

**BLACK MALE FOCUS GROUP
AGE 9-12
FORTE LAUDERDALE, FLORIDA**

Moderator: Ronald English

A. This is a group of young men I'm meeting with here in Fort Lauderdale and all of you look bright-eyed and ready to tell what it is that's on your mind or speak what it is that's on your mind. And we start with number one -- now we don't have to go in that order -- I'm going to give you the question, and whoever wants to start, you can start, okay? we don't have to go in the order.

This is question number one: I want you to think about a time in your life that you were most disappointed. A time in your life that was a rough period, a rough time in your life that you were most disappointed. It could be by circumstance, it could be disappointed by a person with a problem that you met, that you faced, that was kind of tough.

Start with number one, all right? Go ahead.

Ok this is number seven. Just give your number when you start, OK?

7. I guess when my Dad got to bust up --

A. When your Dad what?

7. Got to bust up my Mom. I was disappointed in him because of the things he done.

A. Okay.

7. That's -- that's enough.

A. Yes. Say a little bit more about that, in terms of what happened. How you felt about it.

7. I just didn't like the things -- how he treated my Mom. How he cheated on her. I don't think that's right, though.

A. How would he treat her?

7. He went out with other women.

A. OK. and you happened to find out about that.

7. Yeah.

A. OK. Gotcha. All right. That's what we're talking about. I don't want to go into a whole lot of details; just something along the line of saying: this was a rough time in your life, to present the problem for you. And it was disappointing, because you were disappointed in your father, that he did that.

7. Yeah.

A. OK. Gotcha. All right. Who next? OK. You are -- four.

4. The most disappointing time in my life was when my Mom, she went to the laundry, and she told me do not go outside. And then I went outside, with my friends. We got to the Seven-Eleven and we was coming back, and then a car hit me, and I was disappointed in myself because I didn't listen to her.

A. Were you hurt badly?

4. I got a broken leg.

A. A broken leg. OK. Yeah. So you were disappointed at yourself that you didn't listen to your mother and you went out and got a broken leg from a car accident. OK Gotcha. Next? Who next? OK. Number 9.

9. I was skipping, then I had no way home so I found a bike and I just took it.

A. So you really stole a bike. You stole a bike or you borrowed a bike?

9. I borrowed it.

- A. You borrowed it. Did you take it back?
9. Yeah. I ain't take it back 'cause I (unclear) when it got crashed and stuff.
- A. Oh, OK. But it was somebody else's bike. And did they know that you borrowed it? They did?
9. Yeah. They knew I had it.
- A. They did not know you had it?
9. They did.
- A. They did know you had it. OK. But you felt disappointed that you got hit on the bike? And you had to take them back a busted bike.
9. Yeah.
- A. Gotcha. OK. So who else's hand is up? I want everybody to say something about the most disappointing episode, a rough time in your life, as you had a chance to think about it. OK? Number two.
2. (Unclear) and I was disappointed in myself.
- A. Was that here, locally?
2. In New York.
- A. All right, that's a very scary feeling to get lost on a bus in New York. How long did it take you to get found?
2. Maybe an hour.
- A. About an hour. Yeah. That's scary. You?
- When I almost stole twenty dollars from my mother.

A. When you almost stole twenty dollars from your mother. What stopped you from stealing twenty dollars.

I brought it back.

A. Oh, you brought it back. So you actually had taken it but you just didn't spend it.

I had take it off the computer bank.

A. All right. And you were disappointed in who?

In myself.

A. In yourself for having done that. All right. Who haven't we heard from? That time that you could think about where it was a problem that you found kind of big to handle.

When my mother died.

A. Your mom died when you were about four and your father was there to take care of you. Are you the youngest brother?

Yeah.

A. OK. Kind of a rough time. He took pretty good care of you though, it looks like. Who haven't we heard from? Yes sir-- You are number six.

6. (inaudible)

A. Oh, you're brothers.

No, them two.

A. Oh, you two are brothers. Would you say that it was similar to what your older brother had said? How did you happen -- did you find out the same way he did?

(inaudible)

- A. He took who to the house? Oh I see, he took you two to his girlfriend's house, for a summer vacation.

He told us it was a friend.

- A. OK. When did you find out that it was more than "friend".

We kept on coming up there.

- A. Oh, I see it was more than one time. All right, anybody else? Your time: what was kind of a rough time in your life?

When I got run over by a car. When I got hit by a car when I was running, I was going to school and I was running in the street to go to school, and the bus was on the other side of the street, and my school was on that side, and I ran and the car hit me and I fell down on the floor and I got back up and ran to the court --

- A. How was that disappointing?

When I got hit by the car.

Did it hurt?

No, it didn't. (Laughter)

- A. It didn't hurt? (laughter) Really? You see, one rule I forgot --

I just got hit and then I was walking into the class and the kid said, "Did you get hit by a car?" And then I walked away.

- A. One rule we want to keep --

Did you get hit by the car or you went down when the car was coming?

No, I got hit and then I flied and then I got back up and went--

(Laughter)

- A. Seems like everybody's amazed at how well you recovered when you got hit by that car. That's really something. OK.
Two things I want to say at this point. One is, we want to make sure that we give everybody a chance to speak. Then we want to make sure that we have a chance to listen. And everybody's experience is different. That's why we are around the table talking. (Laughter)
The other thing is: it was him. I was not there and you were not there, so we don't know what happened. So it could be one of those things that we just don't understand, but that was true for him.

You got hit in the stomach?

No, I got hit by here and then I flew and I hit the street floor then I got back up and went. (Hysterical laughter)

You want to get run over again.

- A. Thank you, sir.
Now, before we leave this one, there's somebody else we haven't heard from. We haven't heard from you.
5. My sister told not to play with the (unclear)

You got burned?

No. But it kind of made a little fire.

- A. It scared you. OK. And that was disappointing in what way? How was that disappointing to you?

Because I didn't listen to my sister.

- A. You didn't listen to your sister, you were disobedient to your sister.

I was in the house, I tried to trick my brother--(unclear)

A. So I hear most of you guys talking about freak accidents and stuff like that happened. Or some of you talking about times when you were disappointed in your parents. Some of you talking about times when you were disappointed in yourself. But now as you think about those times when you were disappointed, when there were rough experiences going on in your life, now, question number two is to talk about what are some of the ways that you found help? What were some of the things that inspired you or brought you some comfort? In other words, what were some of the things that helped you deal with that situation that you were disappointed in and disappointed about. I'm going to number five, then I'm coming to number four, number three, and number one, in that order. Number five, what were some of the things that you found helpful, to give you some direction and some support at that time.

5. That's when this man he had a gun he was by my school--

A. A man had a what?

5. A gun. First one day I was walking with my friends then I saw this man then he pull out a gun we went to the school and they call the police--

Q22

A. Tell me what was about that you found -- sounds like you were disappointed that somebody pulled a gun on your friend. And how did that make you feel?

5. Bad.

A. OK. Now what help did you find in that kind of situation, or what kind of help have you found, when you find yourself in situations that are rough?

5. The police.

A. So the police have been a source of help for you in terms of how they showed up at times when you needed some help. All right. You next.

4. When I got hit by the car and I (unclear) was running to get home. I was in trouble because my Mom told me don't go out. I'm in big trouble.

A. So who helped you out of the trouble?

4. I just prayed. (unclear)

A. Prayer was one help, are you saying? Do you remember what kind of prayer did you pray at that time?

4. I didn't really know any prayers so I just said--

A. God help you. OK. So prayer was a help in that. You next. What was the thing that you can remember that was most helpful for you in the situation that was tough?

3. My cousin and my friend (unclear) if the police catch them outside they go into a

House arrests. House arrests.

3. Oh, yeah, HRS.

A. HRS? What's HRS?

You don't know what HRS for?

A. No. You'll have to help me out.

Like you're home alone and (unclear)

I forget what it stands for; HRS is like when people need welfare and food stamps they go there. We don't really need that stuff but my sister she just wanted to get Medicaid over HRS then she got an infection in her eye and she go check her eye.

A. So you found help by someone that came and called the police and--your turn next we heard from number three now we're going to number one. What was your most helpful experience; what was an experience in which you feel you found help or direction over a tough situation.

1. When there was a fire in my house, my house was right here and the fire was right here, my house almost got, the fire was right here it burned up all this house, this fire was going to catch on my house, then we had to get out of the house and then we went to our neighbor's house, way down there, then they called the ambulance, then they put out the fire,

Ambulance?

1. I mean they called the firemen and they put out the fire, and then another day came and there was another fire the fire was right here the fire was like way down there then they burnt up the whole house then they called the ambulance and there was no more fire.

A. So then your house did not catch fire? It was the house next door to you that caught fire?

1. Like this: this my house here this is next door house but in the back like there's a gate it burned the gate you'll see there be black marks but it's not there anymore I was living in Miami that time.

A. All right. Your time.

(Unclear) pointed my gun at them.

A. You had a gun?

Yuh.

Was it real?

No a BB gun.

A. Help me understand who gave you the help in that kind of situation?

I'm trying to understand you had -- somebody was about to attack you?

Yuh.

A. Who came to help you?

Nobody.

A. So you had the BB gun; that was a way you helped yourself?

(unclear)

I'm sorry I misunderstood. You were just playing with the BB gun. Let me try it again. I want you to tell me the things you have found to be most helpful in getting over tough situations that you've just described. Some of you have described situations in which you were disappointed in your parents, because you found out that your father was moving around, and had a girlfriend and he took you to the house. Some of you have talked about situations where you were disappointed in yourself. About what had happened to you. And I want to know when you found that you were disappointed, what was it you found most helpful in getting you out of that tough situation. How about you?

Can I talk?

A. You've given me yours.

I want to do it again.

A. OK, well, wait a minute; let me go round to those that have not talked and then --

Can I have some water?

A. Yeah, have some water. We'll go around until everybody has talked and then get back to you.

What is this?

- A. Just water. All right; number two, how about you?
2. When my brother and sister got lost and we had to call the police to find them and when we finally found them we had to take them in the car and ask them why they left because they had went out somewhere across the street and they went somewhere and we couldn't find them.
- A. All right. Number eight. How about you? What can you think of that was one of the most helpful experiences or persons in your life?
8. My dad.
- A. Okay, how?
8. Because he was there with me and my brother when my mom died.
- A. Good. Very good. I understand that. OK number seven.
7. I guess my mother. She was the one that told us don't worry about it.
- A. So in spite of what you knew was happening to her, she was still encouraging you, "Don't worry about it, your father still loves you." OK. What would you say was most helpful in your life? Want to think about it a little bit while we go to somebody else?

Me, me, me, me, me...

- A. Now let's see who hasn't said anything on this question about what has been the most helpful experience in your life? Who has not said anything? You were the first one to say something. Who has not said anything? Because we've got plenty of questions left? Have you thought about anything yet? You can come back to it if you want to. Let's go to the next question. Most of you have talked about helpful things in terms of people. Have you ever found anything helpful as far as any other kind of help aside from a person. It could either be through something that you read, something that you saw. I want to talk about those kind of resources, those kinds of things that have been helpful to you; something that you read, something that you saw, that was a comfort to you. That was helpful to you at that time. That's

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you had to make and how you went about deciding what to do.

SIDE 2

- A. Okay, a major decision you had to make and then what were the basis of it. Who wants to start? Can anybody think about a major decision you had to make?

Let's everybody take a break, go use the bathroom and come back in five minutes. All right?

- A. Number seven.

- Parental
Carol* 7. I guess when my aunt was moving down to Florida and I had to pick who I wanted to stay with. I had to make the decision. I said I'd stay with my mother; I'd lived with her since I was little; she raised me.

- A. Good. Anybody else? See how simple he said it? And it got to the point that we were trying to get to. He made the decision to come and live with his mother, because he had lived with her most of his life. What was your big decision?

I had twenty dollars then I went to go buy a game; there were so much twenty dollar game nineteen ninety-nine; I want the worst game to pick; I say I wanted this game a long time ago and so I pick it.

- A. Your big decision was picking out a game for twenty dollars. And what influenced you to make that decision?

I just pick Sonar(?) because Sonar sounds fun when I got the game it was boring and then I just I just throw it away.

You what? You throw it away?

- A. You picked it because you liked the name or what?

I just picked it because I like how you get to move through like walls and stuff going around the place and stuff.

- A. Who else has a big decision?

Me, me, me, me!

A. Number one.

1. It was the same thing like him; I could have went to live with my godmother, my mother, or my father.

A. So who did you decide?

1. I came to live with my father for like a week then I went back to live with my mother.

A. And what influenced you to make that decision?

1. Love? I was really gonna pick my godmother.

A. Did somebody influence you to make the decision?

1. No, I had to do it myself.

A. All right, number two.

2. The decision I made was to pick a (unclear) game.

A. I'm not familiar with that.

It's like Nintendo.

A. What's your decision number five?

5. That's when my mom (unlcear)

A. What helped you make that decision?

5. My mom.

A. OK Your mother was an influence on you. What about number four? Question number four. You have to listen before you can answer. How and through what means have these influences reached you? Whoever it was who influenced you to make the decision that you made, how did that get to you, how did that reach you, how did somebody else assist you in making that decision?

1. They bribe you with some toys and candy and all that.

A. Ah, that's true. Anybody else? Number three how have you found influences on your decision? What means did they use to get your attention? Number four.

4. The reason why my parents got me cause it seemed like it was fun.

A. What was fun?

4. Going out with my friends.

A. What were your friends doing when you found out that it was stuff that was fun.

4. They used to steal. But I wasn't going to steal with them. I just used to hang around them.

A. So friends exercise a major decision -- a major influence on what you do. Let me ask you this. Somebody says that parents make our primary decision influences. I heard somebody else say friends. Are there any other influences you can think of? In terms of how you have made some decision and how these influences reached you? What way did they get to you to make a certain decision. You mentioned friends.

Something else. Girls.

A. Girls. All right.

I liked a girl, some boys was messing with her, she told me to beat them up; she looked so pretty, I thought if I could beat the boys up, too. Not any more.

You beat 'em up?

I had a black eye in two of my eyes.

A. There's another way of getting to this question, and that's through the next question, question number five. What methods -- now when I say method of communication I mean do you have an idea what I mean, a way that a message is brought to you; there are various ways of doing that. Now what I want to ask you -- be very -- quiet -- and listen to what I'm saying. Number three? Did you forget your number?

3. No you was talking about -- they used to say there was this girl running around trying to kill kids.

She was possessed by a demon; and then I went over there with my Bible and I started praying for her and then my pastor came in and he was looking at me --

A. You were trying to help in that process. Let me hold that story a minute. Let me ask you what methods of communication easily get your attention? If I wanted to get your attention, if I wanted to send you a special message to get your attention to get you to do something --

I know I know I know I know!

A. What would be the way of doing that?

I know I know I know I know!

A. I'm glad to have all these hands. Just wait. We're going to start with number nine and then we're going around the table. And I want to be able to hear everybody. So that means I want everybody to sit.

(unclear)

A. So if someone offered you a prize or offered you something they will get your attention. Number eight.

8. A girl. That's how you get my attention.

(All) Ahhh!

A. Well, let me ask you stuff like this, not dealing with girls, I'm thinking of stuff like posters, music, TV, video, rap, that kind of stuff.

7. In a bad way or a good way?

A. Either way. But right now you can tell me either way that it has been most helpful to you. But we're saying what message gets over to you by what means. Got it? Go ahead.

7. To get you to buy something? You gonna get me to buy it to see how it is, and I want it.

A. Well, you gotta get the word somehow.

7. I guess the TV.

A. TV is one means. OK. You.

The stereo.

A. How do you get the message about stereo? What is the most effective way to get your attention? If I wanted to get your attention to tell you something, or to get you to do something, what would be the best way of getting your attention. While you think about it, I'm going to number four.

4. Commercials, and TV.

Advertising.

A. What kind of advertising?

Kind?

A. Yeah what kind of advertising?

I scream you scream we all scream for ice cream.

A. OK. Advertising that has a jingle to it. OK. Go ahead.

(unclear) and TV.

A. You've given me the product and I want to know how to get your attention.

Like this people come up and say do me a favor or go get me some water then they give you like a dollar in quarters so you can play games?

A. So somebody can get your attention by offering you some money. What about a sports hero? What about history figures?

1. Whyn't you gimme a chance? I'm on the floor?

A. Who gets your attention most easily?

A radio.

A. A radio. Ok good. Number two.

2. ^{sega} ~~Psycho~~-Genesis games.

A. That's a Nintendo-type game. But if somebody had one of those games, how would they get your attention to know about it? How did you find out about that particular game? How did you know it existed?

2. Because my friend had it.

A. OK. So your friends was an influence and chatted with you so then you wanted to play it. OK. Now question number six, we're moving along here, I like this, we're getting into it. Tell me, of those in your life, who do you think understands you best?

2. My mom.

A. Your mother. All right. Number three.

3. My mother.

A. Mother? All right, number four.

4. My mother.

A. All right. This would be somebody that you think knows you best and really could know how you would be feeling emotionally at any given time. How you would be feeling emotionally and mentally at any given time.

Doctor.

A. Your doctor? What kind of doctor is that?

Pediatrician.

My dentist.

A. Your dentist would know how you feel emotionally at any time of your life? I talking about someone with whom you come in contact pretty closely every day. All right, who?

7. My grandmother.

A. Your grandmother. All right, who?

My brother.

A. Your brother? Your oldest brother? 'Cause you said you had several.

My oldest brother. The one that lives with me.

A. Your oldest brother. Who do you think would pretty well understand you best?

A game?

A. But it doesn't understand you. It's what you put into the game that makes a difference. It can't talk to you.

OK, my best friend.

A. Your best friend. Older, younger than you are?

The same age.

A. OK This is good you're doing great. We're almost finished.

We're almost finished?

Do we get lunch after we do this?

Yes!

A. Number seven. Quiet. Listen. Does anything in the Bible make sense to you? If so, what is it?

1. About God coming back to take all the Christians and all the good people that do the will of God back with Him.

A. All right. That makes sense to you: in terms of when God comes back to take the good people with him. All right. Number two.

2. Uh.

A. OK, number three. I'll come back to you, number two. Anything in the Bible make sense to you?

3. God say he would not... John 3 verse 13

A. John 3 verse 13 makes sense to you. What does John 3 verse 13 say?

3. That God so loved the world that he gave his only begun son --

1. It's John 3 sixteen --

3. I got mixed up.

A. OK. John 3 sixteen.

4. For God so loved the world that he gave his only son that whosoever believes in him shall not die but have everlasting life.

A. Thank you number four. Number two?

2. I forgot the name of it with Eve and Adam...

A. The story about Adam and Eve. All right. Can you think about any part of that story that makes sense to you?

2. I can't remember it, I read it but I can't remember it.

A. What part of the Bible makes more sense to you?

I think the part of the Bible that makes more sense to me is God's talking, one John three sixteen, it says that there is no greater love than the man that lays his life down for the rest. He must know about brothers.

A. OK no greater love. What part makes more sense to you? give me your number.

5. Five! When God comes here to bring you to heaven.

(unclear)

A. All right. That God loves you. What part of the Bible -- we have to learn how to listen --

1. I know.

A. In what part of the Bible did you find that God loves you?

7. I'll have to think about it.

- A. All right. Next? You don't have to remember a particular Scripture, it doesn't have to be a particular verse, it can be a part of anything in the Bible that means something to you.

It says God helps those who help themselves.

- A. OK.

You can't expect God to do everything for you you have to help.

Like um Jesus like we love Jesus.

- A. Is that in a part of the Bible that makes sense to you.

Jesus love all the little children.

- A. The story about Jesus loving little children.

Philippians four nineteen; where it says God will supply all your needs.

- A. OK now this is doing good we're gonna move from that question to question number eight. Listen very carefully. Now as you think about the things in the Bible that have made sense to you, to what extent do these things influence your decisions, affect the decisions you have made. Has there been any time that some part of the Bible that has been helpful to you has also helped you to make a decision to do something. Get that now? Give me your number.

5. Number five. Believe in God, what you said again?

- A. I want you to think about that part of the Bible that has been very helpful to you. That you just talked about. Now think about it in terms of how that particular part of the Bible has help you make a decision. Get a sense of where you want to go or what you want to do in your life. How has the Bible helped you to understand something about what you wasnt to do in your life? Now you got it?

Jesus say, like um I forgot again.

Can I go? Can I go?

Jesus changed my life (unclear) a good boy because the Bible says he's coming. About being good.

A. So since the Bible says he's coming, to be good, he will help change your life--

To be good.

A. To be good. All right. Next, number four.

4. When I was going to beat up somebody and my enemies, and then I remember the Bible says like love your enemies, I didn't crash his face off.

He talkin about my face!

A. Now, he said an enemy he didn't say anybody in particular so we'll just leave it at that. Anybody else that has a part of the Bible that spoke to you when you were trying to make a decision?

When, um, it was just like his, when I was going to fight them, somebody in my classroom he keeps picking with me, picking with me, picking with me, messing with me, since the first days, like a week he was messing with me--

A. What part of the Bible helped you to deal with him?

He was about to be in Georgia right now, I would have punched him, but the Bible -- I didn't, because the Bible told me not to hit him. I really wanted to hit him.

A. You really wanted to hit him but the Bible told you not to. Yeah. Now, anybody else? Number six.

6. I had one before but when you ax the questions I can't remember it.

A. All right, number three.

3. Someone in my class, his name is William, he's bothering me a lot, and once I was gonna fight him, but then, I didn't. He's skinny; if you kick him his legs might fall down, that's why I didn't hit him.

A. OK, but what in the Bible helped you decide not to hit him.

Love your enemies.

A. Love your enemies, OK.

But I don't love him.

A. You don't love him. All right, well, but that part of the Bible did help you think about that. OK. What happened to number one? Number one, come out from under the table. Now, you ready number seven?

7. Nothing.

A. All right number eight.

8. What's the question again?

A. The question is what teaching from the Bible has affected your decision? What teaching from the Bible as you have thought about it, talked about these things, has affected your decisions? And I'd like somebody to have a decision not to clap hands, because that's disturbing on the tape recorder. You can't hear best on the tape recorder. I'm going to let you hear part of what is going on but we won't be able to hear it if you're clapping hands. Go ahead.

(Unclear)

A. OK all right. And that help influence your decision.

Are we on number nine?

A. Yeah. We're about to get to number nine. Now did everybody give us something on number eight?

Number six didn't give you something.

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(End of tape 2)

APPENDIX TO FOCUS GROUP SESSION
FT. LAUDERDALE, FLORIDA -- JULY 19, 1994

(Moderator: Ron English)

What is your view of the church?

- Boy #1: It's a great place to be and a safe place to sleep.
- Boy #2: Church is the place to be when you have a problem.
- Boy #3: A place to worship God.
- Boy #4: It was the church that caused me to change my behavior.
- Boy #5: It changed my life from bad to good . . . It's a good place to learn and think about Jesus.
- Boy #6: It's a place to learn about Jesus. It is my home away from home.
- Boy #7: It helped me change my views and think about how to change my actions.
- Boy #8: It's like a second home, especially on youth night with families and friends. I can also beat out my anger on the drums.
- Boy #9: It's a fun place like a toy. . . a place to play and hear about Jesus.

Ages of boys in focus groups:

<u>BOYS #</u>	<u>AGE</u>
1	9
2	10
3	10
4	10
5	10
6	11
7	13
8	13
9	13 (Former gang member)

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Comments regarding ABS materials:

- (1) Need more pictures
- (2) Use football people or sports heroes in action shots (photos)
- (3) Concerning Peer Pressure abstract cover: "It's ugly!"