

Session 1—Influences

Icebreaker - Play a round of 'Get-To-Know-You Tumbling Tower'. Try not to knock it down and make a hot mess!

Go over the attached Group Covenant together

Play the Video—Session 1

1. Was there anything from the video that stuck out to you? Could you relate to Jib's story in any way?
2. Chris shared a story from the Bible about King David getting into a hot mess. At what point do you think David crossed a line into a toxic relationship with Bathsheba? What are some examples of influences that are harmless but could become toxic? What are some signs that they have turned toxic?
3. What are some safeguards you've taken to avoid crossing the line into an influence becoming toxic?
4. In the story about King David, his friend Nathan confronted him about his toxic behavior and helped him get back on the right track. The passage below was written by Paul, one of Jesus' closest followers, about confronting others when they are in a hot mess:

Galatians 6:1-2 Dear brothers and sisters, if another believer is overcome by some sin, you who are godly should gently and humbly help that person back onto the right path. And be careful not to fall into the same temptation yourself. 2 Share each other's burdens, and in this way obey the law of Christ.

Look closely at the underlined words. What do they tell us about when and how to confront someone who has found themselves in a hot mess?

5. Have you ever found yourself overcome by a toxic influence? Was there anyone who confronted you? If so, did they do it in a healthy way?
6. Do you have a friend who you can trust to be honest and direct with you if you find yourself in a hot mess? If not, how could you develop that type of relationship?
7. What are some steps we can take to get back on track if we are overcome by a toxic influence?
8. Have you ever felt, or do you feel now, that you are in a situation so messy that God couldn't or wouldn't help you out of it? Why or why not?
9. Are you struggling with a toxic influence right now? If so, how can we pray for you?

Lead your group through the following prayer:

“Close your eyes and take a deep breath. Ask God to bring to your mind anything that might be turning into a toxic influence for you. Take a minute to listen... Father God, if anything came to mind, we ask that you give us strength to overcome this toxic influence. Bring someone into our life that we can share this with and who will help us to get back on the right track. If nothing came to mind, help us to stay aware of any toxic influences that may try to creep in. Thank you for always giving us a new start and never giving up on us when we are in a hot mess. Thank you that your love for us never changes. Amen.”