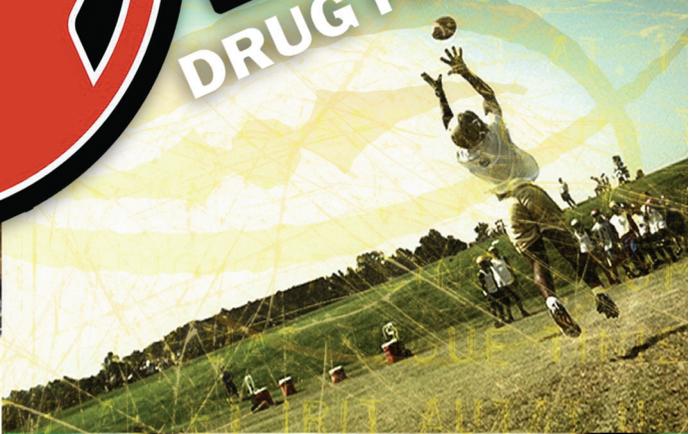


One Way 2 Play

DRUG FREE



OW2P is a systematic Christ-centered program developed to confront the problem of drug use among students by instilling values, encouraging goal-setting and establishing accountability through positive peer pressure.

It challenges students to sign a commitment card saying they will be alcohol and drug free. *OW2P* contains three critical elements that make this program one of the most effective in America. In *OW2P*, FCA is turned into Faith, Commitment and Accountability.

Special thanks to the following FCA All-Stars for helping develop the *OW2P* Playbook: Bill Buckley, Wes Yeary, Scott Carter, Jimmy Miller, Randall Murphree, Christy Mullen, Danny Burns, Steve Fitzhugh, Dave Kubal, Jill Ewert, Susie Magill, Janet Goreham, Ashley Grosse and Bethany Hermes.



National FCA Headquarters
8701 Leeds Road, Kansas City, MO 64129
1-800-289-0909 • www.fca.org • fca@fca.org

Dear Teammate -

Whenever a new year or a new sports season rolls around, there is always a time of reflection. We seem to always make resolutions and promises, and hope that the future or season will be brighter. You've heard it many times at the end of a long season, "Wait until next year! Our team will be back, and we'll be the winners!"

Athletes know as well as anybody that a fresh start often brings new direction and new success. That is what this Kit is all about—the promise of the future. These 12 lessons are designed to help you when making the choices that can set the course for the rest of your life. Resolutions are usually our attempts to say "no" to a bad habit or behavior. People often feel guilty and defeated when they break these resolutions. FCA's *One Way 2 Play—Drug Free* challenge is about saying "yes" to someone before we can say "no" to something.

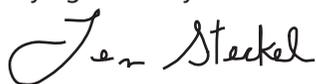
Success means saying "yes" to a personal relationship with the ultimate Head Coach (Jesus Christ), then allowing Him to live His life through you. In all the decisions of your life, you simply are following the lead of Christ. You can do all things when you are accountable to Him. This includes saying "no" to drugs, tobacco, alcohol and any other thing that might stand in the way of your relationship with Him, jeopardizing the great future He has planned for you.

As you do these studies and learn what God's Word says about who you are and who Jesus Christ is, let Him call the plays in your life. Be coachable. Allow your parents, Christian friends and coaches to encourage you and challenge you in your walk with Christ and your desire to live alcohol, drug and tobacco free.

We need to remember what Paul wrote in Romans 12:1-2: "Therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, I urge you to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God; this is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may discern what is the good, pleasing, and perfect will of God."

Have the desire to be in the middle of God's will. As you know, FCA stands for Fellowship of Christian Athletes, but when we are talking about *One Way 2 Play*, FCA stands for Faith, Commitment and Accountability. Accept the challenge to have Faith in Jesus Christ. Make a Commitment to saying "no" to alcohol and other drugs, and to choosing Accountability to one another. After many years of coaching in the NFL, I learned a phrase that was expressed by the players: "Promises are often for losers. Commitments are for winners!" I am confident your future will be bright when you seriously and sincerely make that commitment to yourself and to Jesus Christ!

Playing One Way –

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Les Steckel". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Les Steckel
President/CEO
Fellowship of Christian Athletes



Faith • Commitment • Accountability

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The *One Way 2 Play* Kit

The *OW2P* Kit is a comprehensive 12-session curriculum kit that is a totally unique resource for athletes, coaches, parents, youth leaders, and volunteers that will equip, encourage, and motivate. It is designed to develop the *OW2P* program for the individual athlete, entire team, school or community. The Kit includes the *OW2P* DVD and the *OW2P* Playbook. The DVD contains not only 12 powerful videos for the sessions, but also additional bonus videos. The videos include interviews with top professional athletes and coaches who share their insights.

The Playbook contains 12 corresponding small group studies with complete lesson plans including warm up teambuilders, workout questions and scripture application. There are additional drug prevention resources and tools included such as: How to Use the *OW2P* Game Plan, Developing a *OW2P* Plan, Group Leader's Guide and a complete appendix. The Playbook and DVD are available individually, but it would be more beneficial to follow the suggested options of using the Playbook and DVD together. It can be used as a one-week, four-week or 12-week program.

As you know, FCA stands for Fellowship of Christian Athletes, but when we are talking about *One Way 2 Play*, FCA stands for **Faith, Commitment and Accountability**. Accept the challenge to have **Faith** in Jesus Christ, make a **Commitment** to saying "no" to alcohol and other drugs, and to choosing **Accountability** to one another.

One Way 2 Play Overview

What is FCA?

The Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA) is touching millions of lives...one heart at a time. Since 1954, FCA has been challenging coaches and athletes on the professional, college, high school, junior high, and youth levels to use the powerful medium of athletics to impact the world for Jesus Christ. FCA is the largest Christian sports ministry in America. It focuses on serving local communities by equipping, empowering and encouraging people to make a difference for Christ.

Why One Way 2 Play—Drug Free?

In a survey of 125,000 coaches, more than 90 percent of the coaches responding said the No. 1 challenge they faced in dealing with their athletes was the problem of drug and alcohol use. The problem is not just limited to athletes; it is a problem in every part of our society.

One of the greatest ways that FCA can serve coaches and athletes is to help them with the war against drugs and alcohol. FCA's national drug-free program, One Way 2 Play (*OW2P*), is one of America's most successful faith-based drug and alcohol prevention programs with more than 360,000 signed commitments. Coaches and athletes on teams and campuses are impacting their communities by implementing this powerful program and presenting the *OW2P* program on their teams. Additionally, FCA hosts thousands of rallies, assemblies and events each year in order to spread the drug-free message.

FCA is confronting this issue head-on because of the growing crisis in our country. The following statistics reveal why *OW2P* is needed today more than ever.

- Approximately 36% of ninth-graders say they have consumed alcohol in the past month. (*Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*)
- By their senior year, 70% of teenagers have consumed alcohol, and 46% have tried marijuana. (*Source: Monitoring the Future Survey*)
- 50% of high school seniors have been drunk in the past year. (*Source: Monitoring the Future Survey*)
- One third of 12-17 year olds have smoked a cigarette. (*Source: U.S. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services*)



What is OW2P?

OW2P is a systematic, Christ-centered program developed to confront the problem of drug use among students by instilling values, encouraging goal-setting and establishing accountability through positive peer pressure. It challenges students to sign a commitment card saying they will be alcohol and drug free. OW2P contains three critical elements that make this program one of the most effective in America. In OW2P, FCA is turned into Faith, Commitment and Accountability.

Faith in Jesus Christ and the fact that they can be forgiven and receive wisdom to make and carry out good decisions.

Commitment to saying “no” to alcohol and drugs, as well as helping others to keep their commitments and sign the commitment pledge. (Students have a 60% greater chance of following through on commitments that they sign.)

Accountability to their friends, group leaders and families in keeping their pledge. (Five key accountability questions allow students to have peer help. Students have an 85% greater chance of following through on their commitment if they stay accountable to a peer once a week.)

Why is OW2P so important?

In the best of circumstances, adolescence is a difficult time in a person’s life. Monumental physical, emotional and relational changes occur during this time. Children are becoming adults, and in the process, they try many new behaviors. Some are helpful; some are very destructive. But in addition to the normal developmental process in adolescence, today’s young people experience many other pressures. Families are falling apart. Economic conditions squeeze them. Responsible role models are replaced by millionaire sports and movie stars, and the young people have unrealistic expectations about what they deserve and need.

The tension is so powerful that many kids long for escape. Some seek the initial glamour and excitement of emotion-numbing drugs and alcohol. The gangs we see on the evening news are only one example of this escape. The rural, suburban, middle- and upper middle-class kids escape more quietly, but in far greater numbers.

Today, many young people feel lonely. They feel hopeless, and they desperately need somebody to reach out to them. Your group can be the one place where they feel understood, where they feel loved and where they get the clear direction necessary in making wise decisions.

You have the privilege of letting God use you to address the causes and symptoms of teen drug use. You play a vital role in the shaping of these young lives so that they—and eventually their children—feel loved and can make responsible, healthy decisions.

One Way 2 Play—Drug Free is FCA's way of confronting the problem of drug use. It goes far beyond campaigns like "Just Say No!" because it helps to create a powerful, healthy family atmosphere and provides clear information and guidance for young people. We address the entire scope of the teens' lives, not just one behavior. This comprehensive approach takes longer to communicate and more care to implement, but the quality of the relationships that are built will establish a base for healthy communication about any topic your group discusses.

We have drawn on the expertise of the FCA staff. Together we have created a program that God can use to touch young lives. *One Way 2 Play—Drug Free* is truly innovative, relevant and effective.

What are the features to OW2P?

The features of this exciting program include:

1. Meeting plans that you can use to implement the *One Way 2 Play—Drug Free* program in your group. They are designed to be used in one of three ways—as a single meeting, a four-week series or a 12-week "season."
2. The philosophy and the message of *One Way 2 Play—Drug Free*, that are clearly defined in this playbook.
3. The *OW2P* commitment card, this provides an opportunity for people to commit themselves to living and playing drug free.
4. A resource order form, that offers a way for you to receive valuable resources that will help you reinforce the *One Way 2 Play* commitment.

"A lot of times, the best way to help the addict, a person who is stuck on drugs and alcohol, is to change their heart. See, if you change their heart then they can change their behavior. I know."

- President George W. Bush (Reuters, November 11, 2003)



How is this *OW2P* Kit best implemented?

OW2P is not just a one-shot program. It is designed to help you create a powerful, positive environment with a strong community atmosphere. The best way to implement this kit is follow the 12-week game plan, not just plan one meeting. Instead of thinking of *OW2P* as a program or event, think of it as a ministry. The question that needs to be asked is, "How can I implement the *OW2P* ministry locally?" The goal is not just for the students to sign a commitment card, but to experience a life-change through this ministry. The 12-weeks of videos and studies provides a fantastic series that will equip coaches, teachers, youth leaders and parents to encourage athletes to be strong in their commitments! They are relevant, Biblical and application-oriented. This is a great start, but our hope is that *OW2P* becomes part of your local ministry and has a lifelong impact.

How do I get started?

We realize that some group leaders will be able to implement these concepts very naturally and easily, and others will have more difficulty. That's okay! We know you care for these kids, or you wouldn't be in this position at all. Be patient with yourself as you try new ways of dealing with these topics. Ask for help whenever you need it.

The deep needs we address in this program are not easily resolved. Studies show that the best solution is a concerted effort on all fronts including FCA, churches, school counselors, professional counselors/agencies and parents. Take some time to find out about the resources in your community. As you raise these issues in kids' lives, some will need more help than the group can provide, so do some homework and locate helpful resources. Most communities have competent, qualified Christian counselors who can provide assistance. (In these cases, take the extra step of calling a pastor to find out if these counselors use the Scriptures and talk about God's love, forgiveness and strength. When you find those who combine clinical expertise and Christian principles, you can feel confident about referring people to them.)

Your responsibilities as a group leader do not extend to ministering to the parents of the students, but perhaps you can be the catalyst that directs them to a church or other organization that can provide them with information, encouragement and help. Just as the students need to grieve, forgive and take responsibility, the parents do too. If the parents and the students both are seeking the Lord and letting Him work deeply in their lives, the entire family can be changed. That offers hope for everyone involved.

At this point, you may feel overwhelmed with *One Way 2 Play*. That certainly isn't our goal. We want to help you accomplish your goal of helping young people follow Christ and make good choices. We recognize, however, that this program requires new skills for many group leaders.

Therefore, we recommend that you recruit an assistant (or two) to help you with various aspects of this exciting, life-changing program. The assistants may have abilities that complement your own, and as a leadership team, you can meet far more needs than you could meet by yourself.

We're excited about *One Way 2 Play*, and we believe that God will use it—and you—to change lives! If you have any questions, please call your local FCA staff member or call the FCA National Office at 1-800-289-0909.

How to Use the *OW2P* Kit

The *OW2P* Kit contains 12 great videos and studies that can help you fully develop the *OW2P* program. To maximize the impact, the best way to use the *OW2P* Kit is to set aside 12 weeks in which to implement the whole program. *OW2P* also can be used to impact athletes in a one-week session.

The *OW2P* Kit will guide you through the entire *OW2P* program whether you are a coach, athlete, parent, or volunteer. Along with the 12 videos, the Kit will include corresponding small-group studies. The *OW2P* Kit will inform, involve and ultimately impact athletes and coaches. It will provide clarity, helping people to develop the *OW2P* Game Plan for the individual athlete, team, school and community. Materials include the following: 12-Week Game Plan (videos and studies), How to Use this Game Plan, Developing a *One Way 2 Play* Plan, Group Leader's Guide and a complete appendix. Go to www.FCAGear.com or call 1-800-289-0909 to order your additional resources.

Here are the three options for implementing the *OW2P* program:

Option 1

One Meeting

A one-session approach could be used for groups or teams that want to introduce the program. Use the intro video (school or FCA version, depending on the situation) along with Week 1's "Introduction: What is the *OW2P* program?" The school version video is designed to use in public schools, and the FCA version video is designed for an FCA or church group setting.

Option 2

Four-Week Series

A four-week series uses the intro video and the three Game Plan video clips (Faith, Commitment and Accountability). The accompanying studies (Weeks 1-4) would be used after the videos are shown.

Option 3

12-Week Series

This 12-week approach designed for an entire sports season would be kicked off with the four-week series and then followed by the kit's eight additional videos and studies.

Listed below is an overview of the videos for each week:

Week 1 Videos

Pick one of the following introduction videos.

***OW2P* Intro Video: School Version (10 minutes)**

This video will describe the elements of the *OW2P* program including Faith, Commitment and Accountability. It will focus on decision-making, healthy relationships, positive self-esteem and drug-prevention. This video is designed to be used during school hours in a public school setting.

***OW2P* Intro Video: FCA Version (10 minutes)**

This video will describe the elements of the *OW2P* program including Faith in Christ, Commitment to Him and Accountability with one another. It will focus on godly decision-making, healthy relationships, positive self-esteem and drug-prevention. Designed to be used in FCA meetings and all other times.

Weeks 2-4 Videos

FCA Game Plan Video Clips (3 videos @ 3 minutes)

This video series would be used for a four-week plan for small group meetings and would be used in weeks 2-4 after the FCA intro video was shown. Each video would feature one element of *OW2P* (Faith, Commitment, Accountability) and would be used with the accompanying curriculum (study material).

Weeks 5-12 Videos

FCA Game Plan Video Clips (8 videos @ 1-3 minutes)

These short video clips would introduce the eight remaining topics with curriculum for those desiring to do the 12-week season approach.



Extra Videos in the Kit:

***OW2P* Commercial (:30)**

This is a commercial giving a brief overview of the *OW2P* program.

***OW2P* Promotional Video: School Version (3:00)**

This is a general promotional/informational video that highlights the *OW2P* program.

***OW2P* Promotional Video: FCA Version (3:00)**

This is a general promotional/informational video that highlights the *OW2P* program and incorporates faith in Christ.

***OW2P* School Assembly Program (45:00)**

This is FCA's national *OW2P* spokesman, Steve Fitzhugh's, full school *OW2P* assembly on video. Over the past 10 years, Fitzhugh has challenged more than 750,000 students in 1,000-plus schools with this message.

***OW2P* School Assembly Program Promotional Video (5:00)**

This is an introduction to the *OW2P* assembly program as presented by Steve Fitzhugh.

Leader's Guide

As you prepare to implement *One Way 2 Play—Drug Free* in your group, please keep in mind the following:

1. The 12-week implementation meetings are designed to be 30 to 60 minutes in length. Many people teach entire seminars on each of these subjects, so it probably won't be difficult to fill the available time. If the group is particularly interested in continuing the discussion on this topic, take a few extra weeks to teach further principles and applications.

Below is an outline of each meeting:

- **Goal:** This is an overview of what the meeting will accomplish. It is designed for the leaders to get a quick understanding of the direction of the meeting, not necessarily to be communicated with the athletes.
- **Key Scriptures:** Passages used in the lesson are listed here. In the Workout, you are asked to read them with the students.

Below is a sample agenda of each meeting. We call these the 5W's.

- **Warm Up:** An introduction of the material that typically includes an ice-breaker, team builder or story. It is a fun way to get things started.
- **Watch:** Show the video that corresponds to the study for that week.
- **Workout:** Here is where you dive into the material. The Workout provides you an opportunity to share Scriptures and apply the focus of the lesson to the Word of God. You do not have to read this part, but it is a good idea to challenge the athletes.
- **Workout Questions:** This is a great way to engage them. If the group is too large, break it up so that there are 6-10 in each group. This will allow for maximum discussion and impact.
- **Wrap Up:** This is a closing challenge, thought or prayer that brings closure and focus to the lesson.



2. The message is most powerful if the messenger has personal experience with the truth. Take plenty of time to study, think about the message of *OW2P*, and apply the principles to your own situations and relationships. Personal illustration will enable listeners to see how you relate to the information, after which, they will be more likely to apply it themselves.
3. Be real, but be careful not to be too real. If you tell about your sinful behavior, don't give sordid details. Or if you tell about someone else's sinful or embarrassing behavior, be sure to either get his or her permission or to change the name and details so that the person's privacy is respected.
4. Encourage the group members to remember the balance between responding actively to the truth and allowing the Holy Spirit to equip and strengthen us to do God's will.
5. Tell the group members how you want God to build their faith while providing a sense of stability and encouragement. Talk about the importance of affirming and building one another up with respect and love, just as Jesus would. You may also want to let them know that if they want to talk further about deep hurts and needs in their lives, they can call you, the school counselor, or their pastor or youth pastor.

12-Week Game Plan

Week 1: "Introduction: What is the OW2P program?"

Session 1: Playing One Way
Understanding the need for the OW2P program

Weeks 2-4: "The Three Key Components of the OW2P Program"

Session 2: Faith
Realizing that it starts with faith

Session 3: Commitment
Total commitment means giving my all

Session 4: Accountability
Trusting others to help me keep my commitments

Weeks 5-7: "Identifying the Key Issues"

Session 5: Warning Signs
How can I identify the issues?

Session 6: Peer Influence
Is it peer pressure or peer influence?

Session 7: Discernment
Understanding the times of today

Weeks 8-10: "Understanding the Battle"

Session 8: Temptation
Understanding the pressure points

Session 9: Failure
What to do if I break my commitment

Session 10: Just say "know"
Know what God's Word says

Weeks 11-12: "Training for Victory"

Session 11: Training Factor
Developing training disciplines

Session 12: Strong to the Finish
Having endurance until the end

Session 1: Playing One Way

Understanding the need for the *OW2P* program

Goal

Upon the completion of this study, athletes will understand the issues of alcohol and other drugs, and have a basic understanding of the *OW2P* program. Athletes will have the opportunity to examine their personal decision-making process. They will gain an understanding of the elements in their world that shape the decisions they make. They will be challenged to make a commitment to being drug and alcohol free by signing the *OW2P* Commitment Card.

Key Scriptures

1 Corinthians 6:18-20, Romans 12:1-2

Warm Up

Do as a whole group or divide the group into smaller groups of four. Give each group a piece of paper and a pencil. Tell them each to list celebrities (athletes, rock stars, actors, etc.) who have messed up their lives—careers, relationships, health—by using drugs. Then have them do the same exercise with athletes who use performance enhancers. What have been the effects on them short term? What are the long-term effects?

Watch

Show the Week 1 video — “Playing One Way”

Workout

Playing tough is something that every athlete wants to do. We want to play with grit and have uncompromising faith that we will see results. To play this way, we have to play smart. We have to prepare and be committed to engaging our heads. Often we can't listen to what we feel, but we must use our will to push ourselves to go beyond what we are feeling and make a commitment to playing smart. Not only must we play tough and play smart, but we must also play clean. We must lead a lifestyle that will give us the best chance to accomplish everything we want to accomplish. The best way to do that is to be accountable and hold our friends accountable.

It is important to understand that the battle against drugs and alcohol is not the drugs and alcohol. We sometimes focus on the wrong things. The drugs are what we see, above the surface; however, there is usually something below the surface that is causing students to resort to drugs. The challenge is for students to open up and share those issues. Drugs are a way to medicate the pain. We have found that students are using or abusing

drugs because they have one of four emotional issues. We call it HALT which stands for Hurting, Angry, Lonely and Tired. They are hurting from a broken or damaged relationship, angry at someone (parents, friends, authority) or something, feeling lonely and left out, or just tired of life and don't care anymore. With these different emotional issues waging war against young people's hearts, drugs and alcohol become a release. It is a way to deal with the problems. Get below the surface and deal with the real issues.

FCA's Competitor's Creed is a powerful challenge that encourages athletes and coaches to play and live by a different standard. One segment of the Creed deals directly with the issue of using drugs and alcohol. (To read the entire Creed, see pg. 53)

My body is the temple of Jesus Christ.

I protect it from within and without.

Nothing enters my body that does not honor the Living God.

My sweat is an offering to my Master. My soreness is a sacrifice to my Savior.

Workout Questions

1. When you workout or compete, how do you view your body? How do you condition and train for your sport (physically, mentally, and emotionally)? How do you protect your body?
2. Read 1 Corinthians 6:18-20. How can this passage help you be a better competitor? How can you honor God with your body? How can you dishonor God with your body? How does it change your perspective knowing your body is a temple of Jesus Christ?
3. Read Romans 12:1-2. How can your playing honor God? What are the things you need to sacrifice? Do you compete for the pleasure of the Lord? Explain.
4. There is a cycle of alcohol and drug abuse. Alcohol and drug abuse does not happen overnight, but it starts somewhere. Take a look at the cycle of alcohol and drug use below:
 1. Non-user never tried alcohol or drugs
 2. Experimenting trying alcohol or drugs to see the effects they have or don't have on your body
 3. Using regularly using the drug (weekly to monthly)
 4. Abusing – becoming so drunk or high that it impairs abilities
 5. Addicted – not able to make it through the day or week without a buzz.

Do you know someone at each of the phases of the cycle? Have you seen any positive effects in his or her life? Have you seen any negative effects? In what stage would you consider yourself to be?

5. Why do students drink or use drugs? Share several reasons why students use drugs. (Be sure they share the deeper emotional issues that cover up the pain, like being hurt, lonely or angry.)
6. What motivates you to be alcohol and drug free? Share three reasons why you are motivated to make this commitment.

Wrap Up

Playing tough requires you to be strong in your faith and compromise nothing. Playing smart means that you must make the commitments you need to find success. Playing clean means that you have friends who hold you accountable and whom you hold accountable to make the right decisions.

Hand out the *OW2P* cards and review each element of the program. Tell them that people who sign their names to a commitment are 60% more likely to carry out that commitment, and those who are in accountable relationships are 85% more likely to carry out their commitments.

Encourage each athlete to make the commitment to being drug and alcohol free. Have them complete the cards and sign their commitments. Encourage each to identify and list three key people in their lives with whom they can share their commitment and develop an accountable relationship.

Close in prayer by asking each person to complete this prayer silently or out loud: "Lord Jesus, I want to live and play alcohol and drug free because..."

Session 2: Faith

Realizing that it starts with faith

Goal

Athletes need to realize that it must begin with faith in Jesus Christ. The Lord alone is able to forgive. They must have the wisdom to make the right decisions and have the strength to carry those decisions out. Athletes will be presented with the claims of Jesus Christ and will be challenged to make Him the Lord and Savior of their lives.

Key Scriptures

Hebrews 11:1-3; Hebrews 12:2-3; Galatians 2:20; James 2:17-19

Warm Up

Blindfold a student-volunteer and move away from him with a “prize” in your hands. Tell the rest of the group to begin shouting instructions on how the blindfolded student can walk to you—as loudly as they can, all at the same time. Next, invite another student to come alongside the blindfolded student, not touching, but quietly directing him toward you. Discuss how this experience relates to our faith in God and following only Him.

Watch

Show the Week 2 video — “Faith”

Workout

There is a story of a tightrope walker who tied his rope across a waterfall and then asked the crowd that gathered if they believed he could walk across. “Yes!” they yelled, and he did. He then asked how many believed he could walk across the falls on the rope pushing a wheelbarrow. “Yes, you can do it!” they screamed, and he did. He then asked how many believed he could do the same thing, but this time with a person in the wheelbarrow. “Oh Yes! I believe it!” they exclaimed. Then he asked, “Which one of you will be that person?” No one responded.

Faith is more than saying, “I believe.” To believe in what you can see requires no faith. But to be convinced that what you cannot see is real, and to have as much confidence in its reality as you do in what you can see, hear, taste, touch and smell is genuine faith. It is having the confidence to get in the wheelbarrow and trust the one pushing. Faith is being willing to act on belief. Do you live by faith in God? Have you put your full confidence in Him, trusting all results in every area of life to Him? Or do you say you trust Him and then refuse to get in the wheelbarrow? Do you instead **try to control things on your own?**

Hebrews 11 is often called the “Hall of Faith.” It lists example after example of men and women who took God at His Word, no questions asked, and trusted Him with the results.

Faith goes beyond reason. It believes without understanding why. It sings in prison (Acts 16:25). It sees personal struggles as opportunities (Romans 5:3). It chooses to suffer hardships (Hebrews 11:25). It believes that all things (good and bad) work together for good to make us more like Jesus (Romans 8:28-29). The key to the commitment of being drug, alcohol and tobacco free is faith in Jesus Christ.

Workout Questions

1. Faith in His forgiveness. Read 1 John 1:9. What does it mean to “confess” a sin?
2. Faith that He will give me wisdom to make good decisions. Read Proverbs 13:20. What does this verse mean to you in your life?
3. Faith that He will give me strength. Read Philippians 4:13. What is one practical way you can experience God’s strength concerning alcohol and drug use?
4. Faith that is real. If you were to die today, how sure are you that you would go to heaven (1 to 100%)? Why?

Wrap Up

It is by faith that we are saved (Ephesians 2:8) and come into a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. It is also by faith that we experience victory in life and become totally dependent upon Him to provide the wisdom and strength to live. Do you just say you have faith that Jesus can give you the forgiveness, wisdom and strength to live and play drug, alcohol and tobacco free? Or are you willing to get in the wheelbarrow and put your faith into action? If you are not 100% sure that if you died today and would be in heaven, then you should consider asking Jesus to come into your life.

Follow the *More Than Winning* booklet and walk through each step—God’s Plan, Man’s Problem, God’s Substitute and Man’s Response. Use the suggested Prayer of Commitment to close in prayer.

Students can go online at www.morethanwinning.com and indicate their commitment to Christ. FCA will send them a free follow-up packet with a Sports New Testament.

Session 3: Commitment

Total commitment means giving my all

Goal

A commitment to be drug and alcohol free is a firm pledge, not a conditional promise. A commitment does not change because of circumstances. A commitment is a stake in the ground.

Key Scriptures

Romans 12:1-2; Luke 9:23; Joshua 24:15

Warm Up

Have the whole group stand up and make a circle, all facing the same direction. Be sure that each person is only one to two feet behind the person beside them. On the count of three, have everyone sit down. At this point (if done right), each person should be sitting on the knees of the person behind them. If done wrong, they will be on the ground! Then on the count of three again, have everyone stand. This is like a trust fall, but a little more safe. Have the kids share how they felt making the commitment to trust the person behind them. Discuss the activity as a group.

Watch

Show the Week 3 video —“Commitment”

Workout

Spike Dykes, former head football coach at Texas Tech University, tells the story of a pig and a chicken walking down the street. As they passed by a grocery store, they saw a sign in the window that read, “Bacon and eggs needed.” The chicken looked at the pig and said, “Let’s help out the grocer.” The pig responded, “You must be crazy. For you that’s just a contribution, but for me it’s a total commitment!”

In today’s world, the word *commitment* has become more a word of convenience than of sacrifice. Many people are willing to give part of themselves, but they hold back from total commitment. To commit is to say, “I will, no matter what the cost!”

Because of his commitment to God, Daniel made choices in every area of his life that reflected this commitment. To Daniel, commitment meant that no matter what the consequence, no matter what the cost, he was in it to the death. God honored his commitment, and Daniel had great faith in God’s promises. His commitment to God even influenced others!

In the first chapter of the book of Daniel, Daniel chooses not to eat or drink certain foods because of his commitment to God. Daniel 1:8 says, "Daniel resolved not to defile himself." In other words, he was committed to a life of purity to God. Along with his buddies Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, Daniel did not eat the rich food and wine provided by the king.

Later (in Daniel 3), when the king made a gold idol for everyone to worship, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego would not bow down to it even if it meant they would be thrown into a fiery furnace. Commitment means standing by your word no matter what may happen to you! They told the king that God could save them from the furnace "but even if he does not, we want you to know that we will not serve your gods or worship that image of gold" (verse 18). They were committed no matter what! In this case, God chose to deliver them.

In Chapter 6, an edict was issued, that anyone who prayed to any god for 30 days would be thrown into the lions' den. Daniel was committed to his time with God and continued to pray every morning, noon and evening even if it meant joining the lions! Sure enough, he was thrown into the lions' den! God shut the mouths of the lions, and the king wound up praising God in the end.

Once again, his commitment determined his actions and influenced others. The motivation behind these commitments was not to look good in front of others or to look down on others. It was their love for God that enabled them to commit to doing the things they did.

In the New Testament, Stephen was killed because of his commitment to Christ (Acts 7). Paul was repeatedly beaten and even thrown in jail because of his commitment to God. Paul urged Christians to be living sacrifices (Romans 12:1-2). It was he who said, "I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me" (Galatians 2:20).

God's goals had become Paul's goals. If Paul died, he considered it gain. If he lived, he would serve Christ (Philippians 1:21). If he suffered, he knew he would get a reward from Christ (Romans 8:18). Since Paul was committed to Christ, he knew that it really did not matter what happened to him. Paul was committed to something bigger than himself. He relied on Christ's strength as his source of power for keeping and living out his commitment (Philippians 4:13).

Workout Questions

1. Can you think of a time when you've felt like the pig in the illustration—that your commitment was going to be very costly? If so, when?
2. Why is it hard to keep commitments? What keeps you from following through on your commitments?
3. How can Paul's advice in Romans 12:1-2 help you to keep your commitments?
4. What happens when you do follow through on your commitments?
5. Why is it important for you to keep your *OW2P* commitment?

Wrap Up

You have made a commitment to live drug, alcohol and tobacco free. It's a commitment made through your love for Christ to keep yourself pure and free from substances that can control you. Ephesians 5:18 says not to "get drunk with wine, but instead be filled (or controlled) by the Spirit." The only way for us to live a life of purity is to let Jesus live it through us! His Spirit in you will help you live a life committed to Him!

To close, have everyone sign one piece of paper as a group that shows their commitment to be *OW2P* as a group. You can make a one-page sheet on your computer with the *OW2P* logo, your group or school name and the date. Once everyone signs it, you can make copies for each student so it can be a visual reminder of the commitment. If you can, frame and/or hang the original in a place that can be seen by the students on a regular basis.

Session 4: Accountability

Trusting others to help me keep my commitment

Goal

To show students that much like having a workout partner who spots us while lifting weights and pushes us to do our best, we also need a partner who will help us to stick with our commitment to play drug free. Accountability will help them stick to their commitment.

Key Scriptures

Proverbs 17:17; Proverbs 27:6, 17; 2 Timothy 4:2

Warm Up

In a small group, discuss or list things that normally *do not* need accountability to complete (like eating, sleeping) and discuss or list things that *do need* accountability (homework, working out). Have the groups report their findings to the entire group and explain why there is a difference between the two lists.

Watch

Show the Week 4 video — “Accountability”

Workout

As athletes, we know that with accountability we can train harder. Whether it is sprints on the track, long distance training runs or hitting the weights, having a partner to workout with helps you go to a higher level. The same thing applies with our *OW2P* commitment.

Though it has been more than 3,000 years since King David lived, many people today are still familiar with his story. Sixty-two chapters of the Old Testament are devoted to the telling of his life, and 59 references in the New Testament call attention to him. He was a great and powerful man who was known as “a man after God’s own heart.” Yet David, the great man of God, committed a series of sins that led to terrible consequences.

When he was around 50 years old, David came to a point of comfort in his life. As the King of Israel, he had the greatest military in the world and all of the possessions one would ever need. One thing he did not have was accountability. He lived a life of secrecy. It was during this time in his life that he committed adultery. Since no one held him accountable for his actions, instead of admitting it, he covered it up with premeditated murder. For a year, he lived a lie—a life of deception (2 Samuel 11).

Then God sent Nathan, and in a brief and effective conversation, he told David the truth, holding David accountable for his choices (2 Samuel 12). It was not until then that David admitted his wrong and in humility turned back to God.

So many people today do not have any accountability in any area of their life. As young Christian men and women, it is necessary to have accountability partners to check and double check us on our spiritual disciplines and commitments in the hope that we will not end up, like David, in a mess.

A few observations: Nathan was not taking God's place. He was called by God. The last verse in 2 Samuel 11 says that "the thing that David had done displeased the Lord." We must all give account to God. Galatians 6:7 tells us, "Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows." We will always face the consequences of our actions. God did use Nathan, a man David greatly respected, to help him see his error (Proverbs 27:6). When Nathan said, "You are the man!" it hurt David but brought about healing in his life. As an accountability partner, your messages, like Nathan's, should be done skillfully and humbly, at the right time and in the right way. Call it what it is. Speak the truth in love; be full of compassion remembering that you, too, are a sinner.

Workout Questions

1. How do people normally respond to correction or criticism?
2. Have you been corrected or criticized by your coach this year?
How did you respond?
3. If you needed to be corrected concerning your relationship with God, who would be the one person you would want to do it? Why?
4. Have you ever had an accountability partner for anything in your life?
What kind of impact did it have on you?
5. Why do we need accountability? What benefits come through accountability?
6. How can accountability help you stick to your commitment?



Wrap Up

Choose an accountability partner. He/she can be someone in or outside the group. Discuss the kinds of questions you and your partner will ask every week to help hold each other accountable to the commitments you both have made to living and playing drug, alcohol and tobacco free. You should partner (guys with guys, girls with girls) with someone you respect, and who you know will fearlessly speak the truth. This is not necessarily a best friend.

Remember:

- Pray for your partner! (2 Thessalonians 1:11)
- Be available! (Philippians 2:20)
- Expect results! (Philippians 1:6)

Use the 5 Hard Questions:

1. Are you living and playing alcohol and drug free?
2. Are you encouraging others to live and play that way?
3. Are you being honest with at least one mature person about your feelings and temptations?
4. Are you trusting Christ to meet your needs?
5. Are you honoring Him in your thoughts, words and actions?

Session 5: Warning Signs

How can I identify the issues?

Goal

To help students recognize the warning signs of drugs and alcohol, and to give students tools to help peers seek treatment.

Key Scriptures

Proverbs 23:29-35

Warm Up

As students come in, hand out the following true/false “Alcohol IQ” test and ask each to complete it.

True/False

1. ___ Binge drinking is drinking five or more drinks in one setting.
2. ___ Some people can become an alcoholic within two or three weeks of their first drink.
3. ___ Beer and wine have as much alcohol as a mixed drink that contains hard liquor.
4. ___ A person who starts drinking at age 15 is four times more likely to become an alcoholic as a person who waits until he or she is 21.
5. ___ The average age for kids entering alcohol treatment centers is 13-14.
6. ___ If your mom or dad is an alcoholic there is a 50% chance that you will become an alcoholic as well.

(The correct answer to all questions is “True.”)

Watch

Show the Week 5 video —“Warning Signs”



Workout

One of the greatest races in track and field is the 1,500-meter run. When watching this event, it is hard to pick out the winner, especially in the early laps. Quite often, several runners will move out into the lead, running strong and even pulling away from the rest of the pack. As the runners press toward the final lap, though, only a few emerge as true contenders. Those who start strong and look like winners often finish at the bottom of the pack or not at all.

When teenagers become involved in underage drinking, the results are often the same. Early on, it looks like everybody is moving along together, drinking and having a good time without any real problems. All seem to be "running strong," having the time of their lives and enjoying being young. In reality, many who seem to be handling everything in a normal American teenage way are fast approaching the lap that they can never finish. They move from being an innocent teen drinker to an alcoholic whose life begins to revolve only around drinking and addiction.

The line between social drinking and alcoholism was once invisible for all who have crossed it. For some, it may have taken years to develop an addiction. Others may have become full-blown alcoholics after only two or three weeks of drinking. Sadly, there is no way to know for sure who will become an alcoholic until it has already happened. It's a race that teenagers should never start. The finish line is too elusive.

Workout Questions

1. How do TV and movies depict people who drink alcohol? What characteristics or mannerisms do actors use to portray someone who is an alcoholic? Are consequences realistically depicted?
2. Do you think that any of the teenagers in your school are alcoholics? What makes you think so? (Do not name names.)
3. Do you think alcoholics or drug addicts know they are addicted? Explain.
4. Read Proverbs 23:29-35. What does this Scripture say about alcohol and drugs? Why are they like a snake?

Wrap Up

If you think someone you know may be an alcoholic or on the way to becoming one, here's what you can do:

1. Pray daily that God will convict that person of His great love and His plan for his/her life.
2. In a non-condemning way, share with that person your concern regarding his/her drinking. Assure your friend of your support and love.
3. Tell your friend what Jesus means to you.
4. Refer him/her to professional help groups such as Alcoholics Anonymous or Teen Challenge.

Make sure everyone has a copy of the "*What are the Signs of Alcoholism?*" sheet on the next page. Ask them to take the test and share it with someone who they think may have a problem.

What are the Signs of Alcoholism?*

Here is a self-test that will help you review the role alcohol plays in your life. These questions incorporate many of the common symptoms of alcoholism. This test is intended to help you determine if you or someone you know needs to find out more about alcoholism. It is not intended to be used to diagnose alcoholism.

Yes/No

1. Do you ever drink heavily when you are disappointed, under pressure or having a quarrel with someone?
2. Can you handle more alcohol now than when you first started to drink?
3. Have you ever been unable to remember part of the previous evening, even though your friends say you didn't pass out?
4. When drinking with other people, do you try to have a few extra drinks when others won't know about it?
5. Do you sometimes feel uncomfortable if alcohol is not available?
6. Are you in more of a hurry to get your first drink of the day than you used to be?
7. Do you sometimes feel a little guilty about your drinking?
8. Has a family member or close friend ever expressed concern or complained about your drinking?
9. Have you been having more memory "blackouts" recently?
10. Do you often want to continue drinking after your friends say they've had enough?
11. Do you usually have a reason for the occasions when you drink heavily?
12. When you're sober, do you sometimes regret things you did or said while drinking?
13. Have you tried switching brands or drinks, or following different plans to control your drinking?

14. Have you sometimes failed to keep promises you made to yourself about controlling or cutting down on your drinking?
15. Have you ever had a DWI (driving while intoxicated) or DUI (driving under the influence of alcohol) violation, or any other legal problem related to your drinking?
16. Do you try to avoid family or close friends while you are drinking?
17. Are you having more financial, work, school and/or family problems as a result of your drinking?
18. Has your physician ever advised you to cut down on your drinking?
19. Do you eat very little or irregularly during the periods when you are drinking?
20. Do you sometimes have the “shakes” in the morning and find that it helps to have a “little” drink, tranquilizer or medication of some kind?
21. Have you recently noticed that you can’t drink as much as you used to?
22. Do you sometimes stay drunk for several days at a time?
23. After periods of drinking do you sometimes see or hear things that aren’t there?
24. Have you ever gone to anyone for help about your drinking?
25. Do you ever feel depressed or anxious before, during or after periods of heavy drinking?
26. Have any of your blood relatives ever had a problem with alcohol?

**Used with permission of the Mississippi Chapter of the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence.*

Any “yes” answer indicates you may be at greater risk for alcoholism. More than one “yes” answer may indicate the presence of an alcohol-related problem or alcoholism and the need for consultation with an alcoholism professional. To find out more, contact the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence in your area.

Session 6: Peer Influence

Is it peer pressure or peer influence?

Goal

Too many attribute those intermittent disturbing instances of disobedience to the pressure our peers exert upon us. Is it really peer pressure? Is there literally someone “making” us smoke cigarettes, drink liquor or smoke weed? The threat is peer influence. Peer influence gradually and consistently speaks “do as I do,” hoping we eventually give up, give in, and then give out. In this section athletes will learn to identify peer pressure and peer influence and ways of defusing them both.

Key Scriptures

Psalms 139:13-16; Romans 12:1-2; Genesis 1:26; Proverbs 14:21; James 4:7

Warm Up

Pass a small piece of paper to everyone in the group. No one should write his or her name on the paper. Instead, write one fact about yourself that most people do not know or could not guess. It could be anything. It could be a characteristic, a place you’ve traveled, an embarrassing moment, or a rare accomplishment. When done, the papers should be collected and redistributed at random. Begin to read the facts.

Have the students attempt to place the fact with the person. Have them consider: What was most surprising?, Most embarrassing?, Most impressive?, Most daring?, etc. Does this information make your group more interesting? Discuss what it would be like for everyone to have had the same fact on his or her paper.

Watch

Show the Week 6 video — “Peer Influence”

Workout

One of the miracles of life is the fact that of the billions of people who have populated the earth, no two thumbprints are the same. We are all different, and amazingly so. Different eye color, hair texture and color, complexion, height, build, voice, and the list goes on and on. Remarkably for many, being different is the nightmare. Instead we want to be “like everyone else.”

Peer pressure refers to those occasions where a friend insists that you participate in a certain behavior. Peer pressure is not the common occurrence. Peer influence is. Peer influence is when your circle of friends

engages in a certain behavior and you become exposed to the opportunity to join or reject that behavior.

That “valley of decision” is where dreams take flight or die. That is where we distinguish ourselves from the crowd or become another statistic. How do you handle the “valley of decision?”

Letting the air out of peer pressure? Embrace who you are! You are a one of a kind original. You are a walking, talking, living, breathing miracle. You are no coincidence. The mere fact that you have breath proves that you are part of God’s design and intention. Doing or not doing what a friend presses you to do or not do, does not define who you are.

Diluting the power of influence? Measure your dreams! Dreams are abstract, how can they be measured? Simply examine your dreams and what it will take for you to fulfill them. Will the behavior that tempts you assist or impede your progress? When you get your answer make your decision. Suddenly you will see peer influence lose its impact in your life. Your personal dreams and goals power you through the valley of decision.

The word *now* spelled backwards is *won*. Decide now how you will respond to various situations where your peers might find you. Prepare for both peer pressure and influence by establishing a course of action before the temptation comes. Decide *now* and you’ve already *won*! Through the power of *now* you can master the valley of decision. If you do, all of the issues that prematurely plague young lives will not even be a factor in yours.

Workout Questions

1. Read Psalms 139:13-17. Discuss the details of what makes you special. How were you made?
2. Think about other objects of God’s creation (animals, natural wonders, etc.) What one detail in how you were made distinguishes humankind from all other creations of God? (Genesis 1:26)
3. Read Romans 12:1-2. List teenage behaviors, styles of dress, etc., that are products of conformity and influence. How can a student transform into the young adult that God expects him/her to be?
4. How can you prepare *now* to respond to the various situations you will be put in?



Wrap Up

The urgency to resist peer pressure and peer influence is based on the reality that even “good kids” are getting caught up in behaviors and attitudes that surprise everyone. How many times have you heard someone say, “He was such a good kid, how did he get kicked off the team for using drugs?” or “She was such a nice girl, how did she end up pregnant?”

Too many find out the truth the hard way, as stated in Proverbs 14:12. We learn in the end that the devil is playing for keeps. We learn the hard way sadly when it’s too late. This urgency to resist is dependent upon one simple but profound action: submitting to God (James 4:7). Submit to God and resist temptation, then you become the influencer, not of bad but good.

Write on a piece of paper *now* and hang it in your locker as a reminder that if you decide *now*, then you have already *won*. This week, keep track of the times you were reminded of the *now* principle.

Session 7: Discernment

Understanding the times of today

Goal

To help students in dealing with the powerful media messages about alcohol and tobacco products. Students need godly wisdom to navigate through the turbulent times of today.

Key Scriptures

1 Peter 5:8; 1 Chronicles 12:32; Proverbs 3:21

Warm Up

Divide into groups of four or five. Give each group a pen and a piece of paper and ask them to write down as many ad slogans as they can in 60 seconds. For example: "I'm lovin' it™" and "Just do it." Ask two or three groups to share their slogans with everyone. Point out how these messages get stuck in our brains.

Watch

Show the Week 7 video —"Discernment"

Workout

One of the most creative and bizarre basketball plays recently occurred between two high school rivals. On an out-of-bounds play under the basket, a player was getting ready to in-bound the ball. At that moment, one of his teammates jumped down on his hands and knees and started barking wildly like a dog. All of the players turned to see what he was doing. All except one. This one sprinted toward the basket where he received a perfect pass from his teammate for an easy lay-up. The distraction worked perfectly.

Trick plays are difficult to anticipate because they look so much like the real thing. Before you are aware of what is happening, you have been fooled, and maybe beaten. Many young people who desire to live their lives without drugs, alcohol and tobacco become victims of the "trick play" as well.

These "plays" are designed by powerful advertising agencies that have millions of dollars at stake. The 60-second TV commercial and the full-sized outdoor billboard are powerful ways to spread a message. As Christians, we need to be aware of the influence that the media can have on the choices we make.

Understanding the three keys to the inner-workings of advertising can help you protect yourself from making bad choices through the power of advertising. The first key is understanding that every ad is based on persuasion. This strategy relies heavily upon images designed to appeal to our feelings. Seeing a strong, masculine cowboy smoking a cigarette can tempt one with a feeling of power.

A second key is that most people treat photographs and video images as reality. What we see, we believe to be real, accurate and truthful. We don't stop to think that the beautiful people in shorts who are playing football in the snow-covered Rocky Mountains while drinking beer would, in real life, be freezing to death.

The third key lies in the idea of "double think." Intellectually, guys know that drinking a certain brand of beer is not going to cause beautiful women to flock to their sides; however, at the same time, they would like to think that their chances might be increased if they drink that brand of beer. That's double think. It's all very tricky business.

Workout Questions

1. What is the one ad that has stuck in your brain more than any other? Why has it had such a strong influence on you?
2. Can you think of a commercial or ad that sells a lifestyle, not just a product?
3. Have you ever felt tricked by Satan? How? Read 1 Peter 5:8. How is Satan described? How can Satan devour you?
4. Read 1 Chronicles 12:32. David's soldiers understood the times and knew what to do. If you understand the times, how does that help you know what to do?
5. Read Proverbs 3:21. How do drugs make us lose our discretion? What should you focus on?

Wrap Up

Read aloud the five attributes of a Christian thinker below. Make copies and give a copy to everyone as they leave.

Five Attributes of a Christian Thinker

A Christian Thinker...

...has a strong desire to please God in all that he/she does.

...has a strong sense of right and wrong based on the Bible.

...recognizes that many people who create media may not have Christian values.

...understands that all media, commercials and ads are *not* harmless fun.

...has a habit of asking probing questions about media.

– Adapted from *“Learn to Discern”* by Robert De Moss

Session 8: Temptation

Understanding the pressure points

Goal

To help students see the cause-effect relationship between alcohol use and sexual promiscuity; and to give students tools to say “no” to alcohol and premarital sex.

Key Scriptures

Genesis 9:20-25; Genesis 19:30-36; Romans 13:12-14

Warm Up

Recruit six members to compete in a “drunk bat” relay. Divide into two teams of three. Begin the race by having one team member place his/her forehead on an upright bat, spinning around 10 times and then running with the bat a designated distance to a teammate who does the same. The process repeats until all three members have gone. This game shows how easy it is to lose control.

Watch

Show the Week 8 video — “Temptation”

Workout

One of the great tactics in coaching is to find a way to get the opposing team to let down its defenses, if only for a moment. In football, the offensive coach might run several running plays in a row, all the time setting up those defensive backs to get burned on a play-action pass.

A basketball coach may start the game with his players in a zone defense and then quickly switch to a man-to-man, full-court pressure defense to create quick turnovers. In baseball, it might be the hit-and-run that penetrates the defense. All of these strategies are designed to lull the other team to sleep in order to gain an edge by causing the opposing team to lose its alertness and readiness.

Satan seeks an advantage in our lives in much the same way—by getting us to relax our standards of righteousness, by lulling us to sleep and getting us to drop our defenses against him. One way he does this is through trying to tempt us to use alcohol. For most people, alcohol causes the loss of the natural inhibition that protects them from doing dangerous things.

Nobody could argue the point that when people are under the influence of alcohol, they take more risks and do things they wouldn't ordinarily do.

Those things may even seem fairly insignificant, like being more socially at ease or driving a little faster than you normally would. But the point is that alcohol causes a breach in your natural defenses. This is why in the majority of date rape cases, alcohol has been used by one or both parties. The majority of the teens who have lost their virginity say that at least one of the partners was drinking.

The first two times alcohol is mentioned in the Bible is in Genesis 9:20-25 and 19:30-36. In both cases, sexual immorality and perversion are a direct result of its use. God is trying to tell us something: saying “no” to sexual immorality is hard enough without fanning the flame with alcohol.

God promised to protect us and provide for us, to show us His heart and mind regarding our lives and decisions. Take a closer look at His promises for the nondrinker:

1. Discipline—The fruit of self-control grows in you as you stay sober and spiritually alert (1 Corinthians 6:12).
2. Sexual purity—Staying alcohol free gives you a head start towards an intimate and lifelong marital relationship (Proverbs 23:31-33).
3. Wise decisions—Sobriety helps you to gain a competitive edge through sound judgment and good decision-making (1 Thessalonians 5:4-9).
4. A growing satisfaction about your life as it pleases God (Romans 14:17).

Workout Questions

1. Have you ever seen someone getting drunk on alcohol for the first time?
2. How did that person act differently from the way he or she normally acts?
3. What should you do if your date is drinking heavily?
4. What is the connection between sexual immorality and alcohol?
5. Read 1 Corinthians 6:18-20. In the Bible, we are encouraged to stand strong when faced with sin (Ephesians 6:10-14), but here Paul encourages us to run from sexual immorality. Why?

Wrap Up

Ask yourself this question: "Are my social life and dating relationships pleasing to God?" Be painfully honest. You are violating God's principles if you are an underage drinker, abuse drugs (Romans 13:1), are using any form of tobacco product (1 Corinthians 3:17), or are engaging in premarital sex. Agree with God that this is sin. Ask for His forgiveness and ask Him to give you the strength to quit (1 Corinthians 10:13).

Close with the following prayer exercise:

Have everyone get on their knees and close in quiet prayer time before the Lord. While they are on their knees, ask them to make a commitment to be sexually pure and to run from sexual sin. After several minutes of personal prayer, open it up for group prayer. When the spirit leads, you can close in prayer.

Session 9: Failure

Understanding the times of today

Goal

To help students gain a better understanding of true repentance and God's forgiveness; and to help students get back on track if they have broken their commitment to saying "no" to alcohol, drugs or tobacco.

Key Scriptures

Luke 22:54-61; Acts 3:19

Warm Up

As the group comes in, ask each person to find one person and share his/her most embarrassing moment in sports. (i.e. dropping a pass in the playoffs, shooting a game-losing airball, etc.).

Watch

Show the Week 9 video — "Failure"

Workout

The San Francisco 49ers were playing the Green Bay Packers in a playoff game. Twice the 49ers were driving to score and were stopped because their own receiver dropped the ball. With seconds left and the Packers ahead by three, Steve Young hit the second-year receiver in the end zone for the winning score. He made an unbelievable catch with two Packers right on top of him.

As the receiver came off the field, he wept openly. In the post-game interview, he was asked about the rare show of emotion. His answer was as incredible as his catch. He said he was overwhelmed by the fact that, after having dropped what should have been a routine catch, his coaches and teammates didn't give up on him but trusted him with the most important play of the game. He came through big time!

In Luke 22, we see the disciple Peter drop the ball three times as he does the very thing he said he would never do: deny and desert the Lord Jesus. As Peter stood in the courtyard denying Him, Jesus had just been arrested and was being cruelly mocked and beaten, only hours away from being condemned to die on a cross.

Peter was one of the Lord's "starters." He was one of only 12 men chosen by God to be key leaders in changing the course of human history and impacting the world for Christ like no other group of people. Yet, in the middle of probably the most important event of all time, Peter fumbled the ball.

What happens next is one of the most powerful scenes in the whole Bible. Luke 22:61 says, "The Lord turned and looked straight at Peter. Then Peter remembered..." What kind of look did Jesus give Peter? What did Peter remember? Was it a look of hurt or disappointment or anger? The expanded definition of that word "look" means "to gaze intently and meaningfully at." Jesus was giving Peter the same nod the receiver's coaches and teammates had given the NFL player. It was as if the Lord said, "Yeah, Peter, you blew it, but let's get moving again. I see your potential; I see how I'm going to use you once you learn to trust me more fully. Don't give up!"

Peter may have remembered two things at this incredible moment. He definitely remembered how Jesus told him he would fail, and he might have recalled his conversation with Christ the first day they met when the Lord predicted that Peter would accomplish incredible things for God's purposes.

Are you like Peter? Have you ever made a commitment you couldn't keep? Maybe you desired to say "no" to alcohol, drugs or tobacco, but somehow you failed. Through Peter's life, God shows us an awesome example of His grace and forgiveness. In the middle of your failure, you need to know that the Lord is gazing intently into your life. He sees your weakness but also your great potential; and He only wants to see you succeed. Just as He wanted it for Peter, He wants you to grow to trust Him more by learning to let Him overcome in you every temptation you face.

Workout Questions

1. What is the usual reaction of fans when an athlete makes an obvious mistake?
2. Have you ever blown it in an important game? How did your teammates react? What about the fans? How did their reactions make you feel?
3. If Jesus had been your teammate, what would have been His reaction?

4. How can you relate to Peter? Why is it so important to immediately receive God's forgiveness?

5. What prevents you from going to God and asking for His forgiveness?

Wrap Up

Encourage anyone who has blown it to take the action steps below and remind them that their testimony of failure and ultimate victory could make the difference for many others.

"Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord." –Acts 3:19

Acts 3:19 gives you four steps to take if you have broken your commitment to say "no" to alcohol, drugs or tobacco:

1. *Repent*—Underage drinking is wrong. Admit your failure to God, ask Him to forgive you and decide now to trust Him for His strength to say no.
2. *Return*—True repentance includes a turning around and turning away from the thing that caused us to sin. One of the best ways to do that is to make yourself accountable to others. Consider going to three people:

The pastor or youth leader at your church

Tell him/her plainly what you did, asking him/her to pray with you. Be open to advice.

Your parents

Tell them about your previous commitment to say "no," your talk with your pastor and your renewed commitment. Be willing to submit to their discipline.

Your FCA Huddle Coach

Ask him/her to hold you accountable on a weekly basis.

3. *Receive*—Receive God's forgiveness and His new direction for you, remembering that He desires a personal, loving relationship with you and is more concerned with your freedom and fulfillment than He is with anything you could ever do for Him.
4. *Recognize*—Apart from Jesus, you can do nothing (John 15:5). It is the Lord Himself who will say "no" within your heart if you will allow Him.



Session 10: Just Say “Know”

Know what God’s Word says

Goal

To help students understand God’s view of drugs, alcohol and tobacco; to help students realize that the use of alcohol, drugs and tobacco has negative consequences; and to motivate students to live a life that honors God.

Key Scriptures

2 Timothy 2:5; Psalm 119:9-11

Warm Up

Break up into small groups. Assign each group a scripture from the list of Bible references on the dangers of drinking. (See end of lesson for list of Scripture references.) Have each group determine a lesson to learn from its Scripture and how it relates to their lives. Ask two or three groups to share with everyone.

Watch

Show the Week 10 video — “Just Say ‘Know’”

Workout

In every sport there is a set of rules that governs play. To be successful in that sport an athlete must play by the rules or he/she will be penalized. The first step in successfully playing by the rules is knowing what the rules are. In 2 Timothy 2:5, it says, “Also, if anyone competes as an athlete, he is not crowned unless he competes according to the rules.”

Just as athletic events are governed by a set of rules, so are our lives. Our lives are governed by God’s rules as set forth in His Word—the Holy Bible. If we are going to be successful in the game of life, we must play by God’s rules or we’ll be penalized. In other words, when we choose to sin we break God’s rules. This always results in negative consequences.

A major reason that so many are not successful in the game of life is that they don’t know God’s rules. Our main passage is Psalm 119:9-11, “How can a young man keep his way pure? By keeping Your word. I have sought You with all my heart; don’t let me wander from Your commands. I have treasured Your word in my heart so that I may not sin against You.” The main issue is not rules, but God’s heart. When you know God has the heart to provide for and protect you, then you will begin to look at His rules as His way of bringing freedom and success to your life.

God’s Word gives us a set of rules concerning drug, alcohol and tobacco use. There are 55 references in the Bible that deal with this topic. In every reference, God shows us the negative consequences of substance use, as well as the positive results of abstaining from them. Clearly, God’s Word shows us His desire for us to play the game of life one way—alcohol and drug free.

Workout Questions

1. In what way has drug or alcohol use affected your life or the life of someone you know?
2. Now that you know what God’s Word says about drug and alcohol use (all 55 references), how will you apply this knowledge to your life?
3. In Psalm 119:9-11, it says you should hide God’s Word in your heart. What are some practical ways that you can do this?

Wrap Up

We have seen in God’s Word the negative consequences of using drugs, alcohol and tobacco. Many of us have seen these consequences in our own lives or in the life of someone very close to us. We know what drugs, alcohol and tobacco can do to destroy God’s plan for our lives. Still, we have choices to make.

To help us make the right choices we need to remember these three things:

1. God’s Word shows us that His desire is for us to live and play alcohol and drug free. When we are faithful in our commitment to live our lives in obedience to His Word, God is pleased with our lives (Psalm 1).
2. God’s Word tells us that we belong to Him (1 Corinthians 6:19-20). Drugs, alcohol and tobacco cause a wide range of health disorders and relational problems. Alcohol is a major cause of death among young drivers and a huge factor in many pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases among young people. Treat God’s temple with respect!
3. God’s Word encourages us to set good examples for our friends (1 Corinthians 8:12-13). We are not to do anything to cause others to stumble. When we live out the commitment to be drug, alcohol and tobacco free, it helps our friends to do the same.

On the next page, choose one verse from the list of Scriptures and memorize it before next week. This will be a great way to hide God’s Word in your heart.

What the Bible Says About Drugs, Alcohol and Tobacco

- Genesis 9:20-27 – The first “man of distinction” and the tragic consequences of his drunkenness.
- Genesis 19:30-38 – Drinking results in Lot’s immorality with his own daughters.
- Numbers 5:3 – The vow of the Nazirite excluded drinking wine and strong drink.
- Deuteronomy 21:20 – Drinking is one of the attributes of a stubborn, rebellious and disobedient son.
- II Samuel 13:28-29 – While on a drinking spree, Amnon was murdered by the servants of his brother, Absalom.
- I Kings 16:8-10 – While Elah, King of Israel was “drinking himself drunk,” one of his captains, who had conspired against him, killed him.
- I Kings 20:13-21 – While Ben-hadad, king of Syria, and 32 other kings were drinking themselves drunk in their pavilions, a small band of Israelites fell upon the Syrians and sent them fleeing.
- Proverbs 20:1 – No wise person will allow himself to be deceived by wine, which is a mocker, or by strong drink, which is raging.
- Proverbs 21:17, 25:21 – Drinking leads to poverty.
- Proverbs 23:29-30 – Strong drink produces sorrow, woe, contentions, babbling, wounds without cause and redness of eyes.
- Proverbs 23:21 – This verse gives a warning to refrain from even looking upon wine.
- Proverbs 23:32 – In the end, alcohol bites like a poisonous serpent. It stings like a viper.
- Proverbs 23:33 – It fills men’s minds with impure and perverse thoughts.
- Proverbs 23:24 – It brings on danger, accidents and insecurity.
- Luke 21:34 – It causes distraction from waiting for the Lord’s return.

- Romans 13:13 – It can lead to improper behavior.
- Romans 14:21 – It can cause another Christian to stumble in his or her walk with the Lord.
- 1 Corinthians 3:16-17 – Our bodies are the temple of God.
- 1 Corinthians 6:9-10 – It can keep you from inheriting the kingdom of God.
- Galatians 5:19-21 – It is evidence of a sinful nature.

Session 11: Training Factor

Developing training disciplines

Goal

Being a champion is not easy. If it were easy, we'd all be champions. True champions do not just "rise to the occasion." In actuality, their hard work meets the opportunity to succeed. When the competitor pays the price of practice, preparation and persistence, a champion is made. Here we discover the disciplines that define the champion, not just success in the contest but significance in a life of victory.

Key Scriptures

I Timothy 4:7-8; Acts 17:10; 2 Corinthians 2:11; Joshua 1:6-8; Psalms 119:9-11

Warm Up

Pass out a sheet of paper with 15 very simple math problems (i.e. $6+4$, $3-2$, $10-5$, etc.). The worksheet is to remain face down until further instructions can be made. Be sure to include addition, subtraction, division and multiplication. Indicate that exactly one minute will be allotted to complete the worksheet. The directions at the top of the handout should read as follows:

Sign your name on your paper. Below are 15 simple math problems. As quickly as possible read all instructions and complete the problems below. When you are finished turn your paper over. When you see a plus sign subtract, when you see a minus sign, add. Do the same for division and multiplication. There should be no talking or peeking.

Start timing after you instruct everyone to turn over the paper and begin. Announce the time remaining at 40 seconds, 20 seconds and count down from 10 seconds remaining to 0. Have everyone exchange his or her worksheet for correction. Read the answers. Some may have caught on to the details of the instructions, most will not. Who got the most right? Who got the most wrong? How do both feel? As the old adage goes, "When all else fails, read the instructions."

Watch

Show the Week 11 video — "Training Factor"

Workout

One of the most dominating defenses in Super Bowl history was the 1985 Chicago Bears. They won Super Bowl XX, 46-10, over the New England Patriots.

When Coach Mike Ditka was asked about their dominance, he said, “This game was won on Tuesday and Wednesday. We had two perfect practices. Our victory was sealed.”

How you perform is directly related to how you prepare. If you are going to remain drug free, you must prepare. If you are going to fight the good fight of faith your entire life, you must prepare. If you are going to enjoy the victorious life of a true believer you must prepare. Begin with the instructions! Read them all! After you receive instructions, then you act. Not until then do we close the loop in our relationship with Christ. Receive the instructions, obey them and remain in constant communication with God by prayer.

God’s Word, the Holy Bible, gives us all the instructions we need for developing disciplines that win. In fact, the words H.O.L.Y. and B.I.B.L.E. are acronyms that will help you remember your Bible’s rightful place: Honor, Obey, Love, Your, Bible, It, Brings, Life, Everlasting!

Mathew 10:8 says that we ought not to fear the one who can destroy the body, but rather the one who can destroy the body and soul. Your greatest asset is the strength that no one sees. Your inner strength deserves nurturing the most. When you have spiritual maturity you are less likely to disappoint God. Be driven by a reverence for a Holy God rather than your fear of your top contender.

Too often athletes concentrate on getting bigger, stronger, faster and better. There is no harm in improving, but our first goal should be to read and obey the instructions, God’s Word (1 Timothy 4:6-8). In addition, we should meditate on God’s Word. Joshua 1:6-8 says these words should not leave you but you should meditate on them day and night to observe and do what is written. Then you make your way prosperous, and then you have success.

Workout Questions

1. What did the people of Berea do as an example for today’s believers? (Acts 17:10)
2. What is the only discipline that David concluded would keep him from falling into sin? (Psalm 119:9-11)
3. One of the shortest verses in the Bible gives us our tallest command. What discipline strengthens our inner person most? (1 Thessalonians 5:17)



Wrap Up

The greatest discipline anyone can develop is learning how to get a grip on God's Word. This happens when we read, study, memorize, meditate and do God's Word. You may do this in your daily quiet time or weekly devotions.

We express our response to God's Word (our instructions) by communicating our love to God through obedience and prayer. Master these disciplines and you will master self-control. Satan's greatest fear is the believer who has trained his/her ear and heart to the heart and voice of God, the believer who is willing to do whatever Jesus says to do.

Every day set aside a special time for your training time. During this time you can talk to God and let him talk to you through the Bible. There are many effective methods that can be used for your daily time with God. The PRESS method is the one we suggest.

PRESS Method

Pray

Begin by thanking God for the new day, and then ask Him to help you learn from what you read. Prepare yourself by:

- Clearing your mind and being quiet before the Lord
- Asking God to settle your heart
- Listening to worship music to prepare your spirit
- Asking God for a teachable heart

Read

You can read each day Proverbs (there are 31 chapters in Proverbs, so you have one chapter per day), a psalm and a chapter out of the New Testament or Old Testament. Another way is to begin with one of the Gospels such as John; or one of the shorter letters such as Ephesians or James.

Examine

Ask yourself the following questions in regards to the passage:

Teaching:

What do I need to KNOW about God, myself and others?

Rebuking:

What do I need to STOP doing—sins, habits, selfish patterns?

Correcting:

What do I need to CHANGE in my thoughts, attitudes or actions?

Training:

What do I need to DO in obedience to God's leading?

Summarize

Do one of the following:

- Discover what the passage reveals about God and His character; what it says or promises about me, and what it says or promises about others—my parents, friends, teammates, etc. Write this in a personal journal.
- Rewrite one or two key verses in your own words.
- Outline what each verse is saying.
- Give each verse a one-word title that summarizes what it is saying.

Share

Talk with God about what you've learned. Also, take time each day to share with someone what you learned. Having a daily "Training Time" is extremely important. It is the key to developing spiritually.

If you commit to doing these over the three months, you will have established this habit which is a key to your spiritual development.

I will commit to establishing this daily habit.

Signed _____

Today's Date _____

To receive a daily e-devotional called "FCA's Impact Play," go to www.FCA.org.



Session 12: Strong to the Finish

Having endurance to the end

Goal

Most memorable classic victories involve a last-second heroic goal, a fourth quarter interception at the goal line or a game seven, three-point jumper at the buzzer. Is this type of victory exciting? Yes. But certain? Probably not. Those kinds of victories rely on variables of chance in order to record the win. In our Christian experience, Jesus our Champion has already defeated our foe.

Our participation in His victory depends not upon chance, but how fervently we stand at Jesus' side. It is a glorious thing to receive Jesus as Lord and personal Savior. It is a tragedy to forfeit the crown by faltering in the face of opposition. Athletes will learn from this section how to set themselves apart, hold their ground and be strong to the finish.

Key Scriptures

1 Chronicles 28:10; 2 Chronicles 20:15-17; Isaiah 41:10; Galatians 6:9-10

Warm Up

Quickly divide the room into two teams. Select a team representative for the "strong to the finish" challenge. Each team representative will attempt a feat of endurance simultaneously. Both students will stand side by side with their backs against the wall. With their feet approximately 1 foot from the wall, they should slide their backs down the wall until their thighs are parallel to the floor. It will appear as though they are sitting without a chair.

With their hands folded and resting in their laps, have an official timer time who can endure this position the longest. Each team will root for their respective teammate. The student who lasts the longest wins. Others can try to beat the longest time to get a sense of the challenge. Participants should discuss their experience: What obstacles to enduring arose? How soon did you first consider giving up? Why did you? Why did you not? etc.

Watch

Show the Week 12 video — "Strong to the Finish"

Workout

Only a simple task of endurance, yet the pain of enduring quickly sets in. We have to ask ourselves, "Is it worth it?" The easy part is beginning the task. Many young athletes "go out for the team."

After the first week of workouts, the crowd invariably diminishes. From the sidelines it's easy to long for the thrill of victory and even presume "I'm better than him/her at that position." When the excitement of the first couple of days of joining the team fades and the tough grind of preparing to win begins, the once bright lights of being in the limelight dim. The aching muscles, the tiredness, the pain, and frustration force us to consider, "Is it really worth it?"

Joining "Team Jesus" is quite similar. We hear the gospel message. It pricks our hearts. We are compelled to make a change. We repent, pray the sinner's prayer, and ask Jesus to be Lord of our lives. Then we set out to discover our purpose and destiny in God and honor Jesus with our lives. That is when the big test comes. This is the test that reveals all of our motives and commitments...the test of time! What were your motives for joining this team? Is it worth it? What makes it worth it?

Discovering the keys to enduring will help you unlock the strength you need to finish strong. Weariness will come, so too will disappointment and rejection. Our task is to stay strong to the finish. Setbacks, fallouts, doubts and discouragements all participate in preventing you from continuing the race. Be strong! Remember the keys to enduring and you will no doubt witness uncommon strength to stay the course and wear the crown.

Workout Questions

1. The power of a promise. Read Isaiah 41:10.
Who is speaking in this verse? What does He promise? Discuss.
2. Hope to cope. Now read Galatians 6:9-10.
The question was asked earlier, "Is enduring worth it?" In light of the Galatians passage, is enduring worth it? Why? How does Romans 8:18 affirm the task of being strong to the finish?
3. Not just a tree, but a forest. The mighty sequoia redwood trees of California have mystified onlookers for years. Over 275 feet high and 30 feet in diameter, some of these giants are more than 1,000 years old. Why are they so awesome? One reason. Unlike any other tree, the sequoia's roots attach to each other underground. Most root systems span out. In the sequoia forest, when the wind tries to push a sequoia down, it's not just picking on one tree; it's taking on an entire forest. Read 2 Chronicles 20:15-17. When the giants of peer influence, teenage sexuality, doubt, low self-esteem and drug and alcohol use begin to challenge you, whom are they really taking on? Explain.



Wrap Up

You have joined the team. You have made the pledge. There is only *One Way 2 Play*...it's God's way.

Now stick with the program.

Remember the keys: God has promised to uphold and help you. Hope is empowering. Ultimately, the battle is not yours but the Lord's. Jesus did not shun the cross, He endured it. He did not despise the shame, He withstood it. He shed His blood because you were worth it! He did not "wimp" out on you; how dare us "wimp" out on him.

As a group, read Hebrews 12:1-3. Finish strong!

The Competitor's Creed

I am a Christian first and last.
I am created in the likeness of God Almighty to bring Him glory.
I am a member of Team Jesus Christ.
I wear the colors of the cross.

I am a Competitor now and forever.
I am made to strive, to strain, to stretch and to succeed in the arena of competition.
I am a Christian Competitor, and as such, I face my challenger with the face of Christ.

I do not trust in myself.
I do not boast in my abilities or believe in my own strength.
I rely solely on the power of God.
I compete for the pleasure of my Heavenly Father, the honor of Christ and
the reputation of the Holy Spirit.

My attitude on and off the field is above reproach—my conduct beyond criticism.
Whether I am preparing, practicing or playing;
I submit to God's authority and those He has put over me.
I respect my coaches, officials, teammates and competitors out of respect for the
Lord.

My body is the temple of Jesus Christ.
I protect it from within and without.
Nothing enters my body that does not honor the Living God.
My sweat is an offering to my Master. My soreness is a sacrifice to my Savior.

I give my all – all of the time.
I do not give up. I do not give in. I do not give out.
I am the Lord's warrior – a competitor by conviction and a disciple of
determination.
I am confident beyond reason because my confidence lies in Christ.
The results of my efforts must result in His glory.

Let the competition begin.
Let the glory be God's.

Sign the Creed
Go to www.fca.org



One Way 2 Play Quotes

"When I came into the NFL in 1977 many players smoked cigarettes. The more we learned about their effects—how they could not only hurt your career, but possibly kill you—smoking in the NFL died out. Today, I don't know one NFL player who smokes. They all recognize the danger.

Unfortunately, the same is not true of drugs and alcohol. People still think of them as 'glamorous' or 'exciting.' I have not seen drugs or alcohol do anything but destroy lives and careers. This is why I'm so thankful for the Fellowship of Christian Athletes' One Way 2 Play—Drug Free program. Don't fall into the trap. Protect your life and your health."

Coach Tony Dungy
Indianapolis Colts

"I have never, ever been tempted in the least to use drugs or alcohol. I saw what it did to other people, and I didn't want that to happen to me. I sure didn't want to drink when I was down because I knew it would only make things worse.

Young people, wake up and see the effects of alcohol and drugs on other people! What makes you think you are different or stronger than the next guy, and that it's not going to hurt you? Don't be stupid! Don't think you're strong enough. You're not! You need the foundation of Christ to help you be strong and wise enough to make good decisions."

David Robinson
Former NBA All-Star

"I don't think there is any question about it. When you start drinking or using drugs, you never know if you're going to become an addict. Sometimes a player can try it just once and become addicted very quickly. Even when it takes much longer, it still devastates lives.

I saw some of my good friends just out of college who were drinking, and I saw them later when the alcohol had destroyed their lives. It was sad to see. I hated to see how they had been affected. When you accept Christ as Lord and Savior, He will direct you away from drugs and alcohol. I've seen many players come to Christ, and when they did, they had a sense of purpose in life. They no longer needed substances to fill the emptiness of their lives."

Tom Landry
NFL Hall of Fame

"I have always avoided drugs and alcohol because I knew they could only hurt my athletic performance. At the professional level, I can't imagine anyone performing out here with an alcohol or drug problem. You may be able to make it for a while, but it catches up with you and wrecks your career. People who use drugs or alcohol aren't in control of their lives. Obviously, it affects their ability to succeed.

Sometimes young people think they have to experience something in order to know if it's right or wrong. You don't have to jump off a cliff to be convinced that it will hurt you! It's the same with drugs and alcohol. I've seen people hurt by using and drinking. I don't have to use it myself to know how it will affect me. Don't make that mistake!"

Betsy King
LPGA Professional

Drug Use Statistics

Current alcohol trends among Americans:

- Nearly 17.6 million adult Americans abuse alcohol or are alcoholic.
- 53 percent of men and women in the United States report that one or more of their close relatives have a drinking problem. ^{*1}

Current drug trends among Americans:

- more than 5.9 million persons used cocaine in the past year.
- 22.5 million Americans are classified with substance dependence or abuse.
- 70.3 million Americans are current users of a tobacco product. ^{*2}

Drug and alcohol abuse statistics among youth are alarming:

- 1.5 million youth met criteria for admission to alcohol treatment (of these, only 120,000 received treatment).
- Each year about 1,900 persons under 21 die in motor vehicle crashes that involve underage drinking. (About another 500 persons over age 21 also die in these crashes).
- Almost 20% of 8th-graders, and 42% of 10th-graders have been drunk at least once.
- Approximately 19% of 8th-graders, 35% of 10th-graders, and 48% of 12th-graders report having consumed alcohol during the past month. ^{*3}
- Young adults ages 18 to 25 reported the highest rate of current use of any tobacco products (44.8 percent). ^{*4}

Researchers draw similar conclusions about the broad use of drugs. They find that by the time seniors graduate from high school

- 51% have used an illicit drug
- 46% have used marijuana
- 10% have used inhalants
- 8% have used cocaine
- 76% have tried alcohol
- 53% have used cigarettes.*⁴

A Gallup Poll found that coaches consider drug and alcohol abuse a significant problem on their campuses. Seventy-nine percent of coaches believe alcohol is hurting students or their fellow coaches. Also, two coaches in three say they specifically discuss the problems of substance abuse at pre-season meetings with team members and sometimes with their parents. Nearly half of the coaches say they would like to receive special training to deal with the drug problem. ⁵

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DRUG FREE RESOURCES

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AND RESOURCE
NEEDS.



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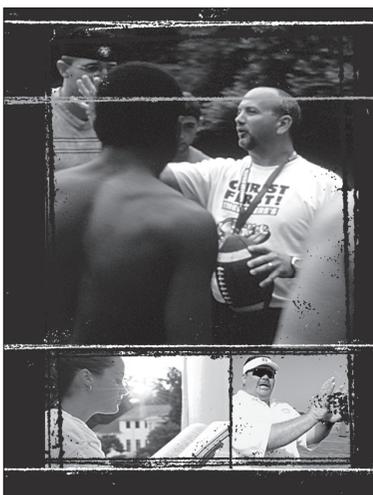
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More Than WINNING



Your Game Plan for Life.



GOD'S PLAN

In most athletic contests a coach prepares a game plan ahead of time. God designed a plan for our lives before the world began.

God is holy and perfect. He created us to love him, glorify him, and enjoy him forever.

WHAT IS GOD'S STANDARD?

The Bible, God's playbook, says that the standard for being on his team is to:

Be holy.
"Be holy because I am holy"-1 Peter 1:16

Be perfect.
"Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect"-Matthew 5:48

WHAT IS GOD'S PLAN?

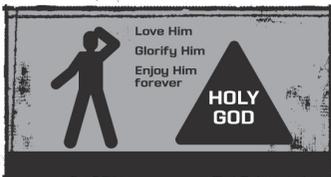
God created us to:

Love Him.
"He said to him, 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.'" -Matthew 22:37

Glorify (honor) Him.
"Our Lord and God, You are worthy to receive glory and honor and power, because You have created all things, and because of Your will they exist and were created." -Revelation 4:11

Enjoy Him forever.
Jesus said, "...I have come that they may have life and have it in abundance"
-John 10:10

Why is it that we cannot live up to God's standard of holiness and perfection and fulfill God's plan for our lives?
Because of...



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MAN'S PROBLEM

Man is sinful and is separated from God.

WHAT IS SIN?

Sin means missing the mark, falling short of God's standard. It is not only doing wrong and failing to do what God wants (lying, gossip, losing our temper, lustful thoughts, etc.), but it is also an attitude of ignoring or rejecting God which is a result of our sinful nature.

"Indeed, I was guilty when I was born..."
-Psalm 51:5

WHO HAS SINNED?

"For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."-Romans 3:23

WHAT'S THE RESULT OF SIN?

Separation from God.

"But your iniquities have built barriers between you and your God..."-Isaiah 59:2

Death.

"For the wages of sin is death"
-Romans 6:23

Judgment.

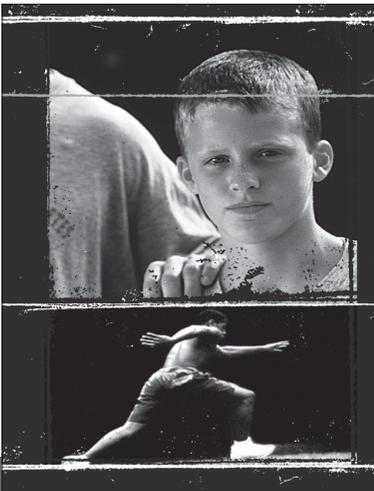
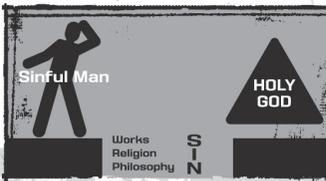
"...just as it is appointed for people to die once—and after this, judgment"
-Hebrews 9:27

This illustration shows that God is holy and we are sinful and separated from

him. Man continually tries to reach God through his own efforts (being good, religious activities, philosophy, etc.) but, while these can be good things, they all fall short of God's standard.

"All of us have become like something unclean, and all our righteous acts are like a polluted garment"-Isaiah 64:6

There is only one way to bridge this gap between God and man...



GOD'S SUBSTITUTE

God provided the only way to be on His team by sending His son, Jesus Christ, as the holy and perfect substitute to die in our place.

WHO IS JESUS CHRIST?

He is God.

Jesus said, "The Father and I are one"
-John 10:30

He is Man.

"...the Word (Jesus) was God...The Word became flesh and took up residence among us"-John 1:14

WHAT HAS JESUS DONE?

He died as our substitute.

"God proves His own love for us in that while we were still sinners Christ died for us"-Romans 5:8

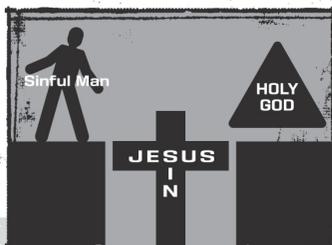
He rose from the dead.

"...Christ died for our sins...he was buried...he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures and...he appeared to Cephas, then to the Twelve. Then He appeared to over 500 brothers at one time..."-1 Corinthians 15:3-6

He is the only way to God.

"I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me"-John 14:6

This diagram shows that God has bridged the gap between himself and man by sending Jesus Christ to die in our place as our substitute. Jesus defeated sin and death and rose from the grave. Yet, it isn't enough just to know these facts. The following page tells how to become part of God's team and experience His plan...



MAN'S RESPONSE

Knowing a lot about a sport and "talking the game" doesn't make you a member of a team. The same is true in becoming a Christian. It takes more than just knowing about Jesus Christ; it requires a total commitment by faith in Him.

FAITH IS NOT:

Just knowing the facts.

"You believe that God is one; you do well. The demons also believe—and they shudder."-James 2:19

Just an emotional experience.

Raising your hand or repeating a prayer is not enough.

FAITH IS:

Repenting.

Turning to God from sin.
"godly grief produces a repentance not to be regretted and leading to salvation..."
-2 Corinthians 7:10

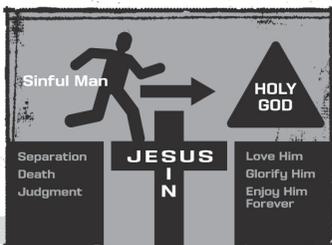
Receiving Jesus Christ.

Trusting in Christ alone for salvation.
"But to all who did receive Him, He gave them the right to be children of God, to those who believe in His name..."
-John 1:12,13

Look at the diagram-

On which side do you see yourself?
Where would you like to be?

Jesus said, "I assure you: Anyone who hears My word and believes Him who sent Me has eternal life and will not come under judgment but has passed from death to life."-John 5:24



REPLAY OF GOD'S PLAN

- ★ **REalize** God is holy and perfect; we are sinners and cannot save ourselves.
- ★ **REcognize** who Jesus is and what He's done as our substitute.
- ★ **REceive** Jesus Christ by faith as Savior and Lord.
"But to all who did receive Him, He gave them the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name..."-John 1:12,13
- ★ **REspond** to Jesus Christ in a life of obedience.
"If anyone wants to come with me, he must deny himself, take up his cross daily, and follow Me."-Jesus, Luke 9:23

Does God's plan make sense to you? Are you willing to repent and receive Jesus Christ?

If so, express to God your need for him. Consider the "Suggested Prayer of Commitment" on the next page. Remember that God is more concerned with your attitude than with the words you say.

Suggested PRAYER OF COMMITMENT

"Lord Jesus, I need you. I realize I'm a sinner and I can't save myself. I need your forgiveness. I believe that you loved me so much that you died on the cross for my sins and rose from the dead. I repent of my sins and put my faith in you as Savior and Lord. Take control of my life and help me to follow you in obedience. I love you Jesus. In Jesus' name, Amen."

"...If you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved...for 'Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved'"

-Romans 10:9,10,13

Once you have committed your life to Jesus Christ, it is important to understand what your position is on this team...

KNOW YOUR POSITION

Too many people make the mistake of measuring the certainty of their salvation by their feelings instead of the facts of God's Word. In Jesus Christ you have a new life. See what God's Word says about your new position on his team...

I am a **New Creation** in Christ.
2 Corinthians 5:17; Galatians 2:20

I have **Everything** I need for life and godliness.
2 Peter 1:3; Ephesians 1:3

I am a **Witness** for Christ and am His **Workmanship**, created for good works.
Acts 1:8; Ephesians 2:10

I am **Loved** and accepted completely in Christ.
Ephesians 1:6; Romans 8:39

I am **Indwelt** by the Holy Spirit.
1 Corinthians 6:19, 20; 1 John 4:4

I am **Forgiven** and **Free** from condemnation.
1 John 1:9; Romans 8:1-2

I have **Eternal Life** in Christ.
John 5:24; 1 John 5:11-13

Trust God! Put your faith in His Word, not in your feelings: "I have written these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life."

-1 John 5:13



4 DAILY EXERCISES

Just as physical growth demands physical exercise, spiritual growth as a Christian demands spiritual exercise. To build spiritual muscle here are four daily exercises.

1. Daily Seek Christ.

Spend time every day reading God's Word and devoting time in prayer.

"...they welcomed the message with eagerness and examined the Scriptures daily to see if these things were so." -Acts 17:11

"I praise You seven times a day..." -Psalms 119:164

2. Daily Share Christ.

Share Jesus every day through your words and actions.

"Every day in the temple complex, and in various homes, they continued teaching and proclaiming the good news that the Messiah is Jesus." -Acts 5:42

"Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ; certain that God is appealing through us." -2 Corinthians 5:20

3. Daily Lead Others.

Lead others by serving as Christ did. Every day die to self and yield complete control of your life to Jesus Christ.

"The greatest among you will be your servant." -Matt 23:11

"If anyone wants to come with Me, he must deny himself, take up his cross daily, and follow Me." -Luke 9:23

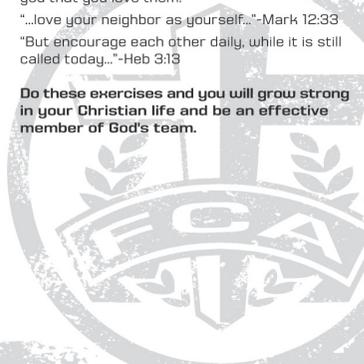
4. Daily Love Others.

Take every opportunity to show others around you that you love them.

"...love your neighbor as yourself..." -Mark 12:33

"But encourage each other daily, while it is still called today..." -Heb 3:13

Do these exercises and you will grow strong in your Christian life and be an effective member of God's team.



The *OW2P* Challenge

The *OW2P* challenge should be almost the same in all types of presentations. There are certain key elements that must be discussed in order for the program to have meaning and distinguish it from other drug free programs. The segments that are optional are listed as so. Please keep the presentation to the basics of the program.

The cards can be distributed to the students at the beginning of the challenge or at the end. This can be done a number of ways depending on the size of the group. Cards may be handed out at the door, passed out to rows by ushers, or placed on chairs prior to the presentation.

FCA staff and volunteers can be used to distribute the cards by the best possible method. It is important that the students provide their own pens and pencils or you provide them. The most effective way is have the students complete the card once the challenge has been given. Do not have the students leave with the cards.

The *OW2P* symbol should be explained. The symbol is of a hand holding up the index finger, signaling the number One, confirming that there is only *One Way 2 Play* and that way is *drug free*. The number One sign can be a way for students to encourage one another of their commitment.

As you know, FCA stands for Fellowship of Christian Athletes, but when we are talking about *One Way 2 Play*, FCA stands for **Faith, Commitment and Accountability**. Accept the challenge to have **Faith** in Jesus Christ, make a **Commitment** to saying “no” to alcohol and other drugs, and to choosing **Accountability** to one another. These three key elements need to be used and should not be substituted for any other elements.

Faith is achieved by believing that one can remain substance free and believing that Jesus Christ forgives and provides wisdom to make good decisions and the strength to carry them out.

Commitment is made by signing a “Commitment Card” which not only helps to track the numbers that are involved, but also can provide a psychological factor, knowing that the student has signed his or her name.

Accountability is achieved by having regular group meeting with others who have also made the commitment to live drug and alcohol free. In these meetings, the hard questions will be asked.

The 5 Hard Questions:

1. Are you living and playing alcohol and drug free?
2. Are you encouraging others to live and play that way?
3. Are you being honest with at least one mature person about your feelings and temptations?
4. Are you trusting Christ to meet your needs?
5. Are you honoring Him in your thoughts, words and actions?

After the elements are explained in detail, an invitation should be made to all those in attendance to sign their commitment card, pledging to be drug and alcohol free.

Encouragement is given to those who have previously made the commitment. Coaches, Huddle leaders and volunteers are encouraged to also make the commitment and be positive role models.

An optional invitation may be extended to those in attendance who wish to make a commitment to Christ and acknowledge that only He can provide the strength to remain substance free. This invitation is contingent upon the setting of the presentation.

Developing a Game Plan

The *OW2P* presentation can be utilized many ways. Since 1993, FCA has seen thousands of lives impacted through the *OW2P* ministry. Our hope for you is that *OW2P* becomes more than just a program. It is a life-changing ministry that is used to impact your entire community. Here are steps to develop a *OW2P* game plan for your community, neighborhood, church, school, team or even family.

1. Use the *OW2P* Kit

- A great way to get started is to utilize the 12-week option in the kit and challenge your athletes with the videos and small group studies.

2. Contact your FCA Office

- Our local FCA staff would love to serve you, and they can share with you what is already happening with *OW2P* in your community. There are 325 FCA offices throughout the country. You can find out who your local staff person is by going to our website www.fca.org or call 1-800-289-0909.

3. Pray

- Pray for God to show you how He wants you to use *OW2P*.
- Ask God to place a vision in your heart to reach athletes and coaches through *OW2P*.
- Pray for others to join you.

4. Identify the Needs

- Identify the needs within your area and how *OW2P* can meet those needs.

5. Action Plan

- Develop a plan to meet the needs identified.
- Start small. *OW2P* can always grow as more people get involved.

- Develop a timeline for the action plan. Plan enough time to accomplish your goals.
- List out the resources needed—facilities, speakers, commitment cards, food, T-shirts, giveaways and other *OW2P* materials.

6. Funding Plan

- Develop a budget if needed.
- Identify funding partners—families, businesses, churches and civic organizations.

7. Volunteers

- Recruit the volunteers needed to accomplish your plan.
- Organize a *OW2P* committee that can help provide leadership.
- Meet to cast the vision and make sure everyone is on the same page.

8. Marketing Plan

- Plan the best way to get the word out. Clear communication is key.
- Create a press release and other items to get to the media.
- Develop materials—brochures, handouts, etc.

9. Follow-Up

- Make sure that you follow through and complete the follow-up. Meet after the outreach and assign responsibilities. Coordinating the remaining details is important to finishing with excellence.

OW2P Events: Suggested Schedule

Rally

- 7:00 Emcee gives welcome
- 7:05 Music and/or Icebreakers
- 7:20 Student-athlete Testimony I
- 7:30 Student-athlete Testimony II
- 7:35 Music or Video
- 7:45 OW2P Challenge
- 8:00 Victory Celebration

Game Day/Special Event

- 2:00 Emcee gives welcome
- 2:05 Music
- 2:15 Icebreakers
- 2:25 Door Prizes
- 2:30 Student-athlete Testimony I
- 2:40 Student-athlete Testimony II
- 2:50 Music or Video
- 3:00 OW2P Challenge
- 3:15 Victory Celebration and Food
- 5:00 Game Time

School Assembly

- 2:00 Welcome
- 2:10 Video
- 2:20 Speaker
- 2:45 OW2P Challenge
- 3:00 (optional) Invite students to an FCA meeting or a Victory Celebration

OW2P Events: Victory Celebration

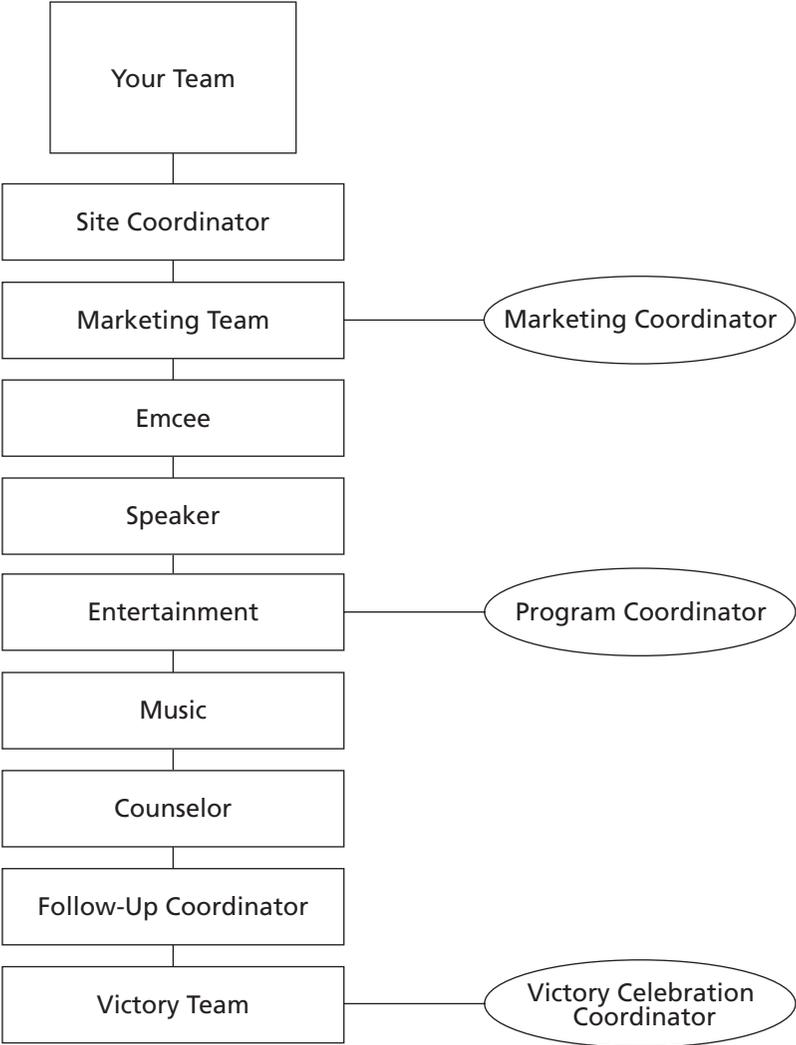
Immediately following the presentation, students should be informed that there will be counselors or FCA staff available. Students may need to talk to someone about the commitment they have just made, about making a commitment to accept Christ, or why they decided not to make a commitment. This should be done in a non-threatening atmosphere where the student feels comfortable at all times.

Food should be provided by sponsors during the Victory Celebration. This can be pizza, sandwiches, popcorn, pop, etc. This will give the students time to socialize and encourage each other and discuss the decisions they have just made.

A *One Way 2 Play—Drug Free* merchandise booth can be set up to allow students or adults to purchase any of the *OW2P* clothing or other merchandise. These items are used to encourage the youth in their decisions and to allow them to demonstrate the importance of their commitments without saying a word.

Follow-up should be made by the counselors and/or the FCA representatives. This can be done in FCA meetings, phone calls, mailings, etc. This will allow the student to know that someone cares about them and stands behind them in their decision to be drug and alcohol free.

OW2P Events: Leadership Team



OW2P Events: Program Team

PROGRAM COORDINATOR

Pre Program

- Read the enclosed information thoroughly.
- Commit to prayer.
- Develop a leadership team by the selection of the following:
 - Site Coordinator
 - Entertainment Coordinator
 - Marketing Coordinator
 - Follow-up Coordinator
 - Victory Celebration Coordinator
- Complete the Budget Worksheet with the leadership team.
- Order any resources from www.FCAGEAR.com the leadership team feels necessary.
- Work with the Site Coordinator to determine the site for the program.
- Coordinate all musicians, speakers and entertainment that will take place during the program.
- Prepare the leadership team spiritually. Maintain regular contact with the team encouraging them as they prepare for their roles.
- Work with the Site Coordinator in site preparation.
 - Establish regular communication with the on-site personnel.
 - Arrange for a site visit to be done by you and the Site Coordinator at least one month prior to the OW2P program.
 - Negotiate price and logistics of meal (if applicable).

Program

- Be available!
- Guide the team to a successful program. Fill in where necessary.
- Stick to the program. Do not let a great event turn into a good event because you went too long. Leave them wanting more, not less!
- Handle all discipline and crisis situations.



Post Program

- Hold a debriefing session with your staff and key site personnel within a week after the program so that you can get fresh insight on ways you can improve if you choose to hold another OW2P event.
- Work with the Follow-up Coordinator on follow-up strategy.
- Write notes to those who have made decisions for Christ.
- Send thank-you notes to all who assisted you.

MARKETING COORDINATOR

Pre Program

- Be responsible for developing and implementing a marketing plan.
- Recruit a Marketing Team and mobilize it to carry out the plan.

Program

- Make and post signs around the site area directing youth about logistics of the program.

Post Program

- Participate in the post program staff debriefing and evaluation sessions.
- Write thank-you notes to your marketing team members.
- Write follow-up notes for kids who made decisions with whom you had contact.

SITE COORDINATOR

Pre Program

- Work with the Program Coordinator to determine the site for the OW2P program.
- Establish regular communication with the on-site personnel.
- Determine equipment that is needed for the event, and whether or not the site can accommodate your needs. Make arrangements to obtain it through local contacts.

- Arrange for a site visit to be done by you and the Program Coordinator at least one month prior to the program.
- Secure all necessary audio-visual equipment for the day.
- Preview any videos that will be shown.

Program

- Setup and coordinate all equipment for musicians, entertainers and speakers.

Post Program

- Make sure all equipment is returned properly and the facilities are clean and properly cared for. You will receive assistance from volunteers.
- Participate in the post program staff debriefing and evaluation session.
- Write thank-you notes to all volunteers and facility contacts with whom you worked.
- Send follow-up notes to kids who made decisions with whom you had contact.

FOLLOW-UP COORDINATOR

Pre Program

- Develop the plan for follow-up.
- Select volunteers to assist in the follow-up process. Use FCA volunteers and local clergy to help in this.
- Print and secure needed resources such as Commitment Cards and pencils.
- Determine where the follow-up will take place.
- Arrange for a site visit to be done at least one month prior to the program.

Program

- Coordinate the distribution of the Commitment Cards and pencils.

Post Program

- Execute the follow-up plan that has been developed.
- Write thank-you notes to all volunteers.
- Send follow-up notes to kids who made decisions with whom you had contact.
- Participate in the post program staff debriefing and evaluation session.

VICTORY CELEBRATION COORDINATOR

Pre Program

- Arrange for local sponsors to donate food and drinks.
- Work closely with the Program Coordinator in determining how much will be needed.

Program

- Be available to help out where necessary.
- Arrange for the quick and organized distribution of food.

Post Program

- Coordinate the set-up and service of lunch (if applicable).

OW2P Events: Marketing Strategies

Marketing is a very important part of the preparation. It can determine the success and the attendance of the event. It is recommended that every available media outlet be used in promoting the event.

Poster

A poster should be developed containing the information about the program and the presentation. It should list the time, date, and location of the presentation. This can be hung in store windows, on school and community bulletin boards and in churches.

Churches

Church communication is an excellent way to promote an event like this. Most churches have bulletins or worship folders that list upcoming events. Announcements can also be made from the pulpit, and information can be distributed in Bible studies and youth groups.

Media

Radio, television and newspaper should be used to inform the targeted areas about the event. Most radio stations announce current and upcoming events that are taking place in and around the community. Announcements can easily be placed on educational and public television stations. Newspapers list events and, depending on how well the program is promoted, they may even want to write a story about it.

OW2P Events: Budget Worksheet

REVENUE

Sponsorships Donations \$ _____

Corporate Donations \$ _____

Individual Donations \$ _____

TOTAL REVENUE \$ _____

EXPENSES

Site Rental \$ _____

Food (if applicable) \$ _____

Marketing Materials \$ _____

Giveaways

 Commitment Cards \$ _____

 Bibles \$ _____

 T-shirts \$ _____

 Follow-up Materials \$ _____

 Other \$ _____

 Other \$ _____

 Other \$ _____

 Other \$ _____

TOTAL EXPENSES \$ _____

NET PROFIT (LOSS) \$ _____

Appendix A:

Why Kids Drink and Use Drugs

"It's so stupid for Billy to use that stuff," Sarah told a friend in disgust. "Can't he see that he's ruining his life?" The answer to that question was obvious to Sarah, but it isn't always that clear to someone who uses alcohol or drugs. In fact, people's behavior almost always seems logical to them, even if others see it is as clearly destructive. There are many reasons people start drinking and using, but they continue to drink or use because it seems like a viable solution to the stresses they feel. Simply put, to them it works. "I don't drink because I like the taste," one girl said. "I drink to get drunk, so I can forget."

Alcohol is the substance of choice for both adults and adolescents. In his book, *Helping the Struggling Adolescent*, Les Parrott, III, Ph.D. comments:

"Statistics vary, but the best estimates indicate that there could be more than 4 million American alcoholics under the age of 18. And the age of experimentation is getting younger. Today's junior high students are facing decisions about drugs that were once reserved only for older youth.

"Trying alcohol today is already more common among current fifth graders than it was among current eighth graders when they were in the fifth grade. The percentage of youth who drank alcohol 10 or more times in the last 12 months doubles between the eighth and ninth grades. Substance use among adolescents is a problem the size of Goliath. Each weekend 30 to 40 percent of the youth in America use alcohol and drugs."

But alcohol is not the only drug kids use. Different researchers draw similar and alarming conclusions about the broad use of drugs. There are four major types of drugs, and each affects the person in specific ways:

1. Stimulants heighten awareness and energy and decrease appetite. They can be useful in treating depression. Caffeine and nicotine are examples of legal stimulants. Cocaine is an example of an illegal stimulant.
2. Depressants slow down the nervous system. They come in many varieties including alcohol, minor tranquilizers (i.e. valium) and sedatives. Other legal substances, which can be used as depressant drugs, include glue, nail polish remover, cleaning fluid, gasoline, lighter fluid and antifreeze.

3. Narcotics are powerful and highly addictive substances that relieve physical pain and produce a sense of euphoria. Examples include heroin, morphine and codeine.
4. Hallucinogens are illegal, “mind-expanding” drugs. They include LSD, marijuana and mescaline.

The use of drugs—especially alcohol—is an epidemic in our country. The reasons young people take this destructive road are because of the desires to experiment with something new and exciting, to escape their emotional pain, to diminish the anger they feel, and to fit in with their peers. Let's examine these reasons.

Experimentation—Most kids try their first joint or beer because they've seen older kids and adults doing it, and it looks like fun. Television commercials portray happy, healthy, strong young people drinking beer and enjoying an “ideal” lifestyle. This illusion is pervasive and powerful. In fact, it is estimated that an average 18-year-old has seen 100,000 beer commercials, all designed by slick ad executives who are trying to entice young people to drink.

The alluring media pictures of joyful drinking combined with normal adolescent urges to try new things, push beyond the boundaries and dabble in things which are taboo. They feel the rush of adrenaline when they drink their first beer or smoke their first joint, and their courage to experiment is often rewarded with instant acceptance by their friends. “Now you're one of us, Rich! Way to go!”

Escaping Emotional Pain—The family is a person's greatest source of strength, love and wisdom. When that vital environment is shaken, however, each family member then experiences the opposite of those benefits—weakness, bitterness and confusion. Individual responses vary.

For instance, some people withdraw or hide so that they won't get hurt again, and some attempt to dominate others so that they can feel superior. Some try to gain approval by fixing other people's problems, and some try to control their lives and environments by being perfectionists. All of these wounded people are simply trying to deal with unresolved emotional pain.

We call these “dysfunctional families,” but we shouldn't make the mistake of saying that all families are dysfunctional or that functional families don't have problems. Functional families have their share of problems, but they adapt to meet needs and work through difficulties. They come out stronger as a result of this process.

In contrast, dysfunctional families focus their energies on placing blame instead of finding solutions. They don't seek creative solutions to problems; they give up in hopelessness. Each person's pain continues to fester as more wounds are felt but unhealed, and each family member tries any and all ways to block this pain and find a sense of meaning in life.

Statistics give us a glimpse of the depth and breadth of hurt in people's lives, but raw numbers only begin to tell of the emotional war inside each person...

- Approximately 30 million Americans are chemically dependent.
- 12 million are compulsive gamblers.
- 12 million are workaholics.
- 40 to 80 million are compulsive overeaters.
- Every addict or abuser affects at least four other people.
- In many inner cities the illegitimacy rate is 80%.
- Among all whites, the illegitimacy rate is now 24%. Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan observes that a rate of 26% creates a "permanent underclass."
- Suicides among kids ages 15 to 19 have almost tripled since 1960.
- Half of all marriages end in divorce.
- 26% of all children live in single-parent homes.
- 35% of all children live in step-relationships.

Parents in these families are overwhelmed with their own problems, and they do not (or will not) give the time and energy necessary to provide love and direction for their children. One woman's statement serves as an indicator: "This kid is just too much trouble. I've got enough trouble of my own without having to tend to his troubles, too! He's got friends. He'll make it."

Others may be more compassionate, but no more effective. Take the following statement for example: "I've tried everything I can to get through to my daughter, but I've got to go to work to make a living for her and her two brothers. I can't be everywhere at once!"

Stress has many different effects on people. Physical effects include headaches, ulcers and other stomach problems, and a variety of psychosomatic illnesses. Stress also reduces the body's immune system and makes it more susceptible to bacterial and viral diseases. Emotional effects of stress include anger, depression and emotional numbness.

Social effects are the propensity to fight, to hide from people or risks, and the urge to fix other people's problems as a substitute for solving their own. Behavioral problems that result from stress include alcohol and drug abuse, truancy and vandalism.

Adolescence is hard enough under the best of circumstances, but when there is little love, little time and poor modeling, a child's pain multiplies and compounds. Typical responses to the weight of this pain are to minimize ("Oh, it isn't that big of a deal. It doesn't hurt much. I can handle it."), deny ("Nah, that doesn't affect me at all. I don't even know what you're talking about."), internalize ("The reason my parents divorced is because I'm a bad person. I'm the one to blame.") and externalize ("Okay, so I stole from that store. So what? If my parents loved me, I wouldn't do stuff like that. It's their fault!").

Some people respond to intense, unresolved pain by becoming emotionally numb. They don't feel anything—no pain, no joy. Some become depressed because their unresolved hurt overwhelms their emotional and physiological functions. Whatever the response, these hurts also produce another emotion: anger.

Anger—They feel hurt. They feel lonely. They feel disconnected from sources of stability and love. And they feel angry. This emotion is so pervasive in the youth culture that many observers call this generation "the age of rage." Though many Christians have great difficulty with anger, this feeling is a normal, healthy response to hurt. In Ephesians 4:26, Paul encouraged believers to be angry, but not to sin in that anger. The way we act in response to the feeling of anger, then, can be healthy or unhealthy—right or wrong. Some causes of anger include the following:

Injustice: Some Christians think that anger is only justified in cases of "righteous indignation" over issues such as abortion, rape and murder, but injustice is far more broad. When others treat us with disrespect, rejection or ridicule, we experience injustice, and a measure of anger is appropriate.

This feeling, however, should prompt us to act appropriately, communicate with the person and forgive the offense. In adolescence, injustices are experienced almost every day. Kids can be vicious in their ability to inflict wounds on each other. The effects of these wounds are multiplied when young people (and adults) perceive more injustice than what actually exists. When people have experienced abandonment and abuse, they tend to see it even when it isn't there. They are hurt then even when there is no cause for that hurt, and their anger continues to build.

Pervasive Hurt: Some young people have experienced constant hurt from ridicule, abandonment, or physical, verbal or sexual abuse. They have never known safety and love, so they don't even know where to look for a supportive environment. For these people, anger is a way of life.

Poor Modeling: Studies show that violent kids tend to come from violent homes. They have seen their parents handle stress by exploding, blaming and withdrawing, and this image is then replayed in their own responses to problems. The other culprit of poor modeling is the media. Attempts have been made recently to lower the levels of violence in movies and on television, but these efforts may only slightly reverse the trend. There are still hundreds of thousands of graphic murders, fights, rapes, explosions and other expressions of outrage that fill people's minds. Even network executives now admit that media violence correlates with personal violence in viewers.

Fear: Many people do not see the connection between fear and anger, but it is very real. People who have experienced severe or prolonged trauma fear being hurt again, much like a person with a broken arm fears being hit on that arm again, thus feeling a return of great pain. Fear is our response to the threats of rejection, failure, punishment, the unknown, exposed secrets and many other potential sources of hurt.

Our instinctive response to these threats is anger at the one who threatens us, and for some of us, the threats are very real. Kids used to worry about being caught by teachers or parents for chewing gum or being messy. Today's young people are afraid of gang violence, date rape, pressure from dope-dealing friends, and sexually transmitted diseases. There's a lot to be afraid of...and angry about.

Unrealistic Expectations: The world of confusion, hurt, and poor role models creates unrealistic expectations. Kids may have unrealistic perceptions of their own abilities. They may expect to make all A's even if they don't study. They may expect to be a starter on the football team even if someone else is a better athlete. Kids also may have unrealistic expectations about how others should treat them. They think teachers should give them good grades, parents should give them money, and friends should give them approval, even if their performances don't warrant these rewards.

Kids see college athletes sign multimillion-dollar contracts to play professional sports. Every week they hear about people who win fortunes playing the lottery. Television commercials tell them that if they use their products they will be happy, popular and comfortable. They only need a little more money to get it. And the kids believe they deserve to get all they want without the required sweat and sacrifice. When these high expectations aren't met, they feel cheated. They feel angry.

When we think of “angry people” we typically envision someone cursing, hitting or expressing violent rage. There are, however, many other ways kids express their anger, and each has a specific name.

- *Comics* try to make the stress go away by making jokes or being silly.
- *Fixers* funnel their angry energy into solving other’s problems.
- *Heroes* find ways to “be somebody” by excelling in sports, school, work, etc.
- *Moles* hide from stress physically and emotionally and limit others’ access to them so that they don’t have to be hurt again.
- *Nice People* hide their anger behind masks of always being kind, pleasant and positive.
- *Slicers* calmly cut people to ribbons with vicious sarcasm, and when confronted, say in mock surprise, “Hey, I was only kidding!”
- *Commanders* have to be in charge of every person and situation.
- *Volcanoes* remain dormant and quiet until the pressure causes them to erupt in violent rage.

All of these responses to hurt and anger work for a while, but eventually they fail to block the pain. At this point, the person’s role may become the *Doctor*, who medicates the pain and anger by prescribing the drug of choice: alcohol, amphetamines, food, sex or something else.

Of course, people can play more than one role at a time, and any of them can use substances, people or behaviors to medicate their pain.

Many of the people who play these roles don’t appear angry. That’s the point. They don’t want people to know the depth of their hurt and anger because that information would make them vulnerable to being hurt again. Their goals are to hide their emotions, get revenge by hurting others, find some sense of meaning in life, and control their environments. The different roles focus on one or more of these goals.

Peer Pressure—Peer pressure is often labeled as the #1 cause of alcohol and drug abuse among young people, but it needs to be seen in context with other causes. Adolescents normally deal with the issues of “Who am I?” and “What am I going to do with my life?”

Teenagers often look to their peers for answers. These normal, healthy questions become much more difficult to answer, however, if the adolescent’s sense of security is threatened by upheaval at home, unresolved hurts, and attempts to mask the anger by playing roles. They are then much more vulnerable to the pressures from friends to try alcohol, drugs, sex, vandalism or any other way to fit in with the group. Insecurity leaves them

emotionally weak and lacking the will to go against others' encouragement and implied threat of rejection. "Come on. Just try it. It won't kill you!" they say, and the emotionally needy adolescent's desire to be accepted makes him susceptible to this seemingly harmless first act.

Alcohol is the most widely accepted drug in our culture, and it has devastating effects. Drunk driving is the leading cause of death for people under the age of 20. It rips families apart and shatters lives. And alarmingly, 25% of those who use alcohol combine it with some other drug. The combination is even more deadly and devastating.

Appendix B:

How You Can Tell If Someone Is Using

All of us recognize the most common effects of alcohol: slurred speech and decreased motor skills, but many parents and coaches have difficulty seeing other patterns of behavior either because they are acquired so gradually or because they don't want to believe they really exist.

Perhaps the best way to begin describing how you can tell if someone is using drugs is to explain the stages of addiction. Not everyone who uses drugs or alcohol is an addict, but that fact doesn't lessen the need for us to identify people who are in the addictive process so that we can help them reverse the course of their lives.

Different authorities label the stages of addiction in similar ways. The description we use is adapted from *Rapha's 12-Step Program for Overcoming Chemical Dependency*.

Stage 1—Experimenting

The user...

- responds to the encouragement of others to “try” alcohol or drugs.
- is excited about doing something new and possibly forbidden.
- typically uses “light stuff” (i.e. alcohol or marijuana).
- experiences euphoria with few negative consequences.
- learns to enjoy using.

Stage 2—Seeking

The user...

- likes the feeling of being high and uses alcohol or drugs socially to fit in.
- establishes limits on use (ex. two beers, three joints, three sniffs or taking prescription drugs “only as directed”).
- sometimes goes over his or her limit and experiences negative consequences.
- is usually in control of the amount of alcohol or drugs used, though there may be some problems at home, school or work because of drug or alcohol use.

Stage 3—Obsessing

The user...

- becomes preoccupied with getting high.
- regularly breaks the self-imposed rules (in Stage 2).
- begins to lose control of aspects of his life due to preoccupation and impulsive behavior.
- feels confusion, guilt and shame over increased drug use; projects blame for his or her behavior onto others; rationalizes, justifies and minimizes painful feelings and inappropriate behavior.

Stage 4—Consuming

The user...

- is consumed by the substance even as he or she consumes it, claiming that it was needed just to feel “normal.”
- blames others for the consequences of drug use and considers other avenues of escape including moving out of town, leaving the family or suicide.
- experiences deteriorating mental, spiritual and physical health.
- experiences withdrawal symptoms when he or she stops using.

For some people, progressing through these stages takes years, and some can stop the slide through sheer willpower. Others, however, seem to sprint down the addictive path of destruction. The type of drug, too, determines the speed of the process. Virtually all authorities report that people can become physiologically addicted to crack cocaine after the first use.

Counselors who work with chemically dependent people observe a variety of characteristics associated with drug and alcohol use. As a person progresses down the stages of addiction, these characteristics become more pronounced. These are warning signs for those of us who care for the users.

Relational

- changes in friendships
- new friends who are users, and may or may not try to hide their use of substances
- unwillingness to bring these new friends home or even talk about them
- unexplained absences from home

Behavioral

- mood swings, secretiveness, withdrawal to avoid confrontation
- unpredictable behavior; explosions of anger, lying, fear and shame
- problems at school or work
- problems with sleep patterns
- problems with eating habits
- problems with money: either broke or having large, unexplained amounts of money
- delusional thinking or hallucinations
- finding excuses for poor performances and increased irresponsibility
- usual activities (social, recreational, hobbies, etc.) change
- impulsiveness and poor judgment
- lack of motivation and discipline
- drug paraphernalia; drug-related slogans on clothes

Physical

- increasing health problems, especially respiratory and gastrointestinal
- nausea or vomiting
- frequent drowsiness
- glazed expressions, poor memory
- poor personal grooming habits
- unusual dilation or movement in the eyes, including:
 - constricted pupils (may indicate use of heroin, PCP or sedatives)
 - dilated pupils (may indicate use of crack, cocaine or amphetamines)
 - non-reactive pupils (may indicate use of marijuana or sedatives)
 - inability to track with eyes (may indicate use of alcohol, marijuana or sedatives)
 - inability to have eyes converge (may indicate use of alcohol, marijuana or sedatives)
 - swollen or droopy eyelids, redness in eyes (may indicate use of heroin, marijuana or PCP)

Physical effects can also be caused by medical problems, so parents, coaches and friends should not jump to conclusions if someone exhibits these characteristics. Look for patterns in each category (relational, behavioral and physical) and look for the progression of any of these characteristics.

Family Members of Alcoholics or Users

Drug and alcohol abuse affects family members and friends. Years ago, counselors who worked with families of alcoholics noticed certain patterns of behavior in these family members. *One Way 2 Play—Drug Free* is designed primarily to address the issues of those kids who are tempted to

use drugs or who are using them already. But we also need to be aware of those who are in close relationships with alcoholics and users.

In fact, studies show that children of alcoholics are more likely to become alcoholics themselves than those from non-alcoholic homes. Experts debate the existence of a genetic link and the effects of parental modeling, but whatever the cause, those from alcoholic homes need to be aware of the increased risk of their own use of drugs or alcohol.

The patterns of behavior for family members varies, but these characteristics are typical:

- a lack of objectivity about the family’s problems; denial, etc.
- a warped sense of responsibility; feeling the need to fix others’ problems.
- being easily controlled by others’ anger, self-pity, silence and demands.
- trying to control others in these same ways.
- unresolved hurt and anger.
- intense feelings of guilt and shame.
- feeling isolated, lonely and afraid of authority figures.
- feeling afraid of angry, demanding people.
- living for the approval of others, and being crushed by disapproval.
- the need to find someone to blame for personal and family problems, even if the person blamed is him or herself.
- feeling like a victim—they deserve better, but can’t do anything about it.
- feeling misunderstood and abandoned even though they try to please people.

In families where stress is unresolved and hurt and anger continue to take their toll, everybody searches for a way to block the pain and gain a sense of value and belonging. Drinking and using are ways to escape, but each person needs to find a source of honesty, hope and health. The group can be that place.

Appendix C:

Producing a Family Atmosphere in Your Group

Drinking is not the problem, it is simply a way someone has chosen to deal with the problem—an ineffective and destructive way. The real problem is deeper than the behavior. It involves a person's sense of identity, security, significance, purpose and hope. The person's family may not have provided these things, but the family of God can. The person's earthly father may have been abusive or aloof, but the Heavenly Father is loving and strong.

The truths of the Scriptures are not meant to be learned in a vacuum. They are understood and applied in the context of vital, vibrant relationships—like your group! Your group can be the place where kids learn to love and be loved, where they develop communication skills and where they learn to be wise and responsible.

We all have heard stories of people who said, "My coach believed in me even when I didn't believe in myself. I don't know what my life would've been like without him (or her)." Those who work with youth have the incredible opportunity to nurture young lives. For many of these young people, a group like yours is their last and best hope of finding real love and strength.

The Message: The message young people desperately need to hear is, "You are valuable to me. I care about you." The Scriptures teach about our incredible sense of value and identity. We were lost and without hope because of our sin, apathy and rebellion against God, but Jesus Christ died to pay for our sins. Paul reminds the Ephesian believers that they have been chosen by God, adopted by Him into His family, forgiven of all sins and sealed in this new relationship by the Spirit of God. Adolescents who wonder, "Who am I?" need to hear this declaration of identity in Christ.

This message gives us connections. Some of us feel loved and accepted by our families, but many of us don't. We may have been abandoned or abused by others, but Christ will "never leave us, nor forsake us." He is consistently loving and strong. He is with us all the time, even when we don't feel His presence. We also have connections in the family of God. Our earthly brothers and sisters may ridicule us or betray us, but those who truly love God love one another, as well.

The forgiveness God offers us is genuine "good news." We have all done

things we regret, but many of us have seen blame and denial modeled as remedies for our sins, and these only produce more sinful behavior. Old-time preachers of God's grace used to say, "God is the God of second chances...and third chances, and fourth chances..." Guilt and shame gnaw at our security and erode our relationships, but the forgiveness of God washes us clean. When we experience this, we can forgive those who have hurt us instead of harboring bitterness toward them. We may savor that bitterness because we think that someday we can get revenge, but in this case, the only person we hurt is ourselves. Paul told the Ephesians to "forgive one another just as God in Christ also has forgiven you."

But forgiveness doesn't mean we let people do anything they want to us. We also grow in our wisdom and perception about people, and we learn to speak the truth, to say "No," and to find sources of spiritual and emotional refreshment.

Kids today need a sense of hope, and the message of Christ is preeminently one of hope and purpose. God does have a plan for our lives. He does care about us and our circumstances. He will give us wisdom and strength when we need them. But this doesn't mean we will understand His plan and purpose at every point along the way. God is inscrutable; we can't understand all He does. We have to trust that He will bring us through difficulties instead of around them.

The Methods: The way we build a family environment in a group is by treating people like family members: with love, honesty and respect. Be honest with the Lord and yourself about your own hurt, fear and anger. These are universal emotions; no one alive escapes these feelings. As you are honest about your own hopes and hurts, you will be more genuine with the group.

Honesty is a vital ingredient in a healthy family, but don't take it too far. Be wise about sharing too much detail about your problems, and don't talk about somebody else's struggles unless you can successfully mask the person's identity. People are attracted to leaders who can admit they are human and struggle with life's issues. Vulnerable people earn the "right" to proclaim hope and healing because they have demonstrated their need for and application of the truth. Appropriate self-disclosure is a necessary element in healthy relationships. If the parents in a family or the leaders in a group model this vulnerability, others will be far more likely to be honest about their own problems and get the help they need.

Commitments are important in families. The Scriptures are full of encouragement about the quality of our relationships. We are to "love one

another," "accept one another," "encourage one another," "forgive one another," "admonish one another," and "honor one another" among others. We demonstrate our commitment to each other in tangible and intangible ways. They can make a visible, public commitment to being drug free by signing the *One Way 2 Play-Drug Free* commitment sheet in the group. We also should commit to avoiding sarcastic comments, which solicit laughs at the expense of the victims. Coaches need to model positive, affirming language, and themselves need to address the power of the tongue fairly often in the group. Much damage can be inflicted, or many blessings can be given through words.

A loving, strong, family atmosphere creates positive peer pressure among the group members. Instead of pressuring each other to participate in destructive behaviors, they will "put the squeeze" on each other to do what is good and right.

A healthy family or group is a safe place where people are respected. Confidentiality on the part of the coach is an important part of that respect. If kids know they can talk to you without being corrected, condemned or challenged, they will be more open to your help. Confidentiality, however, is a difficult issue in working with adolescents because you sometimes find out things that must be communicated to authorities.

For instance, if a girl tells you she is being sexually molested by a family member, you are required by law to report that to Child Protective Services. Don't let this scare you into withdrawing from being a person kids feel safe enough to talk to. When you explain to the group members that you want the group to be a place where they feel loved and safe, you can also tell them that you are required to report physical or sexual abuse to the authorities. Have some referral sources available to those who need more help than the support of the group. Take some time to evaluate the philosophy and effectiveness of these professionals so you can have confidence when you send someone to see them.

The group provides a healthy alternative for the kids. If they have nowhere to go, many of them "hang out" at malls, in unsupervised homes, or other places where they are more likely to get into trouble. Think about other activities which offer alternatives for these kids. Many churches have excellent youth programs which are open to those outside their church. Your student leadership may develop alternative meetings or events which are stimulating and encouraging for the kids, especially those at risk.

Consider these practical ways to help those in your group who are hurting:

DON'T

- Don't confront the person when he or she is high.
- Don't yell, overreact, lecture, or preach.
- Don't let him blame you for his behavior and its consequences. Don't blame yourself, either.
- Don't accept excuses such as, "Everybody's doing it!"
- Don't command him to do anything. Tell him what you are going to do. Don't make empty threats. Plan and carry out what you say you will do.

DO

- Be calm. Communicate that you care. That's why you are getting involved.
- Be objective. Don't exaggerate or deny the reality of the situation.
- Plan ahead. Know what your options are. Know what you are going to do so that you can tell him clearly and firmly.
- Get help. Contact someone who specializes in chemical dependency and codependency counseling.

Many of the kids in your group have nowhere else to go for love and respect. Their families don't provide the affirmation and stability they need, so they go to their friends. But their friends are just as lonely, angry, and hurt as they are, so they only "pool their ignorance" with those who can identify with them. You can provide a nurturing atmosphere where these kids learn to grieve their hurts, forgive the offenders, and learn new skills and responsibilities.



Appendix D:

Teaching Responsibility and Healthy Coping Skills

Many campaigns and programs have been implemented to help kids “Say No to Drugs!” These raise awareness of certain problems, but they seldom address their root causes. And your telling someone to stop a certain behavior usually won’t be effective if you haven’t dealt with the particular root issues that they are facing. *One Way 2 Play—Drug Free* speaks to the dynamic forces in kids’ lives that create the stress, hurt and anger they are trying to alleviate with alcohol or drugs. When these root causes surface, they can respond appropriately and develop new skills for decision-making and living.

Address Root Causes: This may seem like the easiest step in the process, but it is usually the most difficult. Every emotional and relational dynamic in the family is designed to block or avoid pain. That is why addressing the causes of the pain is like paddling upstream. It goes against every inclination of the individual and the family. They have avoided dealing with these causes in the past because they were afraid to awaken what could be sleeping giants. It was better just to leave them alone!

But just as with physical wounds, you can’t experience healing if you won’t let a doctor examine you. As you talk about your own hopes and fears and as you laugh and grimace, the students will realize that they can be honest about their own pain. And as you teach them about the powerful forces of emotional pain, anger and the roles they play in dealing with these feelings, they will feel like they are understood. They will learn to identify the stresses, feelings and destructive behaviors in their own lives.

Some kids will understand immediately and be ready to get the help they need. They may already be at the bottom, desperate for help. Others will take longer to comprehend what you are saying. Be patient with them. They aren’t stupid. They may feel threatened by their own lurking monsters of pain and anger that they might just need time to develop the courage to face them. But the reality is that some never will. No matter how eloquently you speak, no matter how vulnerable you are, some people will never catch on.

Sometimes even the most skilled of counselors won’t be able to tell the difference between the students who just need time and the ones who will never catch on. Don’t give up! It may be years later that the person

desperately needs help and remembers, “I remember a coach who once told me that the problem isn’t the alcohol, it’s the hurt that the alcohol numbs. Now I need to deal with that hurt.”

In this program, we focus on the underlying causes of stress and pain instead of just the behavior of using. Everyone (not just the alcohol and drug users) experiences hurt and pain to some degree, so this program will minister to everyone in your group. It also is universally applicable because it meets needs wherever a student is at the moment. If she has never taken a drink, this program gives her information and lets her make a commitment to avoiding them. If he is a recreational user, it warns him of the danger and gives him an opportunity to stop. If he is in stage 3 or 4, this program gives him a safe place to be honest about his dependency and the pain he is trying to escape. He can get a referral to a school counselor or some other source, and the encouragement and accountability of the group will help him stay clean and sober.

Teach Skills: Changing habits is difficult even under the best of circumstances, but new coping skills are necessary for people who don’t know how to handle stress appropriately. Group leaders don’t need to get a Ph.D. in order to teach these skills; they are common sense solutions to fundamental human problems.

Three skills every person needs to learn are how to identify feelings and pressures, how to set goals and how to take appropriate action. Let’s examine these.

Identify Feelings and Pressures—One of the primary characteristics of a person from a “dysfunctional” family is a lack of objectivity. Everyone around her clearly sees the devastating effects of her father’s alcoholism (or her parents’ divorce, etc.). They see how she is trying to cope with the feelings of hurt and abandonment by sleeping around. But she doesn’t see the connection at all. “Hey, it’s fun, and it doesn’t hurt anybody!” she exclaims defensively.

Or, consider a kid who made good grades, practiced hard at basketball and had a large group of friends. After he experienced the pain of his father’s death it only took a few months before he dropped out of sports, started failing several subjects and found a new set of drug-using friends. Now when his mother tries to talk to him, he shouts angrily, “Dad always told me to make my own decisions, and that’s what I’m doing! Get off my back!”

Another case is that of a young man from a strict, religious home who lives with a nagging, overwhelming sense of guilt and shame because he

can't measure up to his parents' lofty expectations of perfection. From the outside, he is the picture of a "fine Christian boy," but his anger, hurt and shame are eating him alive. He doesn't understand what is going on in his life. He doesn't see the unrealistic pressures, and he believes, "I have to live up to God's standards, and I don't even want to. I must be a bad person!"

You can help people identify their feelings and the stressful situations that cause them by taking the following actions:

- Reveal how you identified your own feelings and pressures by telling your own stories. "I felt angry (or hurt or ashamed or sad or...) when I..."
- Talk about feelings by using modern stories or biblical characters as examples. (i.e. "Peter wept bitterly after he denied Jesus.")
- Put yourself or the group members in the stories. "Peter wept bitterly after he denied Jesus. Imagine how you would have felt if you had been Peter. You had just let down the Man you said you would die for, and..."
- Ask for feedback from the individual or the group: "Think about it. How would you have felt if you had been Peter?" Let them answer without correcting or criticizing their responses.
- Give them "emotion options" to help them identify their feelings. It isn't uncommon for people to be emotionally paralyzed or frozen if they have experienced severe trauma. They may need help. Ask gently, "Did you feel hurt? Sad? Angry? Afraid? Ashamed?" They may still have problems identifying their emotions, but at least you're giving them a vocabulary with which to express their feelings.
- Validate their feelings by validating the significance of their stresses. You can say in the group or individually, "When parents split up, that shakes up your world. You might feel like you don't know who you can depend on. No wonder you feel hurt and angry."
- Remember that for wounded people, even seemingly small stresses produce genuine pain. Don't tell someone, "You shouldn't feel that way." Instead, look for the deeper, hidden wound which magnified the present pain. Say, "That really hurt you. I wonder if there are bigger, hidden hurts that make this one feel so bad."

Identifying feelings and stresses is an important step, but it is only the first of many. Once the problem has been identified you then can help them set goals to overcoming the issue.

Set Goals—We often talk about setting goals in sports, but few of us know how to set them in the most crucial areas of our lives: our behaviors and relationships. Adolescents often have trouble in this area because they are trying, at the same time, to figure out what it means to be a responsible adult. The transition from childhood (when others set goals for you) to adulthood (when you set your own goals and are responsible for your own behavior) is a rite of passage. You can help the students in the group by explaining and reinforcing the following principles:

- **Ask.** “What am I responsible for, and what am I not responsible for?” People are responsible for their own behavior, their own choices and their own responses to problems. We aren’t responsible for the actions of others.

We often think that other people are responsible for making us happy, healthy, wealthy and comfortable, and we get angry when these unrealistic expectations aren’t met. And strangely, many of us feel it is our responsibility to make other people happy, healthy, wealthy and good. In other words, “If I’m not happy, it’s my mom’s fault,” or “If my mom’s not happy, it’s my fault.”

Some of us expect another person to protect us from the consequences of our behavior. For instance, a boy who doesn’t study might expect his father’s position as a respected businessman to bail him out of trouble at school.

- **Explore the options.** It’s easy to get stuck in a rut. We respond in the same way to the same circumstances simply because we’ve always responded a certain way. We need to consider all possible solutions and then choose the best one. For example, a girl who is dating a guy with a drinking problem needs to consider her options instead of feeling hopelessly trapped in the relationship.

She can...

- ...keep dating him without addressing the issue.
- ...stop dating him without telling him why.
- ...ask a friend to tell him to stop drinking.
- ...demand that he prove his love for her by stopping his drinking.
- ...talk to a school counselor about how to handle the situation.

- ...tell him she would prefer that he not drink, but that if he does it's okay.
- ...tell him she cares for him and sees how he's messing up his life by drinking.
- ...tell him she doesn't think they should date anymore until his drinking is under control.

Obviously, some of these are good options, and some are not. The object is to find a few good choices among the possibilities. One of the ways to determine the best choice is to analyze the possible consequences.

- **Know your usual pattern of responses.** We are creatures of habit. If we realize how we normally react in certain situations we will be prepared to make the necessary changes. If we tend to withdraw we might need to be more assertive. If we tend to attack we might need to calm down and listen. If we tend use self-pity to get others to give in we may need to be more honest and responsible. Two questions will help to clarify our position:
 - How do I usually feel and act in situations like this?
 - How do I need to act this time?
- **Be realistic.** It is counterproductive and self-defeating to set unrealistic goals. A student with a D average shouldn't set an immediate goal of straight A's. He may need to set a goal to first achieve all C's. If he achieves that, the next goal may be to receive all B's. Similarly, a girl who is abusing valium shouldn't think that she can simply quit. Something drove her to use the valium, and using it didn't solve the underlying problem. In fact, it probably made it worse. A more realistic goal would be to see a counselor and starting resolving the stresses that caused her to use the drug.
- **Be specific.** One of the most common problems when setting goals is our tendency to be vague. For example, many of us say simply, "I want to be happy." While happiness may be a worthwhile goal, it is probably the result of achieving more specific goals. We can set identifiable goals for even the smallest of events, and, in fact, these "small events" are the building blocks that shape our lives.

Teach group members to ask themselves simple questions. "What do I want in this relationship?" "What do I need to communicate in this conversation?" "What am I trying to accomplish by acting this way?" "What is my goal in making this decision?" "What is my goal in life?"

Take Appropriate Action—When clear goals have been set, it's time to take action. Several principles help us when taking these steps.

- **Get help.** Wisdom requires that we receive mature guidance at all stages of reflecting, planning and acting. If we haven't sought that input by now, we certainly need it at this point to refine our plan and gain accountability.
- **Resolve the underlying problems.** Grieving and forgiving are important action steps. Others have hurt us. They have offended us. We have experienced deep loss because of the neglect, ridicule, abuse, manipulation or abandonment of others.

The appropriate responses are to grieve and feel the appropriate sadness regarding how we have been treated, and to forgive those who have hurt us. This forgiveness may not come easily because it is based on our progressive understanding of the hurts that we have experienced. But it also must be based on our own experiences of Christ's forgiveness of our mistakes.

To forgive, however, doesn't mean that we give people the license to hurt us again. One of the ways we can love them is to refuse to let them act inappropriately toward us again.

The entire message of *One Way 2 Play* could be summarized in this: grieve, forgive and take responsibility. These words incorporate the heart and action of the entire program.

- **Put yourself in positive environments.** Many of us want to change, but we remain stuck in the same lifestyle and relationships that reinforce old, destructive behavior patterns. This is a very important subject, but many religious leaders take the easy route, demanding compliance to set a legalistic standards that are "guaranteed to produce results." Some say, "If you listen to anything but Christian music or read anything but Christian books, you're going to fall!" Others go even farther saying, "If you listen to anything but hymns, you're falling into the Devil's trap."

Our selection of music, books, videos, movies and even friends influences our lives, and coaches need to address these important topics. This needs to be done, however, with reason and with the description of consequences instead of with rigid rules. Paul wrote, "Everything is permissible for me—but not everything is beneficial. Everything is permissible to me—but I will not be mastered by anything" (1 Corinthians 6:12).

Help them to see that they can make their own decisions about these issues, but that they will experience the resulting consequences, good or bad. Again, some will listen, and some won't, but your example and encouragement will make a great difference.

- **Be strong!** The Lord must know how difficult it is to do something new because the Scriptures are full of admonitions to “be strong and courageous.” New directions threaten us. Even a stout-hearted, proven man like Joshua needed the Lord’s encouragement: “Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go” (Joshua 1:9).

No matter how carefully we’ve planned and prepared most of us get “jelly-legged” and “mush-brained” when it’s time to speak the truth to someone or change a behavior for the first time. We need to be reminded to hang in there!

End Notes

1 Parrott, Les, III, *Helping the Struggling Adolescent*, (Zondervan: Grand Rapids, 1993), p.93.



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