



## MODULE 1

# Foundations on the Pathway to Wellbeing




OPPORTUNITY  
International

## Acknowledgements

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## Introduction

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Opportunity International has been dedicated to empowering people living in extreme poverty with different financial and training solutions for nearly four decades. Although these efforts have provided new opportunities for the transformation of many people living in very challenging circumstances around the world, one of the many aspects that has increasingly come to the forefront is the question of how to shift the mindset of a person immersed in generational poverty towards one of self-determination and personal agency that leads to personal, family, and community wellbeing.

As many practitioners working in community development have discovered over the years, even when families have enough funds or material resources to cover their immediate needs, they often don't change the attitudes and behaviors that keep them living under the line of poverty. However, different studies have demonstrated that lasting transformation often requires a mental shift related to increased feelings of self-worth and self-confidence; shifting from a spirit of hopelessness and fatalism to one of active, aspirational hope; it involves strengthening a person's determination to push through challenges even in the face of extremely adverse circumstances, while holding onto a clear vision for a desired future and a sense of life purpose.

This module provides the seeds for these transformational shifts in participant's mindset for sustainable change. The stories and activities in each session are focused on helping participants view their own strengths and possibilities in a new way, so they can determine the pathways of their own wellbeing by understanding the source of their own agency, as a "motor" which moves them in the direction of their unique life purpose.

### Topics covered in Module 1

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This module launches into the most fundamental of human experiences, an understanding that each life has meaning and purpose, and that a person's contributions to family and community are valuable and necessary. Although these aspects of life can be discussed from a theoretical or even theological perspective, this module addresses it from a practical angle by helping participants practice different tools that can strengthen their sense of worth, hope and self-determination.

#### Module objectives:

- 1) Participants will develop a greater sense of self-worth as they identify their personal gifts and unique abilities and skills.
- 2) Participants will strengthen their feelings of hope as an active, aspirational, goal-setting force for their lives.

- 3) Participants will increase their resilience to challenges they confront in life.
- 4) Participants will develop a vision for the future based on their understanding of their purpose in life.

The content of this module has been divided into four sessions that include an introduction to the following topics:

### Session 1.1: Celebrating our Worth

**Key Message:** *“My life has great worth, and I celebrate my own unique strengths, including my gifts, abilities, and skills.”*

This session introduces the concept of self-worth by placing value on each person’s unique characteristics and traits. Although each person may be compared to others in different aspects, everyone is valuable and therefore worthy of human dignity. Participants will also have the opportunity to identify how their unique gifts, abilities and skills can be used as a strength for their own lives and a resource to serve others in their families and communities. Participants will be tasked with practicing these gifts and skills to emphasize how they are important and valuable, and learn that “no one can do exactly what they can do”.

### Session 1.2: Strengthening Hope

**Key Message:** *“By regularly practicing hope in my life, I can improve my wellbeing.”*

This session recognizes the essential nature of hope in our lives. Participants explore the difference between active hope, or hope that allows someone to move toward a goal, and wishful hope, or a hope that can keep a person stagnant. Then, they look at how hope can be exercised, like a muscle. By introducing the concept of hope as something that can be strengthened, the session aspires to offer participants a greater sense of agency over their sense of hope, which can then motivate a specific course of actions. Finally, participants learn about three research-based ways to cultivate greater hope in life: Doing Positive Activities, Identifying Hope Heroes, and Choosing a Hope Network, applying these concepts as a group, and to their daily lives.

### Session 1.3. Resilience and Persistence

**Key Message:** *“I can bounce back from challenges and keep pushing forward to improve my life.”*

This session builds on the hope concept introduced in the previous session. It makes it clear that while we need hope to thrive, we will always encounter problems. To keep going toward our hopes in the midst of trials, we can rely on two skills:

resilience and persistence. Participants explore resilience, or the ability to get back up when knocked down, and **Persistence**, the ability to adapt to problems to keep going toward a goal. During the session, participants explore these concepts through multiple stories. They then learn five practical steps they can use to face immediate problems, and apply these steps to a real-life scenario before working to apply them in their own lives.

## Session 1.4. Discovering Purpose and Vision for My Life

**Key Message:** *“I have a clear purpose in life, and I follow it by setting goals and taking steps to make it a reality.”*

This session begins by helping participants see their future dreams as possibilities that can be achieved through agency and determination. They reflect on their lives as a journey with a past, present, and future. The past has brought them through many experiences to this present time, where they can recognize a purpose in going forward, through hope, resilience and persistence. The future is a vision of what may become reality if they can focus on shorter term goals, made up of smaller tasks and steps. By learning to break down large goals, participants will be motivated to continue working towards their vision of a ‘brighter future’, as in the example of the real life story used in the lesson.

### Core values: Self-Worth, Hope, Resilience, Agency

The values listed above are considered the core values that lie at the center of the concepts discussed throughout Module 1. While many of them reflect the subjects of the sessions, we consider these values the most foundational for participants in the Pathways to Wellbeing training,

**Self-Worth:** Self-worth is the level of value you place on yourself. Our self-worth is important, as it shapes how we think about ourselves, the way we feel, and even the way we act. Many people judge self-worth by their social status, how they appear, or their wealth. In this Module, we focus on how to identify our **self worth** based on our value as unique humans given to us by God, our Creator, instead of seeking it through comparison to others. Improved self-worth can bring participants to a healthier understanding of how they can act to improve their lives, their family, their community, and their world.

**Hope:** Hope implies a general belief that things can and will change for the better. Hope is crucial for people to believe that they can change their circumstances, and thus an essential ingredient for the Pathways to Wellbeing training. If people believe that their situation can change for the better, they can start to take the necessary steps for effecting that change.

**Resilience:** The ability to bounce back from life’s inevitable hardships is essential to improved wellbeing. Participants in this training will undoubtedly face difficulties in

their lives, and even in implementing the learning from this training. By developing the value of responding to challenges with resilience, and continuing toward their goals, participants will be better equipped to improve their own lives, and the lives of those around them.

**Agency:** Agency is defined as “the capacity of individuals to act independently and to make their own free choices”. In order to develop this value, each person must believe they are capable of taking action to change their circumstances as well as improve their lives in the future, for themselves, their families, their communities, and the world.

### Negative attitudes or underlying motivations

Fatalism is one of the most dangerous threats to wellbeing, and to aspiring to reach a brighter future. Fatalism, or the belief that we cannot change the future, can prevent us from trying to improve our lives, and can lead to a lack of hope and motivation to try to change ourselves and our circumstances. A lack of self-worth can also contribute to stagnation. By believing that we are not worthy of a better life, we can fall into the same trap of lack of motivation to change.

This curriculum specifically combats these traps for self-worth, change, and wellbeing by exploring the four values above, and by offering participants real, research-based techniques and skills for values-led change.

Thank you for leading such an essential piece of the **Pathway** to Wellbeing. We hope your own foundations for wellbeing are enhanced, as you facilitate this module with your participants.



***Accomplishment of purpose is better than making a profit. - Hausa proverb***

***“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.”  
- Jeremiah 29:11***





Celebrating Our  
Own Worth



# Session 1.1:

## Celebrating Our Own Worth

### Key message:

“ My life has great worth, and I celebrate my own unique strengths, including my gifts, abilities, and skills. ”

”



### Session Objectives:

By the end of the session, participants will be able to:

1. Recognize that each person is created with special worth.
2. Identify and value their own unique strengths, including their gifts, abilities, and skills.
3. Practice the use of their strengths, including their gifts, abilities, and skills as a personal resource to serve themselves and others.



#### Materials

- Small ball (for 90 minute session)
- Pens or markers, enough for all participants



#### Equipment

- Laptop or Tablet
- Projector
- Speakers



### Preparation

- Make sure that the meeting space is clean and ready to facilitate the various steps of the session.
- Make sure that the audiovisual equipment is properly set up and ready to show **Video 11.: Beatrice's Story**
- Have binders and copies of session handouts ready for all participants:
  - ▶ Summary: **“Celebrating our own worth”**
  - ▶ Let's practice: **“What are my Strengths?”**
  - ▶ Home practice: **“Using my Gifts and Skills”**



**Session 1.1:**

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**90**  
minutes

**SESSION OVERVIEW****90 minutes**

Activities	Summary	Mins.
<p><b>Activity 1:</b> <b>Welcome and group introductions</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Welcome and brief introduction to the program and the session.</li> <li>▶ Introduction exercise in which each person introduces themselves and shares something they are good at.</li> </ul>	<b>15</b>
<p><b>Activity 2:</b> <b>Let's Share a Story</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Presentation of <b>Video 1.1: Beatrice's Story.</b></li> <li>▶ Group discussion on the video.</li> </ul>	<b>20</b>
<p><b>Activity 3:</b> <b>Let's Talk: "Understanding our own Worth"</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Group exercise "Alike or Different", in which participants form groups according to their personal preferences, qualities or skills.</li> </ul> <p>Group discussion to reflect on each person's unique and special worth regardless of differences or likeness to others.</p>	<b>20</b>
<p><b>Activity 4:</b> <b>Let's Practice: "What are My Strengths?"</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Participants identify their gifts and skills in four areas: manual, physical, mental, emotional</li> <li>▶ Small group discussion on what they have discovered about themselves.</li> </ul>	<b>20</b>
<p><b>Activity 5:</b> <b>Let's Remember</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Share a selected phrase or verse.</li> </ul>	<b>10</b>
<p><b>Activity 6:</b> <b>Home Practice</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Explain handout on the home practice in which participants will identify a gift, ability or skill they can use to help themselves or someone else in daily life.</li> </ul>	<b>5</b>

## STEPS FOR SESSION FACILITATION

90 minutes



### 1. Welcome and group introductions (15 mins)



To begin the module by offering a warm welcome, introduce participants to each other, and create an encouraging and friendly learning environment.

#### Welcome (5')

**Step 1:** Offer a warm welcome to the first session of the **Pathways to Wellbeing** program, thanking each participant for their time and motivating them to fully engage in the program.



Welcome to our first session of Opportunity International's "Pathways to Wellbeing" program. We are very glad to see each of you here today, and we appreciate you taking the time from your many responsibilities to share, grow, and learn together in this program.

You have already learned about this program in an earlier meeting, and we hope that you have decided to participate because you want to make some important changes to improve your physical, mental, and spiritual wellbeing. Each person has a unique path in life, and this program will help you make decisions about your own path to wellbeing; for yourself, your family and your community. We encourage you to set aside the time for these sessions and that you fully participate in each activity, sharing your thoughts and experiences.

#### Introductions (10')

**Step 2:** Explain that we will do a quick group introduction exercise in which each person will say their name and one thing they are good at doing.

**Step 3:** Ask participants to form a circle and have a small ball ready that will be used to select which person in the circle will present next.

**Step 4:** Begin the exercise by going first, providing an example for participants to follow.



Now we will briefly introduce ourselves and get to know each other a bit more. Let's stand and form a circle. The person that holds this ball in their hands will say their name and share one thing that you are good at doing. When that person has finished, he or she will then choose another person in the circle to present and will throw the ball to them.

I will start! My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I am good at playing guitar (example).



## 2. Let's Share a Story (20 mins)



To present a true story that will help participants reflect on the importance of understanding and celebrating your own worth.

**Step 1:** Show **Video 1.1: Beatrice's Story**, asking participants to pay close attention to the details of the story.

To begin today's topic "Celebrating our own Worth", we would like to show you a story of a person that has learned about her own worth through different life experiences. Let's take a look.



**Step 2:** After the video, use the following questions to guide a discussion on the story:

- What do you think of this story about Beatrice?
- What were some of the hardships she went through at different points in her life?
- **What helped her to keep going when she felt like giving up?**
- **How does she use her skills and talents for herself and others?**
- **Why does she feel good about herself?**



**Step 3:** Summarize the discussion, emphasizing how Beatrice has learned to value her own worth by using her abilities and skills as a strength to overcome challenges and to look forward to new goals.

We have talked about the many challenges that Beatrice had to face, and how she thought she would give up at different points of her life. The encouragement she received as she learned to use her gifts and skills in cooking and organizing a thriving food business helped her keep going and feel good about herself.



**When we understand our own worth and what we can contribute to our family and community, we can overcome obstacles and move towards having greater goals in life.**

## 3. Let's talk: Understanding our own worth (20 mins)



To help participants recognize how each person has their own special worth, including gifts, abilities, and skills.

## Group exercise “Alike or Different” (10’)

**Step 1:** For the next group exercise, tell participants that you will read a list of phrases which describe ways they are alike and different. After they hear the phrase, they will move to form a group with others who are like them in a particular way. While they move from group to group, participants should try to notice how other people are alike or different.



Let’s do another group exercise so we can keep getting to know each other a little more. In this exercise we’ll also be able to see how we are alike in some ways and different in others. Please stand up and let’s move towards the center of our room.

I will read some phrases with examples of different preferences, abilities or talents. Those who prefer one of the things I mention will quickly move to form a group with those that share the same preference. Those who prefer neither one can stay where they are.

Let’s do a practice phrase: “Everyone who prefers breakfast form one group and those who prefer dinner form another!” (example).

Good job, I can see you’ve got it! Now, as I read the following phrases, try to see if there are others in the group who share your same preferences in most things and others who are quite different!

**Step 2:** Read the following phrases and encourage participants to form a group with those that share their preferences.



**Note:** adapt the following examples to the cultural context of the group

### Please form a group with those who prefer:

The color green	The color orange
Getting up very early	Staying up late at night
Singing or playing a musical instrument	Talking with friends in their spare time
Making things in their spare time	Talking with friends in their spare time
Visiting new places	Staying at home
Listening to other people talk	Talking to anyone who will listen
Being active all day	Taking times for rest and relaxation during the day



### Group discussion (10')

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**Step 3:** After reading all the phrases, lead a brief discussion with participants about what they observed while moving between groups or staying in one place.

Thanks for participating in this exercise! Let's talk about what happened during the exercise:

- What did you observe during the exercise?
- Were there any surprises about other people preferring things differently to you?
- Were there any phrases in which you were not sure of your own preference? Why do you think that is?
- Is it better to have any of these preferences instead of others? Why?



**Step 4:** Summarize the discussion about the exercise, leading the group to recognize that each person is unique, with different ways of being, including gifts, abilities, and skills, that make them valuable and special. Emphasize the importance of recognizing one's own worth, as well as each person's, remembering that everyone contributes something special to the world.

### SUMMARIZE THE DISCUSSION:

As we saw during this exercise, each person has their own way of being, including their own preferences, as well as unique gifts, abilities, and skills. Although we may be alike in some ways, the differences we have do not make some people better than others. Each person is unique as a human being. Each one has a special worth for being the way they are.

**If at any time you feel that your life is not as important as someone else's, take a moment to remember that what you can contribute to your family, your community and the world is special and important, and there is no one else just like you!**





### + For Christian or Religious Context

If you are facilitating this session within a Christian or religious context, you may include the following explanation of what it means to be created in the image of God and the special value we believe each human being has.

*In the Christian faith we also believe that each person is created in the image and likeness of God. What do you think that means? (Allow time for 1 - 2 volunteers to briefly share.)*

*Thanks for your comments! We do believe that by being created in the image of God, we have been gifted with talents and abilities that make us unique and special in God's eyes. He wants us to celebrate those gifts and use them to face life with a sense of gratitude and responsibility towards our lives and those of our neighbors, as well as all of creation.*

*In this program we will be remembering this idea very often, because we believe that God wants everyone to be able to achieve a fulfilled life, and to seek healthy relationships with yourself, your family, your community and with God.*

## 4. Group practice: What are my strengths? (20 mins)



To identify gifts, abilities or skills as strengths that serve your own wellbeing, as well as contributing to family and community wellbeing.

### “What are my strengths?” (10’)

**Step 1:** Explain that when we are able to identify our personal gifts, talents, and abilities, we can then use them as a source of strength on the path to wellbeing.

**Step 2:** Give each participant a copy of the **Let’s Practice Handout: “What are my strengths?”**, in which each person will think about a question to identify their main gifts, talents, and abilities.



As we've already seen, each of you has very special qualities, including gifts, abilities, and skills that are your own and no one else's! Today we are also going to take the time to identify some of those specific qualities in different areas, and how you can use them as a source of strength.

I will now pass out a handout that can help guide you in thinking about your own gifts, abilities, and skills. On the handout, you can see there is a silhouette drawn of a person that represents you. The sheet is also divided into four parts to help you think about your gifts and skills in four areas:

### **1) Mental; 2) Emotional; 3) Manual; and 4) Physical skills;**

There is a question for each area that I will read and you can then either circle the pictures that you believe represent your gifts and skills in that area, or you can write or draw something else that represents your skills in that area.

Let's do an example together so that everyone understands what we're going to do.

**Step 3:** When all participants have understood the exercise, ask the following questions, allowing several minutes between questions for participants to think, circle, draw or write their answers for each area.

### **Questions about gifts, talents, and abilities for each area:**

#### **1) Mental Area**

**What is something I'm interested in learning or knowing more about?**

~~illustrate different topics: reading, doing math, science, geography, agriculture, construction, engines~~

#### **1) Emotional Area**

**What is something that makes me feel healthy and happy?**

~~illustrate different activities: talking with others, telling jokes, comforting someone who's sad, caring for children, teaching something to others (teacher), praying, singing, going to church, having family gatherings~~

#### **3) Manual Area :**

**What is something I enjoy doing with my hands?**

~~\*Graphic note: include different illustrations of manual skills such as: cooking, drawing, playing an instrument, wood carving, sewing~~

#### **4) Physical Area**

**What is something I do well with my body?**

~~illustrate physical activities: run, play sports, plow the land, dance, lift heavy things, carry babies!~~

## Using my strengths (10')

**Step 4:** Invite the participants to form groups of three. Ask participants to briefly share with their group what they discovered by answering the questions on the handout, and what they learned about their gifts and abilities, using the following guiding questions:



- How did it make you feel to identify your unique gifts, abilities, and skills?
- If you could only use one or two of the gifts, abilities or skills you enjoy the most, which ones would you choose and what would you use them for?
- How might you use these gifts, abilities, and skills to help yourself? Your family? Your community?

**Step 5:** To wrap up, summarize the discussion and ask the group to give themselves a round of applause to celebrate themselves for recognizing their own special gifts, abilities, and skills, and for recognizing that they are God's unique and special creation.



### SUMMARIZE THE DISCUSSION:

Identifying your strengths, including your own gifts, abilities, and skills is a way to recognize and celebrate your own worth. You are special and have your own strengths! You can use these strengths as a resource for yourself, and also to serve those around you, including your family and your community. No one else can use your gifts, abilities, and skills just like you!

Let's celebrate each other by giving everyone a round of applause and saying to those around you: "You're special"!

## 5. Let's member (10 mins)



**To reflect on a verse or phrase that reinforces the central message and value of the session.**

**Step 1:** Read one of the selected verses or phrases below. Choose the phrase based on an understanding of the religion of the participants and to which saying they might best respond.



I'd now like to share a verse/phrase about using our unique gifts and abilities, to help us reflect a bit more on what we have been talking about today.



### For Christian reflection:

*“God has given each of you a gift from his great variety of spiritual gifts. Use them well to serve one another. Do you have the gift of speaking? Then speak as though God himself were speaking through you. Do you have the gift of helping others? Do it with all the strength and energy that God supplies. Then everything you do will bring glory to God through Jesus Christ.” - 1 Peter 4:10-11a*

*“In his grace, God has given us different gifts for doing certain things well. So if God has given you the ability to prophesy, speak out with as much faith as God has given you. If your gift is serving others, serve them well. If you are a teacher, teach well. If your gift is to encourage others, be encouraging. If it is giving, give generously. If God has given you leadership ability, take the responsibility seriously. And if you have a gift for showing kindness to others, do it gladly.” - Romans 12:6-8*



### For Muslim reflection:

*“And of His signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth and the diversity of your languages and your colors. Indeed in that are signs for those of knowledge.” - Quran 30:22*



### For cultural reflection:

*“Don’t set sail using someone else’s star.” - African proverb*

*“He who does not know one thing knows another.” - African proverb*

**Step 2:** Ask participants to form groups of three and discuss the following questions for 5 minutes.

Please form groups of three with those next to you, and discuss these questions for a few minutes:






- What does this verse/phrase say to you about using your unique gifts, abilities, and skills?
- How can you use your gifts and abilities as a source of strength to serve yourself, your family, or your community?

**Step 3:** After five minutes of discussion, ask for two or three volunteers to summarize what they discussed in their group. Finish by summarizing the discussion and emphasizing the importance of recognizing your special worth and using your own gifts and abilities to serve yourself and others.



Thanks for sharing a little about what your groups discussed together. 

### **SUMMARIZE THE DISCUSSION:**

Remember that your unique gifts and abilities are a part of you and your own special worth. You can celebrate yourself each day, and find many ways to use these special gifts and abilities as a strength and a resource to serve yourself and others in your daily life.

## 6. Home Practice (5 mins)



**To review the session's central message and assign an activity participants can do at home to reinforce the learning and objectives of the session.**

**Step 1:** Briefly review the main topics of today's session with the participants. Explain the summary handout and how after each session, they will be asked to do a practice on the topic at home.



We are now coming to the end of our first session, in which we have learned to recognize and celebrate the special worth and unique qualities that each one of us has. We also learned to identify some specific gifts, abilities, and skills in different areas - those things we do well and can learn to use as a source of strength and a resource to serve ourselves and others.

Once you are home, take some time to look over the first sheet of paper in your binders, the **Summary Handout**, which will help you remember the main things we talked about and practiced during our session together.

Also, each time we meet for a session, we will ask you to do a special activity at home to practice what we have discussed during our time together. This will help you apply what you have thought about and learned during our session in your daily activities at home with your family. When we come together for our next session, we will ask you to share your experience and what you learned while doing the home practice.

**Step 2:** Provide the **Home Practice Handout: Using my gifts and skills** and explain the home practice for this session, in which participants will use at least one of their gifts, abilities or skills identified during the group practice, either for their own benefit or to serve another person.

Today's home practice will be to choose one of your unique gifts, abilities, or skills to use in a new way in your daily life. Try to think of how you can use your gifts or abilities in any way that makes your life or the lives of those around you better.

For instance, if your gift is listening, you can offer someone in the community your time to listen to them talk about a problem they have. If your gift is your skill in farming, you can use your skill to improve your farming, or to help someone else improve their farming. **(Use examples that are appropriate for the lives of your participants.)**

Thank you all for your participation today! We will see you at the next session, on (date). In that session, I look forward to hearing how you have used your gifts, abilities, and skills to help yourselves, your families, and your community! See you soon!





**Session 1.1:**

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**60**  
minutes



## SESSION OVERVIEW

60 minutes



Activities	Summary	Mins.
<b>Activity 1:</b> <b>Welcome and group introductions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Welcome and brief introduction to the program and the session.</li> <li>▶ Introduction exercise in which each person introduces themselves.</li> </ul>	10
<b>Activity 2:</b> Let's Share a Story	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Presentation of <b>Video 1.1: Beatrice's Story</b></li> <li>▶ Group discussion on the video</li> </ul>	15
<b>Activity 3:</b> <b>Let's Talk: "Understanding our own Worth"</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Group exercise "Alike or Different", in which participants form groups according to their personal preferences, qualities or skills.</li> <li>▶ Group discussion to reflect on each person's unique and special worth regardless of differences or likeness to others.</li> </ul>	15
<b>Activity 4:</b> <b>Let's Practice: "What are My Strengths?"</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Participants identify their gifts and skills in four areas: manual, physical, mental, emotional</li> <li>▶ Small group discussion on what they have discovered about themselves.</li> </ul>	10
<b>Activity 5:</b> <b>Let's Remember</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Share a selected phrase or verse.</li> </ul>	5
<b>Activity 6:</b> <b>Home Practice</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Explain handout on the home practice in which participants will identify a gift, ability or skill they can use to help themselves or someone else in daily life.</li> </ul>	5

## STEPS FOR SESSION FACILITATION

60 minutes



### 1. Welcome and group introductions (10 mins)



To begin the module by offering a warm welcome, introduce participants to each other, and create an encouraging and friendly learning environment.

#### Welcome (2')

**Step 1:** Offer a warm welcome to the first session of the **Pathways to Wellbeing** program, thanking each participant for their time and motivating them to fully engage in the program.

Welcome to our first session of **Opportunity International's "Pathways to Wellbeing"** program. We are very glad to see each of you here today, and we appreciate you taking the time from your many responsibilities to share, grow, and learn together in this program.

You have already learned about this program in an earlier meeting, and we hope that you have decided to participate because you want to make some important changes to improve your physical, mental, and spiritual wellbeing. Each person has a unique path in life, and this program will help you make decisions about your own path to wellbeing; for yourself, your family and your community. We encourage you to set aside the time for these sessions and that you fully participate in each activity, sharing your thoughts and experiences.



#### Introductions (8')

**Step 2:** Explain that we will do a quick group introduction exercise in which each person will say their name and one thing they are good at doing.

**Step 3:** Begin the exercise by going first, providing an example for participants to follow.

Now we will briefly introduce ourselves and get to know each other a bit more. Let's stand and form a circle. We'll go around the circle and each say your name and one thing you are good at.

I will start! My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I am good at playing guitar (example).



## 2. Let's Share a Story (15 mins)



To present a true story that will help participants reflect on the importance of understanding and celebrating your own worth.

**Step 1:** Show **Video 1.1: Beatrice's Story**, asking participants to pay close attention to the details of the story.



To begin today's topic "Celebrating our own Worth", we would like to show you a story of a person that has learned about her own worth through different life experiences. Let's take a look.

**Step 2:** After the video, use the following questions to guide a discussion on the story:



- What do you think of this story about Beatrice?
- **How does she use her skills and talents for herself and others?**
- **Why does she feel good about herself?**

**Step 2:** Summarize the discussion, emphasizing how Beatrice has learned to value her own worth by using her abilities and skills as a strength to overcome challenges and to look forward to new goals.



### **SUMMARIZE THE DISCUSSION:**

We have talked about the many challenges that Beatrice had to face, and how she thought she would give up at different points of her life.

The encouragement she received as she learned to use her gifts and skills in cooking and organizing a thriving food business helped her keep going and feel good about herself.

**When we understand our own worth and what we can contribute to our family and community, we can overcome obstacles and move towards having greater goals in life.**

## 3. Let's talk: Understanding our own worth (15 mins)



To help participants recognize how each person has their own special worth, including gifts, abilities, and skills.

### **Group exercise "Alike or Different" (10')**

**Step 1:** For the next group exercise, tell participants that you will read a list of phrases which describe ways they are alike and different. After they hear the phrase, they will move to form a group with others who are like them in a particular way. While they move from group to group, participants should try to notice how other people are alike or different.



Let's do another group exercise so we can keep getting to know each other a little more. In this exercise we'll also be able to see how we are alike in some ways and different in others. Please stand up and let's move towards the center of our room.

I will read some phrases with examples of different preferences, abilities or talents. Those who prefer one of the things I mention will quickly move to form a group with those that share the same preference. Those who prefer neither one can stay where they are.

Let's do a practice phrase: *"Everyone who prefers breakfast, form one group, and those who prefer dinner form another!" (example).*

Good job, I can see you've got it! Now, as I read the following phrases, try to see if there are others in the group who share your same preferences in most things and others who are quite different!

**Step 2:** Read the following phrases and encourage participants to form a group with those that share their preferences.



**Note:** adapt the following examples to the cultural context of the group

**Please form a group with those who prefer:**

The color green	The color orange
Getting up very early	Staying up late at night
Singing or playing a musical instrument	<del>Talking with friends in their spare time</del>
Making things in their spare time	Talking with friends in their spare time
Visiting new places	Staying at home

Thanks for participating in this exercise! Let's talk about what happened during the exercise:

- What did you observe during the exercise?
- Is it better to have any of these preferences instead of others? Why?



### Group exercise (10')

**Step 3:** After reading all the phrases, lead a brief discussion with participants about what they observed while moving between groups or staying in one place.



Thanks for participating in this exercise! Let's talk about what happened during the exercise:

- What did you observe during the exercise?
- Is it better to have any of these preferences instead of others? Why?

**Step 4:** Summarize the discussion about the exercise, leading the group to recognize that each person is unique, with different ways of being, including gifts, abilities, and skills, that make them valuable and special. Emphasize the importance of recognizing one's own worth, as well as each person's, remembering that everyone contributes something special to the world.



### **SUMMARIZE THE DISCUSSION:**

As we saw during this exercise, each person has their own way of being, including their own preferences, as well as unique gifts, abilities, and skills. Although we may be alike in some ways, the differences we have do not make some people better than others.

**Each person is unique as a human being. Each one has a special worth for being the way they are.**

**If at any time you feel that your life is not as important as someone else's, take a moment to remember that what you can contribute to your family, your community and the world is special and important, and there is no one else just like you!**



### + For Christian or Religious Context

If you are facilitating this session within a Christian or religious context, you may include the following explanation of what it means to be created in the image of God and the special value we believe each human being has.

*In the Christian faith we also believe that each person is created in the image and likeness of God. What do you think that means? (Allow time for 1 - 2 volunteers to briefly share.)*

*Thanks for your comments! We do believe that by being created in the image of God, we have been gifted with talents and abilities that make us unique and special in God's eyes. He wants us to celebrate those gifts and use them to face life with a sense of gratitude and responsibility towards our lives and those of our neighbors, as well as all of creation.*

*In this program we will be remembering this idea very often, because we believe that God wants everyone to be able to achieve a fulfilled life, and to seek healthy relationships with yourself, your family, your community and with God.*

## 4. Group practice: What are my strengths? (20 mins)



To identify gifts, abilities or skills as strengths that serve your own wellbeing, as well as contributing to family and community wellbeing.

### “What are my strengths?” (10’)

**Step 1:** Explain that when we are able to identify our personal gifts, talents, and abilities, we can then use them as a source of strength on the path to wellbeing.

**Step 2:** Give each participant a copy of the **Let's Practice Handout: “What are my strengths?”**, in which each person will think about a question to identify their main gifts, talents, and abilities.



As we've already seen, each of you has very special qualities, including gifts, abilities, and skills that are your own and no one else's! Today we are also going to take the time to identify some of those specific qualities in different areas, and how you can use them as a source of strength.

I will now pass out a handout that can help guide you in thinking about your own gifts, abilities, and skills. On the handout, you can see there is a silhouette drawn of a person that represents you. The sheet is also divided into four parts to help you think about your gifts and skills in four areas:

**1) Mental; 2) Emotional; 3) Manual; and 4) Physical skills;**

There is a question for each area that I will read and you can then either circle the pictures that you believe represent your gifts and skills in that area, or you can write or draw something else that represents your skills in that area.

Let's do an example together so that everyone understands what we're going to do.

**Step 3:** When all participants have understood the exercise, ask the following questions, allowing several minutes between questions for participants to think, circle, draw or write their answers for each area.

**Questions about gifts, talents, and abilities for each area:**

**1) Mental Area**

**What is something I'm interested in learning or knowing more about?**

~~illustrate different topics: reading, doing math, science, geography, agriculture, construction, engines~~

**1) Emotional Area**

**What is something that makes me feel healthy and happy?**

~~illustrate different activities: talking with others, telling jokes, comforting someone who's sad, caring for children, teaching something to others (teacher), praying, singing, going to church, having family gatherings~~

**3) Manual Area :**

**What is something I enjoy doing with my hands?**

~~\*Graphic note: include different illustrations of manual skills such as: cooking, drawing, playing an instrument, wood carving, sewing~~

**4) Physical Area**

**What is something I do well with my body?**

~~illustrate physical activities: run, play sports, plow the land, dance, lift heavy things, carry babies!~~

**Step 4:** To wrap up, summarize the discussion and ask the group to give themselves a round of applause to celebrate themselves for recognizing their own special gifts, abilities, and skills, and for recognizing that they are God's unique and special creation.

### **SUMMARIZE THE DISCUSSION:**

Identifying your strengths, including your own gifts, abilities, and skills is a way to recognize and celebrate your own worth. You are special and have your own strengths! You can use these strengths as a resource for yourself, and also to serve those around you, including your family and your community. No one else can use your gifts, abilities, and skills just like you!

Let's celebrate each other by giving everyone a round of applause and saying to those around you: "You're special"!



## **5. Let's remember (5 mins)**



**To reflect on a verse or phrase that reinforces the central message and value of the session**

**Step 1:** Read one of the selected verses or phrases below. Choose the phrase based on an understanding of the religion of the participants and to which saying they might best respond.

I'd now like to share a verse/phrase about using our unique gifts and abilities, to help us reflect a bit more on what we have been talking about today.







### For Christian reflection:

*“God has given each of you a gift from his great variety of spiritual gifts. Use them well to serve one another. Do you have the gift of speaking? Then speak as though God himself were speaking through you. Do you have the gift of helping others? Do it with all the strength and energy that God supplies. Then everything you do will bring glory to God through Jesus Christ.” - 1 Peter 4:10-11a*

*“In his grace, God has given us different gifts for doing certain things well. So if God has given you the ability to prophesy, speak out with as much faith as God has given you. If your gift is serving others, serve them well. If you are a teacher, teach well. If your gift is to encourage others, be encouraging. If it is giving, give generously. If God has given you leadership ability, take the responsibility seriously. And if you have a gift for showing kindness to others, do it gladly.” - Romans 12:6-8*



### For Muslim reflection:

*“And of His signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth and the diversity of your languages and your colors. Indeed in that are signs for those of knowledge.” - Quran 30:22*



### For cultural reflection:

*“Don’t set sail using someone else’s star.” - African proverb*

*“He who does not know one thing knows another.” - African proverb*

**Step 2:** Use the following questions as a guide for a brief discussion on the selected verse of phrase.

- What does this verse/phrase say to you about using your unique gifts, abilities, and skills?
- How can you use your gifts and abilities as a source of strength to serve yourself, your family, or your community?



### SUMMARIZE THE DISCUSSION:

Remember that your unique gifts and abilities are a part of you and your own special worth. You can celebrate yourself each day, and find many ways to use these special gifts and abilities as a strength and a resource to serve yourself and others in your daily life.



## 6. Home Practice (5 mins)



**To review the session's central message and assign an activity participants can do at home to reinforce the learning and objectives of the session.**

**Step 1:** Briefly review the main topics of today's session with the participants. Explain the summary handout and how after each session, they will be asked to do a practice on the topic at home.

### SUMMARIZE THE DISCUSSION.

We are now coming to the end of our first session, in which we have learned to recognize and celebrate the special worth and unique qualities that each one of us has. We also learned to identify some specific gifts, abilities, and skills in different areas - those things we do well and can learn to use as a source of strength and a resource to serve ourselves and others.

Once you are home, take some time to look over the first sheet of paper in your binders, the **Summary Handout**, which will help you remember the main things we talked about and practiced during our session together.

Also, each time we meet for a session, we will ask you to do a special activity at home to practice what we have discussed during our time together. This will help you apply what you have thought about and learned during our session in your daily activities at home with your family. When we come together for our next session, we will ask you to share your experience and what you learned while doing the home practice.

**Step 2:** Provide the **Home Practice Handout: Using my gifts and skills** and explain the home practice for this session, in which participants will use at least one of their gifts, abilities or skills identified during the group practice, either for their own benefit or to serve another person.





Today's home practice will be to choose one of your unique gifts, abilities, or skills to use in a new way in your daily life. Try to think of how you can use your gifts or abilities in any way that makes your life or the lives of those around you better.

For instance, if your gift is listening, you can offer someone in the community your time to listen to them talk about a problem they have. If your gift is your skill in farming, you can use your skill to improve your farming, or to help someone else improve their farming. ***(Use examples that are appropriate for the lives of your participants.)***

Thank you all for your participation today! We will see you at the next session, on (date). In that session, I look forward to hearing how you have used your gifts, abilities, and skills to help yourselves, your families, and your community! See you soon!



**Session 1.1:**


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**30**  
minutes

## SESSION OVERVIEW

30 minutes



Activities	Summary	Mins.
<b>Activity 1:</b> <b>Welcome and group introductions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Welcome and brief introduction to the program and the session.</li> </ul>	5
<b>Activity 2:</b> <b>Let's Share a Story</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Presentation of <b>Video 1.1: Beatrice's Story.</b></li> <li>Group discussion on the video.</li> </ul>	10
<b>Activity 3:</b> <b>Let's Talk: "Understanding our own Worth"</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Group exercise "Alike or Different", in which participants form groups according to their personal preferences, qualities or skills. </li> <li>Group discussion to reflect on each person's unique and special worth regardless of differences or likeness to others.</li> </ul>	10
<b>Activity 4:</b> <b>Home Practice</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explain handout on the home practice in which participants will identify a gift, ability or skill they can use to help themselves or someone else in daily life.</li> </ul>	5

## STEPS FOR SESSION FACILITATION

30 minutes



## 1. Welcome and group introductions (5 mins)



To begin the module by offering a warm welcome, introduce participants to each other, and create an encouraging and friendly learning environment.

## Welcome (5')

**Step 1:** Offer a warm welcome to the first session of the **Pathways to Wellbeing** program, thanking each participant for their time and motivating them to fully engage in the program.

Welcome to our first session of **Opportunity International's "Pathways to Wellbeing"** program. We are very glad to see each of you here today, and we appreciate you taking the time from your many responsibilities to share, grow, and learn together in this program.

You have already learned about this program in an earlier meeting, and we hope that you have decided to participate because you want to make some important changes to improve your physical, mental, and spiritual wellbeing. Each person has a unique path in life, and this program will help you make decisions about your own path to wellbeing; for yourself, your family and your community. We encourage you to set aside the time for these sessions and that you fully participate in each activity, sharing your thoughts and experiences.

During the sessions of this module, I am sure we will be able to get to know each other better and support each other in this journey of finding your own pathway to wellbeing. Are there any questions?



## 2. Let's Share a Story (10 mins)



To present a true story that will help participants reflect on the importance of understanding and celebrating your own worth.

**Step 1:** Show **Video 1.1: Beatrice's Story**, asking participants to pay close attention to the details of the story.

To begin today's topic "Celebrating our own Worth", we would like to show you a story of a person that has learned about her own worth through different life experiences. Let's take a look.



**Step 2:** After the video, use the following questions to guide a discussion on the story:



- What do you think of this story about Beatrice?
- *What helped her to keep going when she felt like giving up?*
- *How does she use her skills and talents for herself and others?*
- *Why does she feel good about herself?*

**Step 3:** Summarize the discussion, emphasizing how Beatrice has learned to value her own worth by using her abilities and skills as a strength to overcome challenges and to look forward to new goals.



#### **SUMMARIZE THE DISCUSSION:**

Although Beatrice had to face many challenges, she learned to use her gifts and skills in cooking and organizing to help her keep going and feel good about herself.

*When we understand our own worth and what we can contribute to our family and community, we can overcome obstacles and move towards having greater goals in life.*

### **3. Let's talk: Understanding our own worth (10 mins)**



To help participants recognize how each person has their own special worth, including gifts, abilities, and skills.

#### **Group exercise "Alike or Different" (5')**

**Step 1:** For the next group exercise, tell participants that you will read a list of phrases which describe ways they are alike and different. After they hear the phrase, they will raise their hand if they feel it applies to them. The participants should try to notice how other people are alike or different.



Let's do an activity so we can keep getting to know each other a little more. In this activity we'll also be able to see how we are alike in some ways and different in others.

I will read some phrases with examples of different preferences, abilities or talents. Those who prefer one of the things I mention will raise their hand.

Let's do a practice phrase: "Everyone who prefers breakfast raise your hand. Now, those who prefer dinner raise your hand" (example).

Good job, I can see you've got it! As I read the phrases, try to notice who is more like you and who is different.

**Step 2:** Read the following phrases and encourage participants to raise their hand to show their preferences and to observe how other people in the group respond.



**Note:** adapt the following examples to the cultural context of the group

**Please form a group with those who prefer:**

The color green	The color orange
Getting up very early	Staying up late at night
Singing or playing a musical instrument	Talking with friends in their spare time
Making things in their spare time	Talking with friends in their spare time
Visiting new places	Staying at home
Listening to other people talk	Talking to anyone who will listen

**Group discussion (5')**

**Step 3:** After reading all the phrases, lead a brief discussion with participants about what they learned about being different or alike.

Thanks for participating in this activity! Let's talk about what you learned:

- Did you observe others who were alike or different to you in your preferences?
- Was there anyone in the group that was exactly like you in their preferences?
- Is it better to have any of these preferences instead of others? Why?



**Step 4:** Summarize the discussion about the exercise, leading the group to recognize that each person is unique, with different ways of being, including gifts, abilities, and skills, that make them valuable and special. Emphasize the importance of recognizing one's own worth, as well as each person's, remembering that everyone contributes something special to the world.





### SUMMARIZE THE DISCUSSION:

As we saw during this exercise, each person has their own way of being, including their own preferences, as well as unique gifts, abilities, and skills. Although we may be alike in some ways, the differences we have do not make some people better than others.

**Each person is unique as a human being. Each one has a special worth for being the way they are.**



### + For Christian or Religious Context

If you are facilitating this session within a Christian or religious context, you may include the following explanation of what it means to be created in the image of God and the special value we believe each human being has.

In the Christian faith we also believe that each person is created in the image and likeness of God. Since we are created in God's image, we have been gifted with **talents and abilities** that make us unique and special. He wants us to celebrate those gifts and use them to face life with a sense of gratitude and responsibility towards our lives and those of our neighbors, as well as all of creation.

In this program we will be remembering this idea very often, because we believe that God wants **everyone to be able to achieve a fulfilled life**, and to seek healthy relationships with yourself, your family, your community and with God.

## 4. Home practice (5 mins)



**To assign an activity participants can do at home to reinforce the learning and objectives of the session.**

**Step 1:** Explain the Summary Handout and the purpose of assigning a home practice.

We are now coming to the end of our first session, but we'd like you to keep thinking about what we talked about today. Once you are home, take some time to look over the first sheet of paper in your binders, the **Summary Handout**, to help you remember.

Also, each time we meet for a session, we will ask you to do a special activity at home to practice what we have discussed during our time together. This will help you apply what you have thought about and learned during our session in your daily activities at home with your family. When we come together for our next session, we will ask you to share your experience and what you learned while doing the home practice.



**Step 2:** Provide the **Home Practice Handout: Using my gifts and skills** and explain the home practice for this session, in which participants will identify their gifts, abilities, or skills using the Group Practice Handout as a guide, and then decide which of these they will use each day, either for their own benefit or to serve another person.

Today's home practice will be to first identify what your most important gifts, abilities and skills are, using the "Let's Practice" handout as a guide. You'll see on the sheet that there are different ideas you can circle as your gifts or abilities, or you can write or draw your own in the different areas of the handout: mental, emotional, manual or physical.

After you identify your gifts and abilities, choose one or two to use in a new way in your daily life. Try to think of how you can use them in any way that makes your life or the lives of those around you better.

Thank you all for your participation today! We will see you at the next session, on (date). In that session, I look forward to hearing how you have used your gifts, talents, and abilities to help yourselves, your families, and your community! See you soon!



## Additional Notes for Facilitators

### On a person's worth and human dignity

The concept of human dignity forms the basis of human rights that we now recognize as a value that every human being has without taking into account their class, race, gender, religion, abilities or any other factor that previously in history could be used to give more value to one person over another.

The phrase “human dignity” was recognized in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights ratified by the United Nations in 1948 after World War II.

*“Human dignity means that an individual feels respect for him or herself and is valued at the same time that he or she is respected and valued. It implies the need for all human beings to be treated on an equal footing and to be able to enjoy the fundamental rights derived from that.”*

*-(Eleonora Lamm, Doctor in Law and Bioethics, University of Barcelona, 2017)*

Human dignity is a way of recognizing that “all people have intrinsic worth.” This recognition is very current today because there are still many societies where people do not have access to their fundamental human rights and where people who meet certain characteristics are perceived to be of greater value, are more respected, and have greater access to opportunities to lead a life with dignity.

Human dignity also forms a central part of the Christian concept of the human being created in the image and likeness of God. If people are God’s creation, they have a sacred value that cannot be separated from their identity.

These ideas are important in the field of human development, because the starting point for a person to make changes in their basic living conditions is the recognition that their own life is valuable and they have the right to lead a life of dignity and personal fulfillment.

### On recognizing each person's abilities and strengths

#### **Two main reasons to focus on strengths:**

By identifying one’s own strengths, a person can expand on those positive areas in their life. Strengths become an important tool to achieve the positive goals that people set for themselves in life.

Research studies have also shown that the strengths a person demonstrates helps them handle problems more effectively. Identifying individual strengths is not only comforting for the person, but it can also be inspiring to know that you carry these “tools” within you in whatever situation you may go through.

Research studies have also shown that the strengths a person demonstrates helps them handle problems more effectively. Identifying individual strengths is not only comforting for the person, but it can also be inspiring to know that you carry these “tools” within you in whatever situation you may go through.

### **How Strengths Help in Difficult Times:**

Research shows that people who use their strengths are less stressed, more engaged, and happier. By identifying, exercising, and growing their strengths, people can boost their own well-being and resilience.

Also, by becoming more aware of their own strengths, a person is more likely to be able to recognize strengths in others.

*“A person’s strengths serve as crucial influencers that help embrace the positive, endure the mundane, and navigate and handle struggles.”  
(Doman, 2020)*

## REFERENCES

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Human Rights Careers (n.d.) What is Human Dignity? Common Definitions. <https://www.humanrightscareers.com/issues/definitions-what-is-human-dignity/>

Doman, F. (2020). How Character Strengths Help Us Through Trying Times. Institute on Character. <https://www.viacharacter.org/topics/articles/how-character-strengths-help%20us-through-trying-times>

Lamm, E. (2017). La dignidad humana (Human Dignity). DELS, Argentina. <http://www.salud.gob.ar/dels/entradas/la-dignidad-humana>

## OTHER RESOURCES

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Character Strength Workbooks. VIA institute. <https://www.viacharacter.org/resources/workbooks>



**Session 1.2:**

Strengthening Hope

## Session 1.2:

### Strengthening Hope

#### Key message:

“By regularly practicing hope in my life, I can improve my wellbeing.”



#### Session Objectives:

By the end of the session, participants will be able to:

1. Identify day to day experiences in which they have felt hopeful and their causes.
2. Recognize the difference between active and wishful hope.
3. Identify and use new strategies to create and strengthen a sense of hope in their lives.



#### Materials

- Optional: Pencils / pens



#### Equipment

- Laptop or Tablet
- Projector
- Speakers



#### Preparation

- Make sure that the meeting space is clean and ready to facilitate the various steps of the session.
- Make sure that the audiovisual equipment is properly set up and ready to show **Video 1.2.: Keti's Story**
- Have copies of session handouts ready for all participants
  - ▶ Session 1.2 Summary Handout: **“Strengthening Hope”**
  - ▶ Let's Practice Handout: **“How to Strengthen Hope”**
  - ▶ Home Practice Handout: **“Practicing Hope at Home”**



**Session 1.2:**

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**90**  
minutes



## SESSION OVERVIEW

90 minutes



Activities	Summary	Mins.
<b>Activity 1:</b> <b>Welcome and group introductions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Welcome participants.</li> <li>▶ Review the home practice assigned in the previous session in pairs.</li> <li>▶ Summarize lessons learned from the experience.</li> </ul>	10
<b>Activity 2:</b> <b>Warm-up</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Warm-up exercise in which participants express how they are feeling via gestures.</li> </ul>	5
<b>Activity 3:</b> <b>Let's Share a Story</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Presentation of Video <b>1.2: Keti's Story</b>.</li> <li>▶ Group discussion of the story.</li> </ul>	20
<b>Activity 4:</b> <b>Let's Talk: What does it mean to have hope?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Compare active hope, which helps us to reach goals in life, to wishful hope, which is wishing for things that are out of reach, and without taking action.</li> <li>▶ Use real-life scenarios to <b>Identify</b> wishful vs. active hope.</li> </ul>	20
<b>Activity 5:</b> <b>Let's Practice: How to strengthen hope</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Explanation of three strategies that help to create and strengthen a sense of hope: positive activities, hope heroes, a hope network.</li> <li>▶ Brainstorm in groups of three on how to apply these three strategies in daily life.</li> </ul>	20
<b>Activity 6:</b> <b>Let's Remember</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Group reflection on a selected phrase or verse.</li> </ul>	10
<b>Activity 7:</b> <b>Home Practice</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Explain the home practice, in which participants will apply their three strategies for strengthening hope.</li> </ul>	5

**STEPS FOR SESSION FACILITATION****90 minutes****1. Welcome and Home Practice Review (10 mins)**

**To welcome all participants to the group, creating an environment of energy, trust, and familiarity, and to review the home practice.**

**Welcome (2')**

**Step 1:** Warmly welcome the participants to the meeting, telling them about the topic of today's session, hope.



Welcome back to the **Pathways to Wellbeing Program!** We are excited to have you back to explore more about the foundations of how we can improve our wellbeing for ourselves, our families, and our communities. Today's session will focus on hope, what it is, why it is important, and how we can create and strengthen it in our lives.

**Home Practice Review (8')**

**Step 2:** Remind participants that at the end of the last session, they were asked to commit to practicing the learning from the last session in their homes. Review the commitment to select one of their gifts, abilities, or skills to use in daily life, for themselves or to serve someone else. Ask participants to turn to someone next to them and tell them about their experience of doing the Home Practice from the last session.



At the start of every session, we will also review the home practice you committed to do, so you can apply what we talked about in the past session to your daily lives.

In the last session, we committed to using at least one of our gifts, skills, and abilities in our daily lives. Please turn to the person next to you and share how you used your gifts, skills, and abilities, and what you learned from using them. You will have 5 minutes to share with each other!

**Step 3:** After 5 minutes of discussion, ask one or two volunteers to share what they did to exercise their gifts, skills, and abilities and what they learned from it. Then summarize the reflections.



I would love to hear from one or two volunteers about their experience. Would someone be willing to share what they did and what they learned from the home practice? **(Wait for 1-2 people to share.)**

Thanks to all of you for sharing your efforts to put your learning into practice. By doing this work and by sharing it, you have helped all of us learn more and to walk a few steps on the Pathway to Wellbeing!



## 2. Warm-up (5 mins)



**To help participants identify their emotions while getting to know each other better.**

**Step 1:** Ask all participants to stand in a circle for their warm-up. Introduce the warm-up, explaining that each person will make a motion that indicates how they are feeling right now. First demonstrate before going around the circle person by person. After participants make their gestures, allow time for participants to ask clarifying questions about others' gestures.

To get started with today's topic, I would like all of us to do an exercise that will help us understand how each of us is feeling today. To do this, I invite all of you to stand in a circle.

Now, we will go around the circle and make a hand motion or a facial expression that shows how you are feeling right now. I will start and then we will continue to my right. We will all be silent and observe others until everyone has expressed their feeling. I will begin, and we will go around the circle to my right. Are there any questions?

OK, here we go. **(Make a facial expression or a hand motion that shows how you are feeling. Then ask the next person to go. Wait for each person to make an expression or motion.)**

Thank you all! Did you understand how everyone was feeling, or is there someone's expression or gesture that you'd like that person to explain? **(Give time for people to ask questions to other participants to explain any gestures they did not understand.)**

**Step 2:** Thank participants for sharing how they feel with their colleagues. Explain that it is important to share these things with others in order to get to know each other better, so they can support each other on the Pathway to Wellbeing.

Thank you all for participating and for sharing how you feel with all of us. It is important that we share with each other. Not only does it help us get to know each other better, but it can help us support each other as we travel the Pathway to Wellbeing together.



### 3. Let's Share a Story (20 mins)



To show a real life story of how taking small steps can lead to a greater sense of hope and wellbeing.

**Step 1:** Present story, asking participants to pay close attention to the details of the story.



To further explore hope, let's watch the story of Keti, a woman from Uganda who has learned a lot about hope in her life.

**Step 2:** Use the following questions to guide a discussion on the story.



- What did you observe in Keti's story?
- When did Keti experience hopelessness?
- What wisdom did Keti share about how to have hope?
- **(TIP) Have you ever experienced a sense of hopelessness like Keti?**
- **What did Keti do to begin to experience hope?**
- **Have you ever experienced increasing your hope like Keti? What allowed you to increase your hope?**

**Step 3:** Summarize the discussion, emphasizing how Beatrice has learned to value her own worth by using her abilities and skills as a strength to overcome challenges and to look forward to new goals.



#### SUMMARY

Keti faced incredibly difficult circumstances and lost all hope at one point. However, she acted, using prayer, taking classes, and taking other actions, which boosted her sense of hope.

**Like Keti, if we trust and move toward action, we can strengthen our hope.**

### 4. Let's k: "What does it mean to have hope?" (20 mins)



To define active hope that allows us to move toward a better life, instead of keeping us in the same place.

#### Understanding Active Hope (5')

**Step 1:** Guide participants in a brief discussion on hope. Ask them to describe hope, describe why hope is important, and define two different kinds of hope.

Thank you for sharing! So after hearing a story about how someone learned about hope, how might you describe hope?

Those are excellent descriptions! Hope can be different things, which we will discuss in a moment. But one thing we know: **Hope is very important to our wellbeing!** People that have hope feel more positive in their daily lives. These positive feelings help children get better grades, help us experience less addiction or bad habits, and improve relationships with our family and friends!

However, there are two types of hope: active hope and wishful hope. **Wishful hope** is based on wishes, or things that you cannot reach. We have this type of hope when we want something that is out of reach, and we won't be able to take steps to reach it. For example, if we say "I hope it does not rain on the day of the festival!", this wish is out of our hands – only God decides when it rains! What are some other examples of wishful hope?

**Active hope** is different from wishful hope. It moves us and motivates us to reach a goal. One example is if I say "I hope I can see my whole family soon", I can take steps to see them, by planning to visit their village, or by inviting them to visit me! Can you think of other examples of active hope?

Active hope is the type of hope that allows us to have positive feelings. This is because when we have a goal, active hope helps us to get to that goal!



### Group discussion on "Hope Scenarios" (10')

**Step 2:** Ask participants to form 4 groups by counting from 1-4. Inform each group that you will read a scenario to the group, and they will discuss it using questions on what type of hope the person in the scenario feels, and what steps they can take to be more positive.

Now, we will form four groups to discuss a scenario, and analyze the different types of hope and the situations that lead to active hope.

Let's each count off as "1-2-3-4". Each person will go with the number of their group, and the group will choose someone to be the spokesperson that will share at the end.

I will read a scenario to each group, and you will discuss the scenarios using 2 questions:

- Does this scenario show an active hope that leads to a goal or a wishful hope/unreachable dream?
- What are steps this person could take to feel active hope in this situation?

I will give you 5 minutes to discuss, and after this, your group will share your responses to the questions.





### Option: Choose two scenarios and discuss as a whole group.

#### Scenario 1:

*Mary is excited, because she has decided that she wants to purchase chickens, even though she has never kept livestock in her house before. Mary knows that she is good at making financial calculations, so she has figured out how much she needs to save each month from selling vegetables in order to buy 10 chicks in the next 6 months.*

#### Scenario 2:

*John has decided that he will purchase a lottery ticket with the last extra money he has, hoping that he will win lots of money and be able to buy an ox to plow his fields. He waits until the day that the lottery is announced, but his ticket doesn't win.*

#### Scenario 3:

*Martha has had another fight with her teenage son, who wants to drop out of school to make money. Martha hopes he'll stay in school so that he can get a good job when he is older.*

#### Scenario 4:

*David and Agnes are in the process of opening a store in their town. They hope it will do well, as Agnes is pregnant. They hope that the store will provide additional income for the baby's needs, and eventually, when the child grows up, for its school fees.*

**Step 4:** Summarize the discussion, highlighting the importance of active hope for a better life.



#### SUMMARY

Active hope allows us to move toward our dreams, while wishful hope keeps us in the same place.

**By recognizing the difference between these two types of hope, and by taking steps toward active hope, we can improve our wellbeing, and plan for a better future.**

## 5. Let's practice: "How to Strengthen Hope" (20 mins)



To learn and practice steps to create and strengthen active hope in participants' lives.

### 3 Strategies for Hope (5')

**Step 1:** Explain to participants that hope is like a muscle - it can be exercised to make it stronger. The more that they exercise hope, the stronger hope can be, even in situations that are difficult or that look hopeless.

Offer participants the **Let's Practice Handout: How to Strengthen Hope**. Briefly explain three strategies that they can learn to cultivate hope and to strengthen it, to prepare for moments when they are losing hope, as pictured on the handout.

Now that we understand why hope is so important and how it can help us to improve our lives, we need to learn how to strengthen hope. Hope is like a muscle in your body - you can exercise it to make it stronger. How do you think you can exercise hope? **(Wait for 2 or 3 responses.)**

Thank you for sharing your ideas – these are some of the many ways we can strengthen our hope! Now, I want to share with you three strategies that have been proven to exercise and strengthen the “hope muscle” in our lives. These are: Positive Activities, Hope Heroes, and a Hope Network, as you can see on your handout.

### **1) Positive Activities:**

Doing activities that we like every day can help us have positive feelings like gratitude, happiness, peace, and fun! Some examples might be dancing, telling jokes, drawing, singing, exercising, playing games, praying, or other activities.

Each one of us has different things that make us feel positive, and what we like may be related to our gifts, talents, and abilities, as we discovered in our last meeting. By doing activities that exercise our strengths, we also exercise our hope muscle, which helps us to have a positive outlook on daily life, and helps support us during difficult times.

### **2) A Hope Hero:**

Another way to exercise our hope muscle is to identify a role model or “hero” that, despite their circumstances, has persevered toward their goals to make a better life for themselves, and that inspires you to have greater hope and persevere.

This can be a person that you know and have a relationship with, such as your mother, a teacher, or a chief, or it can be a person you’ve heard of and admire all that he or she has achieved, like a community leader, a celebrity, or a character in the Bible or Koran.

### **3) A Hope Network:**

A third way to exercise hope is to think about a small group of people that we know that can help support and encourage us, keeping our mood and hope high, even when there are obstacles in our path.

These people can be very close to you, like family, friends, or neighbors, or they can be people that are leaders in your community, like a religious leader, a teacher, or a healthcare worker.

Our group can also be a part of your hope network! We are all on this journey together, and the group members here may understand more than other people the changes you are trying to make in your life, so we may be a great source of support and encouragement in keeping up your hope!



## Small group brainstorm (15')

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**Step 2:** Explain to participants that they will now brainstorm ideas in each of the three strategies, thinking of different ways in which they might use each strategy in their daily lives to improve hope. Ask participants to form groups of 3, in which they will brainstorm ideas for the hope strategies.



**Option: If applicable for your participants, have them write down or draw their ideas on the Handout.**

Using the handout we will now brainstorm together, different ways in which we can use these three strategies to have hope.

For each strategy, you will brainstorm ideas like this:

**For Positive Activities,** you will brainstorm ideas of activities that motivate you or that give you good feelings and positive attitudes.

**For Hope Heroes,** you will brainstorm the people that you admire and that could be chosen as your Hope Hero. These can be people you know personally or people you have heard of that inspire you.

**For a Hope Network,** you will brainstorm people in your lives and communities that can be part of your Hope Network. You can talk about specific people, or more general categories of people that can help you.

Now I want to ask you to move into groups of three. Each group will do a “brainstorm” for 10 minutes to identify ways in which you can use each of the three strategies. Please assign each person in your group a strategy. That person will be responsible for remembering everything that your group brainstorms around the strategy.

When you are brainstorming, don't forget this group of learners - since you are all learning about hope, you can all be a part of each other's Hope Networks!

**Step 3:** Have groups share some of their ideas in each of the categories with all participants. Lead a brief summarizing discussion.



### SUMMARY

There are specific ways that we can exercise and strengthen our hope muscle, to prepare us for hopeful and less hopeful times in our lives.

**By practicing Positive Activities, identifying Hope Heroes, and creating a Hope Network, we can increase active hope in our daily lives that will encourage us to keep going towards our goals.**



## 6. Let's Remember (10 mins)



To reflect on a verse or phrase that reinforces the central message and value of the session.

**Step 1:** Read one of the selected verses or phrases below. Choose the phrase based on an understanding of the religion of the participants and to which saying they might best respond.



### For Christian reflection:

*“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.” - Jeremiah 29:11*

*“But those who hope in the Lord  
will renew their strength.*

*They will soar on wings like eagles;*

*they will run and not grow weary,*

*they will walk and not be faint.”*

*- Isaiah 40:31*



### For Muslim reflection:

*Wealth and sons are allurements of the life of this world: but the things that endure, Good Deeds, are best in the sight of thy Lord, as rewards, and best as (the foundation for) hopes. - Quran 18:46*



### For cultural reflection:

*A little hope each day can fill the rivers to overflowing. - African Proverb*

**Step 2:** Guide a brief conversation with the whole group, using the following questions.



- In light of what we have discussed today about hope, how does this verse/phrase give you a greater sense of hope?
- If you could share this verse/phrase with yourself ten years ago (or when you were a teenager), what would you say to your younger self to motivate them and give them more hope?

**Step 3:** Briefly summarize after 5 minutes of group discussion, emphasizing the idea of persevering with hope, despite obstacles in our path.



### SUMMARIZE THE DISCUSSION:

Thanks for sharing your reflections on this verse/phrase.

**This verse/phrase reminds us that hope is essential for our wellbeing. It can help us feel positively about our current lives, and feel that we can act to change our future lives.**

## 7. Home practice assignment (5 mins)



**To review the session's central message and assign an activity participants can do at home to reinforce the learning and objectives of the session.**

**Step 1:** Ask participants to choose one of the ideas they brainstormed for each of the three Hope Strategies. Have them commit to practicing this strategy in the days following the session.



**Note: If applicable for your participants, have them write down their Home Practice commitments on the Handout.**



Remember that each week we will ask you to do a Home Practice related to the topic we have discussed in our meeting. This practice is very important for you to continue to learn about the topic through experiencing and using what you have learned in your daily life.

For today's Home Practice, we will have three tasks:

### 1. Do one positive activity daily.

Choose one of the activities from the brainstorm that you did in your small group, and take note of how you feel after doing it.

### 2. Choose a Hope Hero.

Think about who inspires you to persevere and have hope, and then learn more about them, asking them questions, or finding out more about their life.

### 3. Create your Hope Network.

Think of 3-5 people who affect you positively who can make up your Hope Network. Talk with each person and ask them permission to go to them when you are feeling discouraged or without hope. Remember people in this group that you feel you can incorporate into your Hope Network. Since you are all going through this learning together, you can think of individuals or everyone in this group as part of your network!



**Step 2:** Close the meeting and remind participants of the date and time of the next meeting.

Thanks to all of you for your participation today. We will see each other in the next session on (date)! I look forward to hearing how you strengthen your hope muscles using the three strategies!





**Session 1.2:**

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**60**  
minutes



## SESSION OVERVIEW

60 minutes



Activities	Summary	Mins.
<b>Activity 1:</b> <b>Welcome and Home Practice Review</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Welcome participants.</li> <li>▶ Review the home practice assigned in the previous session in pairs.</li> <li>▶ Summarize lessons learned from the experience.</li> </ul>	<b>10</b>
<b>Activity 2:</b> <b>Warm-up</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Warm-up exercise in which participants express how they are feeling via gestures.</li> </ul>	<b>15</b>
<b>Activity 3:</b> <b>Let's Share a Story</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Presentation of <b>Video 1.2: Keti's Story.</b></li> <li>▶ Group discussion of the story.</li> </ul>	<b>5</b>
<b>Activity 4:</b> <b>Let's Talk: What does it mean to have hope?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Compare active hope, which helps us to reach goals in life, to wishful hope, which is wishing for things that are out of reach, and without taking action.</li> <li>▶ Use real-life scenarios to identify wishful vs. active hope.</li> </ul>	<b>15</b>
<b>Activity 5:</b> <b>Let's Practice: How to strengthen hope</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Explanation of three strategies that help to create and strengthen a sense of hope: positive activities, hope heroes, a hope network.</li> <li>▶ Brainstorm in groups of three on how to apply these three strategies in daily life.</li> </ul>	<b>10</b>
<b>Activity 6:</b> <b>Let's Remember</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Group reflection on a selected phrase or verse.</li> </ul>	<b>5</b>
<b>Activity 7:</b> <b>Home Practice</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Explain the home practice, in which participants will apply their three strategies for strengthening hope.</li> </ul>	<b>5</b>

## STEPS FOR SESSION FACILITATION

60 minutes



### 1. Welcome and Home Practice Review (10 mins)



To welcome all participants to the group, creating an environment of energy, trust, and familiarity, and to review the home practice.

#### Welcome (2')

**Step 1:** Warmly welcome the participants to the meeting, telling them about the topic of today's session, hope.

Welcome back to the **Pathways to Wellbeing Program!** We are excited to have you back to explore more about the foundations of how we can improve our wellbeing for ourselves, our families, and our communities. Today's session will focus on hope, what it is, why it is important, and how we can create and strengthen it in our lives.



#### Home Practice Review (8')

**Step 2:** Remind participants that at the end of the last session, they were asked to commit to practicing the learning from the last session in their homes. Review the commitment to select one of their gifts, abilities, or skills to use in daily life, for themselves or to serve someone else. Ask participants to turn to someone next to them and tell them about their experience of doing the Home Practice from the last session.

At the start of every session, we will also review the home practice you committed to do, so you can apply what we talked about in the past session to your daily lives.

In the last session, we committed to using at least one of our gifts, skills, and abilities in our daily lives. Please turn to the person next to you and share how you used your gifts, skills, and abilities, and what you learned from using them. You will have 5 minutes to share with each other!



**Step 3:** After 5 minutes of discussion, ask one or two volunteers to share what they did to exercise their gifts, skills, and abilities and what they learned from it. Then summarize the reflections.

I would love to hear from one or two volunteers about their experience. Would someone be willing to share what they did and what they learned from the home practice? **(Wait for 1-2 people to share.)**





Thanks to all of you for sharing your efforts to put your learning into practice. By doing this work and by sharing it, you have helped all of us learn more and to walk a few steps on the Pathway to Wellbeing!

## 2. Warm-up (15 mins)



**To show a real life story of how taking small steps can lead to a greater sense of hope and wellbeing.**

**Step 1:** Present story, asking participants to pay close attention to the details of the story.



To further explore hope, let's watch the story of Keti, a woman from Uganda who has learned a lot about hope in her life.

**Step 2:** Use the following questions to guide a discussion on the story.



- What did you observe in Keti's story?
- **What did Keti do to begin to experience hope?**
- **Have you ever experienced increasing your hope like Keti? What allowed you to increase your hope?**



### SUMMARY

Keti faced incredibly difficult circumstances and lost all hope at one point. However, she acted, using prayer, taking classes, and taking other actions, which boosted her sense of hope.

**Like Keti, if we trust and move toward action, we can strengthen our hope.**

## 3. Let's talk: "What does it mean to have hope?" (15 mins)



**To define active hope that allows us to move toward a better life, instead of keeping us in the same place.**

### Understanding Active Hope (5')

**Step 1:** Guide participants in a brief discussion on hope. Ask them to describe hope, describe why hope is important, and define two different kinds of hope.

Thank you for sharing! So after hearing a story about how someone learned about hope, how might you describe hope?

Those are excellent descriptions! Hope can be different things, which we will discuss in a moment. But one thing we know: **Hope is very important to our wellbeing!** People that have hope feel more positive in their daily lives. These positive feelings help children get better grades, help us experience less addiction or bad habits, and improve relationships with our family and friends!

However, there are two types of hope: active hope and wishful hope. Wishful hope is based on wishes, or things that you cannot reach. We have this type of hope when we want something that is out of reach, and we won't be able to take steps to reach it. For example, if we say "I hope it does not rain on the day of the festival!", this wish is out of our hands – only God decides when it rains! What are some other examples of wishful hope?

**Active hope** is different from wishful hope. It moves us and motivates us to reach a goal. One example is if I say "I hope I can see my whole family soon", I can take steps to see them, by planning to visit their village, or by inviting them to visit me! Can you think of other examples of active hope?

Active hope is the type of hope that allows us to have positive feelings. This is because when we have a goal, active hope helps us to get to that goal!



### Group discussion on "Hope Scenarios" (10')

**Step 2:** Explain that you will read a scenario, and the group will discuss what type of hope the person in the scenario feels and why.

I will read a scenario to each group, and you will discuss the scenarios using 2 questions:

- Does this scenario show an active hope that leads to a goal or a wishful hope/unreachable dream?
- What are steps this person could take to feel active hope in this situation?



#### Scenario 1:

*Mary is excited, because she has decided that she wants to purchase chickens, even though she has never kept livestock in her house before. Mary knows that she is good at making financial calculations, so she has figured out how much she needs to save each month from selling vegetables in order to buy 10 chicks in the next 6 months.*

#### Scenario 2:

*John has decided that he will purchase a lottery ticket with the last extra money he has, hoping that he will win lots of money and be able to buy an ox to plow his fields. He waits until the day that the lottery is announced, but his ticket doesn't win.*





**Scenario 3:**

*Martha has had another fight with her teenage son, who wants to drop out of school to make money. Martha hopes he'll stay in school so that he can get a good job when he is older.*

**Scenario 4:**

*David and Agnes are in the process of opening a store in their town. They hope it will do well, as Agnes is pregnant. They hope that the store will provide additional income for the baby's needs, and eventually, when the child grows up, for its school fees.*

**Step 3:** Summarize the discussion, highlighting the importance of active hope for a better life.

**SUMMARY**

Active hope allows us to move toward our dreams, while wishful hope keeps us in the same place.

**By recognizing the difference between these two types of hope, and by taking steps toward active hope, we can improve our wellbeing, and plan for a better future.**

#### 4. Let's practice: "How to Strengthen Hope" (10 mins)



**To learn and practice steps to create and strengthen active hope in participants' lives.**

##### 3 Strategies for Hope (5')

**Step 1:** Explain to participants that hope is like a muscle - it can be exercised to make it stronger. The more that they exercise hope, the stronger hope can be, even in situations that are difficult or that look hopeless.

Offer participants the **Let's Practice Handout: How to Strengthen Hope**. Briefly explain three strategies that they can learn to cultivate hope and to strengthen it, to prepare for moments when they are losing hope, as pictured on the handout.



Now that we understand why hope is so important and how it can help us to improve our lives, we need to learn how to strengthen hope. Hope is like a muscle in your body - you can exercise it to make it stronger. How do you think you can exercise hope? **(Wait for 2 or 3 responses.)**

Thank you for sharing your ideas – these are some of the many ways we can strengthen our hope! Now, I want to share with you three strategies that have been proven to exercise and strengthen the “hope muscle” in our lives. These are: Positive Activities, Hope Heroes, and a Hope Network, as you can see on your handout.



**1) Positive Activities:** Doing activities that we like every day can help us have positive feelings like gratitude, happiness, peace, and fun! Some examples might be dancing, telling jokes, drawing, singing, exercising, playing games, praying, or other activities.

Each one of us has different things that make us feel positive, and what we like may be related to our gifts, talents, and abilities, as we discovered in our last meeting. By doing activities that exercise our strengths, we also exercise our hope muscle, which helps us to have a positive outlook on daily life, and helps support us during difficult times.

**2) A Hope Hero:** Another way to exercise our hope muscle is to identify a role model or “hero” that, despite their circumstances, has persevered toward their goals to make a better life for themselves, and that inspires you to have greater hope and persevere.

This can be a person that you know and have a relationship with, such as your mother, a teacher, or a chief, or it can be a person you’ve heard of and admire all that he or she has achieved, like a community leader, a celebrity, or a character in the Bible or Koran.

**3) A Hope Network:** A third way to exercise hope is to think about a small group of people that we know that can help support and encourage us, keeping our mood and hope high, even when there are obstacles in our path.

These people can be very close to you, like family, friends, or neighbors, or they can be people that are leaders in your community, like a religious leader, a teacher, or a healthcare worker.

Our group can also be a part of your hope network! We are all on this journey together, and the group members here may understand more than other people the changes you are trying to make in your life, so we may be a great source of support and encouragement in keeping up your hope!

### Small group brainstorm (5')

**Step 2:** Tell participants that the group will now brainstorm ideas in each of the three strategies, thinking of different ways in which they might use each strategy in their daily lives to improve hope. Use the Handout to guide brainstorming.



**Option: If applicable for your participants, have them write down or draw their ideas on the Handout.**

Using the **Let’s Practice Handout**, we will now brainstorm different ways in which we can use these three strategies to have hope.

**For Positive Activities,** you will brainstorm ideas of activities that motivate you or that give you good feelings and positive attitudes.

- What are some positive activities that we could engage in to give ourselves hope?

**For Hope Heroes,** you will brainstorm the people that you admire and that could be chosen as your Hope Hero. These can be people you know personally or people you have heard of that inspire you.

- Who might we choose to be a Hope Hero?

**For a Hope Network,** you will brainstorm people in your lives and communities that can be part of your Hope Network. You can talk about specific people, or more general categories of people that can help you.

- Who are people that we could call on to be part of our hope network?

**Step 3:** Have groups share some of their ideas in each of the categories with all participants. Lead a brief summarizing discussion.



### SUMMARY

There are specific ways that we can exercise and strengthen our hope muscle, to prepare us for hopeful and less hopeful times in our lives.

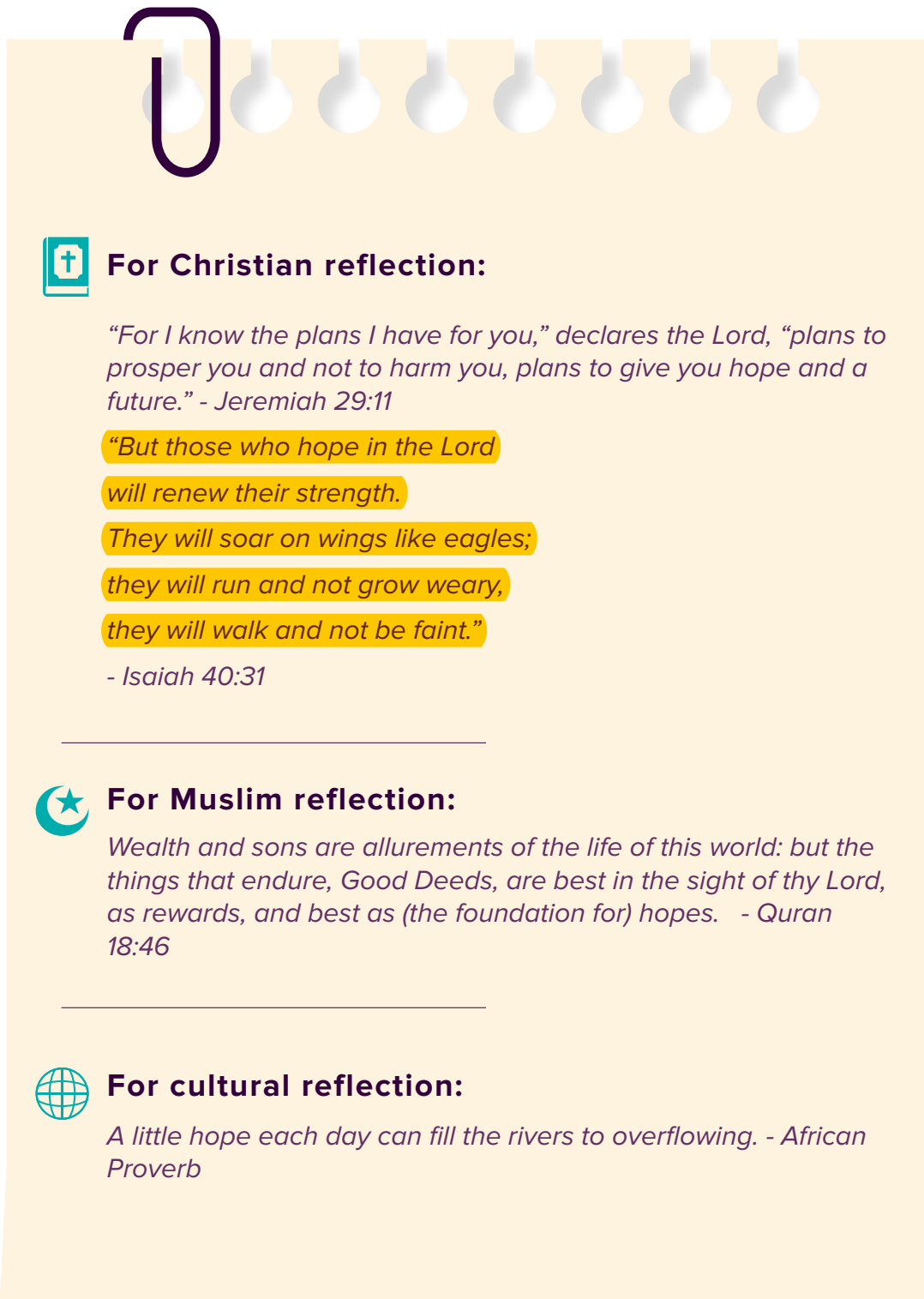
**By practicing Positive Activities, identifying Hope Heroes, and creating a Hope Network, we can increase active hope in our daily lives that will encourage us to keep going towards our goals.**


## 5. Let's remember (5 mins)



**To reflect on a verse or phrase that reinforces the central message and value of the session.**

**Step 1:** Read one of the selected verses or phrases below. Choose the phrase based on an understanding of the religion of the participants and to which saying they might best respond.




 **For Christian reflection:**

*“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.” - Jeremiah 29:11*

*“But those who hope in the Lord  
will renew their strength.  
They will soar on wings like eagles;  
they will run and not grow weary,  
they will walk and not be faint.”*


*- Isaiah 40:31*

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 **For Muslim reflection:**

*Wealth and sons are allurements of the life of this world: but the things that endure, Good Deeds, are best in the sight of thy Lord, as rewards, and best as (the foundation for) hopes. - Quran 18:46*

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 **For cultural reflection:**

*A little hope each day can fill the rivers to overflowing. - African Proverb*

**Step 2:** Guide a brief conversation with the whole group, using the questions below.

- In light of what we have discussed today about hope, how does this verse/phrase give you a greater sense of hope?



**Step 3:** Briefly summarize the discussion, emphasizing the idea of persevering with hope, despite obstacles in our path.



### **SUMMARIZE THE DISCUSSION:**

Thanks for sharing your reflections on this verse/phrase.

**This verse/phrase reminds us that hope is essential for our wellbeing. It can help us feel positively about our current lives, and feel that we can act to change our future lives.**

## **6. Home practice assignment (5 mins)**



**To review the session's central message and assign an activity participants can do at home to reinforce the learning and objectives of the session.**

**Step 1:** Ask participants to choose one of the ideas they brainstormed for each of the three Hope Strategies. Have them commit to practicing this strategy in the days following the session.



**Note: If applicable for your participants, have them write down their Home Practice commitments on the Handout.**



Remember that each week we will ask you to do a Home Practice related to the topic we have discussed in our meeting. This practice is very important for you to continue to learn about the topic through experiencing and using what you have learned in your daily life.

For today's Home Practice, we will have three tasks:

### **1. Do one positive activity daily.**

Choose one of the activities from the brainstorm that you did in your small group, and take note of how you feel after doing it.

### **2. Choose a Hope Hero.**

Think about who inspires you to persevere and have hope, and then learn more about them, asking them questions, or finding out more about their life.

### **3. Create your Hope Network.**

Think of 3-5 people who affect you positively who can make up your Hope Network. Talk with each person and ask them permission to go to them when you are feeling discouraged or without hope. Remember people in this group that you feel you can incorporate into your Hope Network. Since you are all going through this learning together, you can think of individuals or everyone in this group as part of your network!

**Step 2:** Close the meeting and remind participants of the date and time of the next meeting.

Thanks to all of you for your participation today. We will see each other in the next session on (date)! I look forward to hearing how you strengthen your hope muscles using the three strategies!





**Session 1.2:**

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**30**  
minutes

## SESSION OVERVIEW

30 minutes



Activities	Summary	Mins.
<p><b>Activity 1:</b> <b>Welcome and Home Practice Review</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Welcome participants.</li> <li>▶ Review the home practice assigned in the previous session, shared in pairs.</li> <li>▶ Summarize lessons learned from the experience.</li> </ul>	<b>5</b>
<p><b>Activity 2:</b> <b>Let's Share a Story</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Presentation of a story about hope.</li> <li>▶ Group discussion of the story.</li> </ul>	<b>10</b>
<p><b>Activity 3:</b> <b>Let's Talk: What does it mean to have hope?</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Compare active hope, which helps us to reach goals in life, to wishful hope, which is wishing for things that are out of reach, and without taking action.</li> <li>▶ Use real-life scenarios to identify wishful vs. active hope.</li> </ul>	<b>10</b>
<p><b>Activity 4:</b> <b>Home Practice</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Explain the home practice assignment, in which participants will apply their three strategies for strengthening hope.</li> </ul>	<b>5</b>



## STEPS FOR SESSION FACILITATION

30 minutes



### 1. Welcome and Home Practice Review (5 mins)



To welcome all participants to the group, creating an environment of energy, trust, and familiarity, and to review the home practice.

#### Welcome (1')

**Step 1:** Warmly welcome the participants to the meeting, telling them about the topic of today's session, hope.

Welcome back to the **Pathways to Wellbeing Program!** We are excited to have you back to explore more about the foundations of how we can improve our wellbeing for ourselves, our families, and our communities. Today's session will focus on hope, what it is, why it is important, and how we can create and strengthen it in our lives.



#### Home Practice Review (4')

**Step 2:** Remind participants that at the end of the last session, they were asked to commit to practicing the learning from the last session in their homes. Review the commitment to select one of their gifts, abilities, or skills to use in daily life, for themselves or to serve someone else.

Ask one or two volunteers to share what they did to exercise their gifts, skills, and abilities and what they learned from it. Then summarize the reflections.

At the start of every session, we will also review the home practice you committed to do, so you can apply what we talked about in the past session to your daily lives.

In the last session, we committed to using at least one of our gifts, skills, and abilities in our daily lives.

I would love to hear from one or two volunteers about their experience. Would someone be willing to share what they did and what they learned from the home practice? **(Wait for 1-2 people to share.)**

Thanks to all of you for sharing your efforts to put your learning into practice. By doing this work and by sharing it, you have helped all of us learn more and to walk a few steps on the Pathway to Wellbeing!



## 2. Let's Share a Story (10 mins)



**To show a real life story of how taking small steps can lead to a greater sense of hope and wellbeing.**

**Step 1:** Present story, asking participants to pay close attention to the details of the story.



To further explore hope, let's watch the story of Keti, a woman from Uganda who has learned a lot about hope in her life.

**Step 2:** Use the following questions to guide a discussion on the story.



- What did you observe in Keti's story?
- **What did Keti do to begin to experience hope?**
- **Have you ever experienced increasing your hope like Keti? What allowed you to increase your hope?**



### SUMMARY

Keti faced incredibly difficult circumstances and lost all hope at one point. However, she acted, using prayer, taking classes, and taking other actions, which boosted her sense of hope.

**Like Keti, if we trust and move toward action, we can strengthen our hope.**

## 3. Let's talk: "What does it mean to have hope?" (10 mins)



**To define active hope that allows us to move toward a better life, instead of keeping us in the same place.**

### Understanding Active Hope (5')

**Step 1:** Guide participants in a brief discussion on hope. Ask them to describe hope, describe why hope is important, and define two different kinds of hope. Then ask participants to give examples of what demonstrating active hope might look like in their lives.



Thank you for sharing! So after hearing a story about how someone learned about hope, how might you describe hope?

Those are excellent descriptions! Hope can be different things, which we will discuss in a moment. But one thing we know: **Hope is very important to our wellbeing!** People that have hope feel more positive in their daily lives. These positive feelings help children get better grades, help us experience less addiction or bad habits, and improve relationships with our family and friends!

However, there are two types of hope: active hope and wishful hope. Wishful hope is based on wishes, or things that you cannot reach. We have this type of hope when we want something that is out of reach, and we won't be able to take steps to reach it. For example, if we say "I hope it does not rain on the day of the festival!", this wish is out of our hands – only God decides when it rains! What are some other examples of wishful hope?

**Active hope is** different from wishful hope. It moves us and motivates us to reach a goal. One example is if I say "I hope I can see my whole family soon", I can take steps to see them, by planning to visit their village, or by inviting them to visit me! Can you think of other examples of active hope?

Active hope is the type of hope that allows us to have positive feelings. This is because when we have a goal, active hope helps us to get to that goal!

- From our story today, did Keti demonstrate wishful hope or active hope?
- How can you tell that she demonstrated that kind of hope?

What might be an example of how we can demonstrate active hope in our lives?

## SUMMARY

Active hope allows us to move toward our dreams, while wishful hope keeps us in the same place.

**By recognizing the difference between these two types of hope, and by taking steps toward active hope, we can improve our wellbeing, and plan for a better future.**

Remember that each week we will ask you to do a Home Practice related to the topic we have discussed in our meeting. This practice is very important for you to continue to learn about the topic through experiencing and using what you have learned in your daily life.

For today's Home Practice, we have identified three ways in which you can daily improve your feelings of hope, or strengthen your hope "muscle"! These are:



**1. Do one positive activity daily.**

Choose one of the activities from the brainstorm that you did in your small group, and take note of how you feel after doing it.

**2. Choose a Hope Hero.**

Think about who inspires you to persevere and have hope, and then learn more about them, asking them questions, or finding out more about their life.

**3. Create your Hope Network.**

Think of 3-5 people who affect you positively who can make up your Hope Network. Talk with each person and ask them permission to go to them when you are feeling discouraged or without hope. Remember people in this group that you feel you can incorporate into your Hope Network. Since you are all going through this learning together, you can think of individuals or everyone in this group as part of your network!

**Step 2:** Close the meeting and remind participants of the date and time of the next meeting.



Thanks to all of you for your participation today. We will see each other in the next session on (date)! I look forward to hearing how you strengthen your hope muscles using the three strategies!

## Additional Notes for Facilitators

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### On Hope as Motivation for the Future

Hope is an essential foundation for anyone to have a happy life, and research backs this up!

#### Definition of Hope

While there are many definitions of hope, in this curriculum, we have created a definition of hope as a vision with associated positive feelings and actions. Positive feelings help us to stay hopeful as we work toward our goals, while positive actions move us closer to our goals.

This definition allows us to move away from the idea of hope as wishful thinking, such as “I hope I win the lottery.” This kind of “hope”, just wishful thinking, can be discouraging in the long run, when people who wish for things don’t get what they wish for.

This more active definition of hope not only gives people positive feelings but allows them to take action toward what they hope for, which gives them a feeling that they can achieve their goals.

#### Hopelessness

Hopelessness is defined as a negative outlook towards oneself and towards the future. It has been connected to sadness, helplessness, anxiety and depression in individuals, and various negative outcomes in society, including partner violence, addiction, and suicide.

#### The Importance of Hope

Not only do we want our participants to be able to avoid all of the negative effects of hopelessness like anxiety and depression, but we want them to gain all of the positive effects that hope can bring! Hope can protect people from starting to feel hopeless in difficult situations, it helps children and adults do better in school, and gives people a sense that life is more meaningful. Hope can even predict better business outcomes, including higher productivity and more sales (Journal of Positive Psychology, 2013)!

Because of all of these positive benefits, we see hope as one of the foundations for helping people live better, more meaningful, more fulfilled lives.

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Hopeful Minds. (n.d.) Hopeful Minds Hope Research Hopeful Minds. <https://hopefulminds.org/hope-research/>

## OTHER RESOURCES

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