

*“When it was dark,
you always carried the sun
in your hand for me.”*

~Sean O’ Casey, Three More Plays:
The Silver Tassie, Purple Dust, Red Roses for Me

Lesson #11: Challenges to Hope



Topic: Using our hope tools when life brings unexpected events. Finding and identifying a person who will support you and your hope.

Finding and Connecting with Your Hope Supporter and/or Community

Let’s Think About:

-  Have you ever had a time in your life when something unexpected happened? Did it change your plans? What did you do? Did someone help you?
-  When in your life have you helped someone else? How did you help them? Do you know how your help impacted that person?

We discussed what we can do to overcome obstacles as we progress toward our goals. These are challenges that we can think about or know ahead of time and find ways of solving.

Sometimes life brings unexpected things that we have not planned for, that may be painful or especially difficult, which will challenge our hope. This is when it is so important to remember that we can *always use our hope tools* to help us no matter what comes our way.

One tool that is especially helpful during these challenging times, is to connect with something sacred. Sacred things are so important because they help us see the world outside of ourselves. They help us remember there is a community of people like us who appreciate and believe in the same things that we do, and that **we are not alone**.

People can find sacredness in nature, anything related to human activity, or the fact that we are a part of the never ending and connected universe.

- 1) To keep all our hope tools, we must have a “Hope Supporter”.
- 2) **A Hope Supporter is someone who knows and appreciates you, sees your strengths, and helps you keep a hopeful mind. They are imperative to our hope. It takes a team to achieve most goals. It’s always important to *ask for help*. These supporters push us toward our dreams.**
- 3) We can ***ask someone*** to be our supporter, so if we don’t have one yet, that’s okay.

Story

Kendra’s Unexpected Challenge

We learned that Kendra was successful in finding a way to travel to her community center to keep her action steps in place for her running goal. Kendra was proud of herself for finding a way to solve this expected challenge. However, after her arrival on Saturday, she encountered something she had not anticipated.

Once Kendra got there, she was very excited to be with other kids who enjoyed running as much as she did. Immediately, she approached a group of students to say hello and introduce herself. They glanced briefly at her, but quickly turned back to their own conversation.

When it was time to run, Kendra was amazed at how fast they could go. She tried desperately to keep up, but it was clear that the other students were much faster than her.

After practice, she told them how impressed she was with their pace. The group exchanged knowing looks and rolled their eyes. Then, one of the students replied, “Yeah, you’re really slow. We don’t think you’re good enough to run with us. You’re never going to keep up and you run funny.” The group laughed and walked away. Kendra felt embarrassed, hurt, and defeated.

This was an *unexpected* challenge for Kendra. Should she give up? How can she find hope in this situation?

Some ideas for Kendra may include:

Having a Hope Supporter: Finding another student at the community center separate from this group to become friends with and run together. Tell a trusted adult if the group continues to be mean towards her and ask for guidance. Focus on what she finds sacred to bring comfort and support.

Ignore the group bullying her. By not giving attention to their teasing and mean comments, they may lose interest when not receiving a reaction.

She may think and remind herself about how far she has come with her running goals. She may not be as fast as the other kids, but she is running farther than she had been when she first started. She has created her own success. Her enjoyment of running does not have to change because she may not be as fast of a runner.

Kendra's Solution

Kendra went home that afternoon and told her parents what happened. Her parents both gave her a big hug and reminded her of how hard she had been working and the progress she had made. They encouraged her to try the group again and see if there was another student who may be interested in running with her.

Kendra had been so impressed with the group running fast the first day, she didn't pay attention to some of the other kids at the center. She agreed to try again the following Saturday.

When Kendra returned, she avoided the mean kids and focused on finding another friend. She found another girl Emma who was quiet at first, but after talking they realized they had a lot in common. They enjoyed running at a slower pace and complimented one another as they improved each Saturday.

The other group still made mean comments at times, but Kendra and Emma stuck together and ignored them. Eventually, the group moved on to teasing someone else at the center.

What could they do if the group continued to be mean to them? What if the bullying got worse? How could Kendra and Emma help the new person being teased?

Hope Exercise

Answer the questions below to the best of your ability. When you've completed them correctly, you will move on to Lesson 12: Giving Hope!

1. In the story, Kendra encountered an unexpected challenge. She handled the situation by:
 - a. keeping the problem to herself.
 - b. **telling her parents and coming up with a solution together.**
 - c. working hard to run fast.
 - d. none of the above.

2. Our hope tools can be used no matter what challenges we face whether expected or unexpected.
 - a. True
 - b. False

3. Sacred things are important because they remind us:
 - a. we are never alone.
 - b. help us see the world outside of ourselves.
 - c. there is a community of people who believe in the same things we do and appreciate them.
 - d. all the above.

4. Which one does not define a Hope Supporter.
 - a. Someone who sees your strengths and encourages your dreams and goals.
 - b. Someone who is always there if you ask for help.
 - c. Someone who is there for you if they have time.
 - d. Someone who knows you and appreciates you and helps you keep a hopeful mind.

Hope Activity

Take a moment to think about and answer the following questions. Write them down in a safe place as a positive reminder of how you can support someone with your help, what you can do when faced with unexpected challenges (use your hope tools!) and be sure to identify a Hope Supporter or Supporters in your life.

- 1) What hope tools would you use during an unexpected event in your life?
- 2) Is there anything you believe in that brings you hope?
- 3) Who can you help have hope?
- 4) How can you support someone?

Identify or ask someone to be a Hope Supporter for you. Complete the HOPE NETWORK WORKSHEET to aid in choosing your support person. Keep this in a safe place.