



ANSWERS TO **10**

**QUESTIONS**  
YOUNG PEOPLE ASK

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Some names of the young people who are quoted in this brochure have been changed. This publication is not for sale. It is provided as part of a worldwide Bible educational work supported by voluntary donations.

To make a donation, please visit [www.jw.org](http://www.jw.org).

Unless otherwise indicated, Scripture quotations are from the modern-language *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures*.

*Answers to 10 Questions Young People Ask*  
January 2016 Printing

English (ypq-E)

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Watch Tower Bible and Tract  
Society of Pennsylvania

Publishers

Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of  
New York, Inc., Wallkill, New York, U.S.A.

Made in the United States of America

# 1

## Who Am I?

### WHY IT MATTERS

Knowing who you are and what you stand for will help you to make wise decisions when you are under pressure.



### WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

Imagine this scenario: Karen is at a party for no more than ten minutes when she hears a familiar voice behind her.

*“Why are you just standing there?”*

Karen turns to see her friend Jessica clutching two freshly opened bottles. She can tell that they contain alcohol. Jessica holds one bottle right in front of Karen’s face and says, “You’re not too young to have a little *fun*, are you?”

Karen wants to refuse, but Jessica is her friend. And Karen doesn’t want her friend to think she is boring. Besides, Jessica is one of the good girls. And if *she’s* drinking, then it must not be so bad. ‘It’s just a drink,’ Karen tells herself. ‘It’s not like taking drugs.’

**If you were in Karen’s situation, what would you do?**



### STOP AND THINK!

To make a wise decision in this type of situation, you need an *identity*. An identity is an inner sense that tells you who you are and what you stand for. Armed with that knowledge, you’re empowered to control your life instead of letting others control it for you.—1 Corinthians 9:26, 27.

How can you develop that kind of strength? Answering the following questions is a good start.

1

## WHAT ARE MY STRENGTHS?

Knowing your abilities and positive traits will boost your confidence.

**BIBLE EXAMPLE:** The apostle Paul wrote: “Even if I am unskilled in speech, I certainly am not in knowledge.” (2 Corinthians 11:6) With his thorough grasp of the Scriptures, Paul was able to remain firm when others challenged him. He didn’t let their negative remarks weaken his confidence.—2 Corinthians 10:10; 11:5.

### ANALYZE YOURSELF.

Below, write down a *talent* or a *skill* that you possess.

Now describe a strong quality that you have. (For example, are you caring? generous? dependable? punctual?)

2

## WHAT ARE MY WEAKNESSES?

Just as a chain is only as strong as its weakest link, your identity can quickly change for the worse if you let your weaknesses control your life.

**BIBLE EXAMPLE:** Paul was aware of his weaknesses. He wrote: “I really delight in the law of God according to the man I am within, but I see in my body another law warring against the law of my mind and leading me captive to sin’s law.”—Romans 7:22, 23.

### ANALYZE YOURSELF.

What weakness do you need to learn to control?

When you have a strong identity, you are like a firmly rooted tree that can withstand powerful storms



3

## WHAT ARE MY GOALS?

Would you get into a taxi and tell the driver to circle the block repeatedly until his car ran out of fuel? That would be foolish—and costly!

The lesson? Goals give your life direction and keep you from going in circles. You have somewhere to go and a plan of how to get there.

**BIBLE EXAMPLE:** Paul wrote: “The way I am running is not aimlessly.” (1 Corinthians 9: 26) Rather than drift through life letting things happen to him, Paul set goals and then lived in accord with them. —Philippians 3:12-14.

### ANALYZE YOURSELF.

Below, write down three goals that you would like to reach within the next year. \_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_

4

## WHAT ARE MY CONVICTIONS?

Without convictions, you’ll be indecisive. Like a chameleon, you’ll change colors to blend in with your peers—a sure sign that you don’t have your own identity.

In contrast, when your actions are based on your convictions, you maintain your identity—regardless of what others do.

**BIBLE EXAMPLE:** While likely still a teenager, the prophet Daniel “resolved in his heart” that he would obey God’s laws, even though he was separated from his family. (Daniel 1:8) By doing so, he *stayed true to himself*. Daniel lived according to his convictions.

### ANALYZE YOURSELF.

What are your convictions? For example: Do you believe in God? If so, why? What evidence convinces you of his existence?

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Do you believe that God’s moral standards are for your own good? If so, why?

\_\_\_\_\_

In the end, which would you rather be like—a fallen leaf that gets blown around by every mild breeze or a tree that withstands even powerful storms? Strengthen your identity, and you’ll be like that tree. And that will help you answer the question, *Who am I?*

## ACTION PLAN

Look at the three goals you identified under question 3. Now write down one step you can take *this month* toward meeting each goal.

Goal 1 \_\_\_\_\_

Goal 2 \_\_\_\_\_

Goal 3 \_\_\_\_\_

# 2

## Why Do I Worry About My Appearance?

### WHY IT MATTERS

Some things are more important than what you see in the mirror.



### WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

Imagine this scenario: When Julia looks in the mirror, all she sees is *fat*. “I need to lose weight,” she tells herself—even though her parents and friends tell her she’s “stick-thin.”

Recently, Julia has thought about taking extreme measures to lose “just five pounds.” All she has to do is starve herself for a few days . . .

**If you felt the way Julia does, what would you do?**



### STOP AND THINK!

It’s not wrong for you to be concerned about how you look. In fact, the Bible comments favorably on the physical appearance of a number of women and men, including Sarah, Rachel, Abigail, Joseph, and David. The Bible says that a woman named Abishag was “extremely beautiful.”—1 Kings 1:4.

However, many youths are *obsessed* with how they look. That can lead to severe problems. Consider:

- In one study, 58 percent of girls claimed to be overweight, when, in fact, only 17 percent were.
- In another study, 45 percent of women who were actually *underweight* thought that they were too heavy!
- In their quest to lose weight, some youths have fallen victim to anorexia—a life-threatening eating disorder that really amounts to self-starvation.

If you have symptoms of anorexia or any other eating disorder, *get help*. Start by confiding in a parent or another trusted adult. The Bible says: “A true friend shows love at all times, and is a brother who is born for times of distress.”  
—Proverbs 17:17.

## THE BEST IMPROVEMENT YOU CAN MAKE!

Really, it’s the inner person that makes one either attractive or not. Consider King David’s son Absalom. The Bible says:

*“No man was as highly praised for his handsome appearance. . . . There was no flaw in him.”—2 Samuel 14:25.*

Yet, this young man was full of pride, ambition, and treachery! The Bible, therefore, doesn’t paint a pretty picture of Absalom; it portrays him as a man of shameless disloyalty and murderous hatred.

For good reason, the Bible gives us this advice:

*“Clothe yourselves with the new personality.”—Colossians 3:10.*

*“Do not let your adornment be external . . . , but let it be the secret person of the heart.”—1 Peter 3:3, 4.*

While there’s nothing wrong with wanting to look good, far more important than your appearance is your personality. In the long run, praiseworthy qualities will make you more attractive to others than a strong body or a beautiful figure will! “Prettiness can get quick attention,” says a girl named Phylcia, “but who you are on the inside and your good qualities are what people will remember about you the most.”

## A LOOK AT HOW YOU LOOK

Are you often disappointed with the way you look?

YES

NO

Have you ever considered resorting to cosmetic surgery or an extreme diet to correct a physical flaw?

YES

NO

What would you change about your appearance if you could?  
(Circle all that apply.)

HEIGHT

WEIGHT

HAIR

BODY SHAPE

FACE

COMPLEXION

If you answered yes to the first two questions and circled three or more features in the third, consider this: *There’s a good chance that others don’t see you as negatively as you see yourself.* It’s easy to go to extremes and worry about your appearance too much.—1 Samuel 16:7.

Your perception of yourself can be like a reflection in a distorted mirror



## ACTION PLAN

I can take better care of my health by . . .

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For me, a reasonable exercise program would include . . .

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If a friend confides in me that she is taking drastic measures to lose weight, I will . . .

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## DISCOVER MORE!

Watch the video  
*What Your Peers Say—Body Image*  
at [www.jw.org](http://www.jw.org). (Look under  
BIBLE TEACHINGS > TEENAGERS)



# 3

## How Can I Talk to My Parents?

### WHY IT MATTERS

The better you get along with your parents, the smoother your life will be.



### WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

Imagine this scenario: It's Wednesday night. Geoff, 17, is finished with his chores, and he's finally ready for some well-earned time to relax! He turns on the TV and collapses into his favorite chair.

At that moment, Dad appears in the doorway, and he isn't happy.

"Geoffrey! Why are you wasting your time watching TV when you're supposed to be helping your little brother with his homework? You never do as you're told!"

"Here we go again," Geoff mutters, loud enough to be heard.

Dad leans forward. "What did you say, young man?"

"Nothing, Dad," Geoff says with a sigh, rolling his eyes.

Now Dad is really angry. "Don't use that tone with me!" he says sternly.

**If you were Geoff, how might you have prevented this confrontation?**



### STOP AND THINK!

Communicating with your parents is like driving a car. If you encounter a roadblock, you can find another route.

## FOR EXAMPLE:

“I find it difficult to communicate with my father,” says a girl named Leah. “Sometimes I’ll talk to him for a while, and then he’ll say, ‘I’m sorry, were you speaking to me?’”

### LEAH HAS AT LEAST THREE OPTIONS.

**A**

#### Yell at her dad.

Leah screams, “Come on, this is important! Listen!”

**B**

#### Stop talking to her dad.

Leah simply gives up trying to talk to her dad about her problem.

**C**

#### Wait for a better time, and bring up the subject again.

Leah speaks with her dad face-to-face later, or she writes him a letter about her problem.

### Which option would you recommend to Leah?

**CONSIDER:** Leah’s dad is distracted—and thus unaware of her frustration. So if Leah chooses **Option A**, her screaming might seem to come out of nowhere. This option probably won’t make Leah’s dad more receptive to her words, and it won’t show respect and honor for him. (Ephesians 6:2) Really, then, this option will not benefit anyone.

While **Option B** may be the easiest course to take, it’s not the wisest. Why? Because to deal successfully with her problems, Leah needs to talk to her dad—and if he’s going to help her, he needs to know what’s going on in her life. Silence accomplishes neither.

With **Option C**, however, Leah doesn’t let a roadblock become a dead end. Rather, she tries to discuss the subject another time. And if she chooses to write her dad a letter, Leah might feel better right away.

Writing the letter may also help her to formulate exactly what she wants to say. When he reads the letter, Leah’s dad will learn what she was trying to tell him, which may help him to understand her plight better. Option C thus benefits both Leah and her dad. Whether face-to-face or with a letter, this option follows the Bible’s admonition to “pursue the things making for peace.”—Romans 14:19.

### What other options might Leah have?

See if you can think of one, and write it in the space provided. Then write down where that option would likely lead.

Option:

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Consequence:

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Just as you need not let a roadblock be a dead end, you can find a way to get through to your parents

## WISE ADVICE FROM THE BIBLE

“Honor your father and your mother.”  
—Ephesians 6:2.

“Let your words always be gracious.”  
—Colossians 4:6.

“Be quick to listen, slow to speak, slow  
to anger.”—James 1:19.



## AVOID SENDING MIXED MESSAGES

Remember, what you said and what your parents think you said do not always match.

### FOR EXAMPLE:

Your parents ask you why you seem to be in a bad mood. You say, “I don’t want to talk about it.”

But your parents hear: “I don’t trust you enough to confide in you. I’ll talk to my friends about the problem but not to you.”

Imagine that you are facing a difficult problem and your parent offers to help. But you say: “Don’t worry. I can handle it myself.”

Your parents may hear:

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A better response from you might be:

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## ACTION PLAN

The next time I don’t feel like talking to my parents, I will . . .

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If my parent forces me to talk about a subject that I am reluctant to discuss, I will . . .

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# 4

## How Can I Fix My Mistakes?

### WHY IT MATTERS

Admitting your mistakes will make you a more responsible and trustworthy person.



### WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

Imagine this scenario: While playing with his friends, Tim throws a ball that crashes through a neighbor's window.

If you were Tim, what would you do?



### STOP AND THINK!

#### YOU HAVE THREE OPTIONS:

- A** Run.
- B** Blame someone else.
- C** Tell the neighbor what happened, and offer to pay for the damages.

You could be tempted to select Option A. But there are always good reasons for you to admit your mistakes—whether they involve a broken window or anything else.



## THREE REASONS TO ADMIT YOUR MISTAKES

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### 1 It's the right thing to do.

The Bible says: "We wish to conduct ourselves honestly in all things."—Hebrews 13:18.

### 2 People are more likely to forgive those who admit their mistakes.

The Bible says: "The one covering over his transgressions will not succeed, but whoever confesses and abandons them will be shown mercy."—Proverbs 28:13.

### 3 Most important, it pleases God.

The Bible says: "Jehovah detests a devious person, but His close friendship is with the upright."—Proverbs 3:32.

Karina, 20, tried to keep a speeding ticket a secret from her dad. But she couldn't keep it hidden forever. "About a year later," Karina says, "my dad noticed a speeding ticket under my name. I got into so much trouble!"

Lesson learned? Karina says: "Keeping mistakes a secret only makes things worse. You still pay for them later on!"

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## HOW TO LEARN FROM YOUR MISTAKES

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The Bible says: "We all make mistakes many times." (James 3:2, footnote) And as we have seen, it is a sign of humility and maturity to admit your mistakes—and to do so right away.

The next step is to *learn* from your mistakes. A girl named Vera says: "I try to view each mistake as a learning experience and let it be a lesson that will help me to be a better person and handle the situation differently the next time." Let's see how you can do that.

**You borrow your father's bike and damage it. What would you do next?**

- ▶ Say nothing and hope your dad doesn't notice.
- ▶ Tell your dad exactly what happened.
- ▶ Tell your dad what happened but blame someone else.

**You fail a test because you did not study for it. What would you do next?**

- ▶ Blame the test.
- ▶ Accept responsibility for your failing grade.
- ▶ Claim that the teacher has something against you.

Now look back at the preceding scenarios, and try to imagine that you are (1) your dad and (2) your teacher. What would your dad and your teacher think of you if you readily admitted your mistakes? What would they think of you if you covered up your mistakes?

**Now think about a mistake that you made during the past year and answer the following questions.**

**What was the mistake? How did you handle that mistake?**

- ▶ I covered it up.
- ▶ I blamed someone else for it.
- ▶ I readily admitted it.

**If you didn't admit your mistake, how did you feel afterward?**

- ▶ Great—I got away with it!
- ▶ Guilty—I should have told the truth.

**How could you have handled the situation better?**

**What did you learn from your mistake?**



Dwelling on past mistakes is like staring in the rearview mirror while driving a car

## WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Why do some people hold back from admitting their mistakes?

What will people think of you if you always try to cover up your mistakes, but what will they think of you if you admit your mistakes?—Luke 16:10.

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## ACTION PLAN

During the next 12 months, what goal could you set with regard to handling your mistakes?

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# 5

## What if I'm Being Bullied at School?

### WHY IT MATTERS

How you respond can make things better—or worse.

### WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

Imagine this scenario: Thomas doesn't want to go to school today. Or tomorrow. Or ever again. It all started three months ago when his schoolmates spread vicious rumors about him. Then came the nicknames. Sometimes someone will knock Thomas' textbooks out of his hands and act as if it were an accident, or one person in a group behind him will shove him, and by the time Thomas turns around, he can't tell who did it. Yesterday, the bullying took an even more sinister turn when Thomas received an online threat . . .

*If you were Thomas, how would you respond?*



### STOP AND THINK!

You are not totally powerless! In fact, you can fight a bully without using your fists. How?

- **DON'T REACT.** The Bible says: “A stupid person gives vent to all his feelings, but the wise one calmly keeps them in check.” (Proverbs 29:11) If you remain as calm as possible—at least on the outside—those bullying you may well lose interest.
- **DON'T RETALIATE.** The Bible says: “Return evil for evil to no one.” (Romans 12:17) Seeking revenge will only make the situation worse.
- **DON'T WALK INTO TROUBLE.** The Bible says: “The shrewd one sees the danger and conceals himself.” (Proverbs 22:3) To the extent possible, avoid people who could cause trouble, and avoid situations where bullying may occur.
- **TRY AN UNEXPECTED RESPONSE.** The Bible says: “A mild answer turns away rage.” (Proverbs 15:1) You can even try humor. For example, if a bully asserts that you’re overweight, you could shrug your shoulders and say, “I guess I could lose a few pounds!”
- **WALK AWAY.** “Silence shows that you are mature and that you are stronger than the person harassing you,” says 19-year-old Nora. “It demonstrates self-control—something the bully doesn’t have.”—2 Timothy 2:24.
- **WORK ON YOUR SELF-CONFIDENCE.** Bullies can often detect those who think negatively of themselves and who are thus not likely to fight back. In contrast, many bullies will back off if they see that you aren’t giving them any power over you.
- **TELL SOMEONE.** A former schoolteacher says: “I would urge anyone who is being bullied to speak up. It’s the right thing to do, and it can prevent someone else from being bullied.”

## DID YOU KNOW?

Besides physical assaults, bullying can also include:



**Verbal attacks.** “I’ll never forget the names they called me or the things they said. They made me feel worthless, unwanted, and good-for-nothing. I’d rather have been given a black eye.”—Celine, 20.



**Social isolation.** “My schoolmates started to avoid me. They would make it seem that there was no room at the lunch table, so I couldn’t sit with them. For the whole year, I cried and ate alone.”—Haley, 18.



**Cyberbullying.** “With just a few keystrokes on a computer, you can ruin someone’s reputation—or even his life. It sounds like an overstatement, but it can happen!”—Daniel, 14.

# BULLYING QUIZ

## TRUE OR FALSE

- 1 Bullying has been around for thousands of years.
- 2 Bullying is just harmless teasing. It's not that serious.
- 3 The best way to stop a bully is to fight back.
- 4 If you witness bullying, it's best to ignore it.
- 5 Beneath the boastful talk, bullies are often insecure.
- 6 Bullies can change.

## ANSWERS

- 1 **True.** For example, the Bible tells of the Nephilim—a group whose name means “Those Who Cause Others to Fall Down.”—Genesis 6:4.
- 2 **False.** Bullying is a contributing factor in a large number of youth suicides.
- 3 **False.** Bullies are often physically stronger than their victims, so attempts at retaliation are futile.
- 4 **False.** In this case, there's no such thing as an innocent bystander. If you see bullying and don't say anything, you may become part of the problem rather than part of the solution.
- 5 **True.** Although some bullies have a big ego, many are insecure and put others down to make themselves feel better.
- 6 **True.** With help, bullies can change the way they think and act.

## ACTION PLAN

If I am confronted by a bully, I will do or say the following:

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Self-confidence will give you a power that the bully does not possess

## DISCOVER MORE!

Watch the whiteboard animation *Beat a Bully Without Using Your Fists* at [www.jw.org](http://www.jw.org). (Look under BIBLE TEACHINGS > TEENAGERS)



# 6

## How Can I Resist Peer Pressure?

### WHY IT MATTERS

When you stand up for yourself, you will be in control of your life, instead of letting others control it for you.



### WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

Imagine this scenario: As two of his schoolmates approach, Brian feels a knot in his stomach. Twice already this week, they've tried to get him to smoke. This will be their third attempt.

The first boy speaks:

"All alone again? Let me introduce you to a friend."

He underscores the word "friend" with a wink as he takes something out of his pocket and extends his hand toward Brian.

Brian sees the cigarette between the boy's thumb and forefinger. The knot in Brian's stomach gets even tighter.

"Sorry," Brian says. "I've already told you that I don't . . ."

The second boy interrupts: "Don't be such a coward!"

"I'm not!" Brian summons the courage to say.

The second boy places his arm around Brian's shoulder. "Just take it," he says softly.

The first boy moves the cigarette closer to Brian's face and adds in a whisper: "We won't tell anyone. No one will ever know."

**If you were Brian, how would you respond?**



## STOP AND THINK!

Have Brian's peers really thought about what they are doing? Have they made their own decisions? Not likely. In general, they have yielded to the influence of others. They want to be accepted, so they allow others to shape what they do.

If you were confronted with the same situation, how could you choose a different path and resist peer pressure?

### 1 ANTICIPATE

**The Bible says: "The shrewd one sees the danger and conceals himself, but the inexperienced keep right on going and suffer the consequences." —Proverbs 22:3.**

Often, you can see trouble in advance. For example, suppose you see a group of your schoolmates up ahead, and they're smoking. By anticipating a problem, you'll be ready to deal with it.

### 2 THINK

**The Bible says: "Maintain a good conscience."—1 Peter 3:16.**

Ask yourself, 'How will I feel in the long run if I go along with the crowd?' True, you might temporarily avoid the disapproval of your peers. But how will you feel later? Are you willing to sacrifice your identity just to please your classmates?—Exodus 23:2.

### 3 DECIDE

**The Bible says: "The wise one is cautious."—Proverbs 14:16.**

Sooner or later, we have to make a choice and live with the consequences. The Bible tells of men like Joseph, Job, and Jesus, who all made the right choice. It also tells of Cain, Esau, and Judas, who made bad choices. What will *you* do?

The Bible says: "Act with faithfulness." (Psalm 37:3) If you've already thought about the consequences and made up your mind, *stating* your position can be surprisingly easy—and rewarding.

Don't worry—you don't have to give your peers a lecture. A simple but firm *NO* may suffice. Or to make your nonnegotiable stand clear, you could say:

**"Count me out!"**

**"I don't do that sort of thing!"**

**"Come on, you know me better than that!"**

The key is to respond promptly and with conviction. If you do, you might be surprised at how quickly your peers will back off!

## DEALING WITH RIDICULE

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What if your peers mock you? What if they say, “What’s wrong—are you a coward?” Recognize this sort of taunt for what it is—crude peer pressure. How can you respond? You have at least two options.

**You could absorb the taunt.** (“You’re right, I am scared!” Then briefly state your reason.)

**You could return the pressure. State your reason for refusing, and then appeal to your peers’ intellect.** (“I thought you were too smart to smoke!”)

If your peers continue to taunt you, *walk away!* Remember, the longer you stay, the more intense the pressure will become. By leaving the scene, you show that you refuse to let others change who you are.

Realistically, you can’t hide from peer pressure. But you can decide what you want to do, state your position, and take control. In the end, the choice is yours!—Joshua 24:15.

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## ACTION PLAN

I can prepare myself to resist peer pressure by . . .

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If my peers try to pressure me into wrong conduct, I will . . .

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If you yield to pressure from your peers, you become like a robot that is under their control

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## DISCOVER MORE!

Watch the whiteboard animation *Stand Up to Peer Pressure!* at [www.jw.org](http://www.jw.org). (Look under BIBLE TEACHINGS > TEENAGERS)



# 7

## How Can I Deal With the Pressure to Have Sex?

### WHY IT MATTERS

Your decisions about sex will have far-reaching effects on your future.



### WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

Imagine this scenario: Heather has been seeing Mike for only two months, but she feels as if she's known him forever. They text each other constantly, they talk for hours at a time on the phone, and they can even finish each other's sentences! But now Mike wants more than conversation.

During the past two months, Mike and Heather have done nothing more than hold hands and briefly kiss. Heather doesn't want to go further. But she doesn't want to lose Mike either. No one makes her feel so beautiful, so special. 'Besides,' she tells herself, 'Mike and I are in love . . .'

**If you are old enough to date and you were in Heather's situation, what would you do next?**



### STOP AND THINK!

If you defy a physical law, such as the law of gravity, you will suffer the consequences. The same is true if you defy a moral law, such as the one that states: "Abstain from sexual immorality."—1 Thessalonians 4:3.

What are the consequences of disobeying that command? The Bible says: "Whoever practices sexual immorality is sinning against his own body." (1 Corinthians 6:18) How is that true?

Researchers have found that many youths who have had premarital sex usually experience one or more of the following consequences.

- **DISTRESS.** Most youths who have engaged in premarital sex say that they regretted it afterward.
- **DISTRUST.** After having sex, each partner begins to wonder, 'Who else has he/she had sex with?'
- **DISILLUSIONMENT.** Deep down, many girls would prefer someone who will *protect* them, not take advantage of them. And many boys find that they are less attracted to a girl who has given in to their advances.

**The bottom line:** If you give in to premarital sex, you degrade yourself by forfeiting something precious. (Romans 1:24) Your body is far too valuable to give away!

Show that you have the strength of character to "abstain from sexual immorality." (1 Thessalonians 4:3) Then, if you do marry one day, you *can* have sex. And you'll be able to enjoy it fully, without the worries, regrets, and insecurities that are so often part of the aftermath of premarital sex.—Proverbs 7:22, 23; 1 Corinthians 7:3.



Sex is a gift from God for married persons only. Premarital sex is an abuse of that gift. It's like taking a beautiful garment someone gave you and using it as a cleaning cloth

## FOR GIRLS ONLY



A number of boys have said that they would never marry a girl they have had sex with. Why? Because they prefer someone who is chaste!

Does that surprise you—perhaps even anger you? Then remember this: Movies and TV shows glamorize teen sex and make it look like harmless fun or even true love.

But don't be naive! Those who would try to coax you into premarital sex are only looking out for their own interests. —1 Corinthians 13:4, 5.

# FOR BOYS ONLY



If you are dating, ask yourself, ‘Do I really care for my girlfriend?’ If your answer is yes, how can you best show it? By having the *strength* to uphold God’s laws, the *wisdom* to avoid tempting circumstances, and the *love* to look out for her interests.

If you have such qualities, then likely your girlfriend’s feelings will be similar to those of the morally upright Shulammite who said: “My dear one is mine and I am his.” (Song of Solomon 2:16) In short, she will love you even more!

## WHAT DO YOU THINK?

- ▶ Would anyone who truly loves you endanger your physical and emotional well-being?
- ▶ Would anyone who truly cares for you tempt you to jeopardize your relationship with God?—Hebrews 13:4.

## ACTION PLAN

How will you respond if someone asks you to have sex?

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What circumstances would make it more difficult for you to say no?

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How will you avoid those circumstances?

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### TIP

If someone tries to coax you into sex by saying, “If you love me, you’ll do this,” firmly reply, “If you love me, you won’t ask!”

### TIP

When it comes to conduct with the opposite sex, a good rule to follow is this: If it’s something you wouldn’t want your parents to see you doing, you shouldn’t be doing it.

# 8

## What Should I Know About Sexual Assault?

### WHY IT MATTERS

Each year millions of people are raped or otherwise sexually abused, and young people are a prime target.



### WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

Annette's attacker threw her to the ground before she realized what was happening. "I tried everything I could to fight him off," she says. "I tried to scream, but only air escaped my lungs. I pushed, kicked, punched, and scratched. And that's when I felt a knife pierce my skin. I went completely limp."

**If you were in a situation like that, how would you react?**



### STOP AND THINK!

While you might be prepared—perhaps by being alert when you travel outdoors at night—bad things can happen. "The swift do not always win the race," says the Bible, "nor do those with knowledge always have success, because time and unexpected events overtake them all."—Ecclesiastes 9:11.

Some youths, like Annette, are assaulted by a stranger. Others are attacked by an acquaintance or even a family member. At just ten years of age, Natalie was sexually abused by a teenager who lived near her home. "I was so scared and ashamed that at first I didn't tell anyone," she says.

## YOU ARE NOT TO BLAME

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Annette still deals with feelings of guilt over what happened. “I keep playing that night over and over again in my head,” she says. “I feel as though I should have tried harder to fight him off. The fact is, after being stabbed, I was paralyzed with fear. I couldn’t do anything more, but I feel that I *should* have.”

Natalie also struggles with feelings of guilt. “I shouldn’t have been so trusting,” she says. “My parents had a rule that my sister and I had to stay together when we played outside, but I didn’t listen. So I feel I gave my neighbor the opportunity to hurt me. What happened affected my family, and I feel responsible for causing them so much pain. I struggle with that the most.”

If your feelings are similar to those of Annette or Natalie, keep foremost in mind that a person who is raped is *not a willing participant*. Some people make the issue seem less serious, using the excuse that it is normal for boys to act that way or that victims of rape were asking for it. But no one deserves to be raped. If you were the victim of such a heinous act, *you are not to blame!*

Of course, reading the statement “you are not to blame” is easy; believing it may be much more difficult. Some hold in their feelings about what happened and suffer from guilt and other negative emotions. But who is best served by silence—you or the abuser? You owe it to yourself to consider another option.

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## TELLING YOUR STORY

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Your feelings might be too heavy for you to carry by yourself. Why not get help by talking to someone about them?

The Bible tells us that at the height of his personal turmoil, the righteous man Job said: “I will speak out in my bitter distress!” (Job 10:1) You may benefit from doing the same. Talking to a trusted confidant can help you to come to terms with what happened and help you to gain relief from overwhelming emotions.

Annette found that to be true. She says: “I talked to a close friend, and she urged me to speak with a couple of Christian elders in my congregation. I’m glad I did. They sat down with me on several occasions and told me exactly what I needed to hear—that what happened was not my fault. *None* of it was my fault.”

Natalie talked to her parents about the abuse. “They supported me,” she says. “They encouraged me to talk about it, and that helped me not to be so sad and angry inside.”

Natalie also found comfort in prayer. “Talking to God helped me,” she says, “especially at those times when I felt that I couldn’t open up to another human. When I pray, I can speak freely. It gives me a real sense of peace and calm.”

You too can find that there is “a time to heal.” (Ecclesiastes 3:3) Take care of yourself physically and emotionally. Get needed rest. And most of all, rely on the God of all comfort, Jehovah.—2 Corinthians 1:3, 4.



## IF YOU ARE OLD ENOUGH TO DATE

If you are a girl and you are being pressured to engage in unclean conduct, there's nothing wrong with firmly stating, "Don't do that!" or, "Take your hand off me!" Don't hold back out of fear that you'll lose your boyfriend. If he breaks up with you over this issue, he's not worth keeping! You deserve a real man, one who respects your body and your principles.

### ACTION PLAN

When I feel guilty about what happened, I will . . .

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A trustworthy adult I could confide in is . . .

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### DISCOVER MORE!

Watch the video *What Your Peers Say—Sexual Harassment* at [www.jw.org](http://www.jw.org). (Look under BIBLE TEACHINGS > TEENAGERS)



## SEXUAL HARASSMENT QUIZ

"In middle school, boys would pull on the back of my bra and make derogatory comments—like how much better I would feel once I had sex with them."—Coretta.

Do you think that those boys were

- A Teasing her?       B Flirting with her?       C Sexually harassing her?

"On the bus, a boy started saying nasty things to me and grabbing me. I smacked his hand away and told him to move. He looked at me like I was crazy."—Candice.

What do you think this boy was doing to Candice?

- A Teasing her?       B Flirting with her?       C Sexually harassing her?

"Last year, a boy kept telling me that he liked me and that he wanted to go out with me, even though I constantly told him no. Sometimes, he rubbed my arm. I told him to stop, but he wouldn't. Then, while I was tying my shoe, he smacked my rear end."—Bethany.

In your opinion, was this boy:

- A Teasing her?       B Flirting with her?       C Sexually harassing her?

The correct choice for all three is C.

What makes sexual harassment different from flirting or teasing?

Sexual harassment is one-sided. It continues even when the victim tells the person to stop.  
Harassment is serious. It can lead to sexual violence.

# 9

## Should I Believe in Evolution?

### WHY IT MATTERS

If evolution is true, life has no lasting purpose. If creation is true, we can find satisfying answers to questions about life and the future.



### WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

Imagine this scenario: Alex is confused. He has always believed in God and in creation. But today his biology teacher forcefully claimed that evolution is a fact, that it is based on credible scientific research. Alex doesn't want to appear foolish. 'After all,' he says to himself, 'if scientists have proved evolution to be true, who am I to question them?'

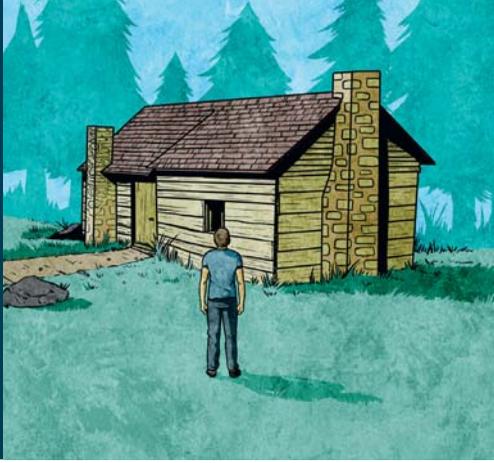
**If you were Alex, would you accept evolution just because the textbooks present it as fact?**



### STOP AND THINK!

People on *both* sides of the debate are often quick to state *what* they believe without really knowing *why* they believe it.

- ▶ Some people believe in creation simply because that's what they've been taught at church.
- ▶ Some people believe in evolution simply because that's what they've been taught at school.



Claiming that life did not have a Creator is as absurd as claiming that this house did not have a builder

## SIX QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

The Bible says: “Every house is constructed by someone, but the one who constructed all things is God.” (Hebrews 3:4) Is that reasonable to believe?

**CLAIM:** Everything in the universe came as a result of a random big bang.

- 1 Who or what caused the big bang?
- 2 Which makes more sense—that everything came from nothing or that everything came from someone?

**CLAIM:** Humans evolved from animals.

- 3 If humans evolved from animals—from apes, for example—why is there such a huge gap between the intellectual abilities of humans and those of apes?
- 4 Why are even the most “basic” forms of life so incredibly complex?

**CLAIM:** Evolution is a proven fact.

- 5 Has the person making this claim investigated the evidence for himself?
- 6 How many people believe in evolution simply because they have been *told* that all intelligent people believe in it?

“If you were walking through the forest and discovered a beautiful house, would you think: ‘How fascinating! The trees must have fallen in just the right way to make this house.’ Of course not! It’s just not reasonable. So why should we believe that everything in the universe just happened to come about?”—Julia.

“Imagine that someone told you that there was an explosion at a printing plant and that the ink spattered onto the walls and ceilings and formed the text of an unabridged dictionary. Would you believe it?”—Gwen.

## WHY BELIEVE IN GOD?

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The Bible encourages you to use your “power of reason.” (Romans 12:1) That means your belief in God should not be based merely on

**EMOTION** (I just feel that there must be a higher power)

**THE INFLUENCE OF OTHERS** (I live in a religious community)

**PRESSURE** (My parents raised me to believe in God  
—I had no choice)

Instead, you should have sound reasons for your belief.

“When I’m in class listening to the teacher explain how our bodies function, there’s no doubt in my mind that God exists. Each part of the body has its own function, down to the smallest detail, and these functions are often carried out without our awareness. The human body truly is mind-boggling!”—Teresa.

“When I see a skyscraper, a cruise ship, or a car, I ask myself, ‘Who built this?’ It takes intelligent people to build a car, for example, because so many small components have to work just right for the whole thing to function. And if cars have to be designed by someone, then so do we humans.”—Richard.

“The more I studied science, the less credible evolution seemed. . . . To me, it takes more ‘faith’ to believe in evolution than to believe in a Creator.”—Anthony.

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## TO THINK ABOUT

Despite decades of research, scientists have yet to come up with an explanation for evolution that they can all agree on. If scientists can’t agree on evolution—and they are supposed to be the experts—are you wrong to question the theory?

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## ACTION PLAN

Imagine that a schoolmate says to you: “I don’t believe in God. Do you?” Write down what you would say.

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## DISCOVER MORE!

Watch the video *What Your Peers Say—Belief in God* at [www.jw.org](http://www.jw.org). (Look under BIBLE TEACHINGS > TEENAGERS)



# 10

## How Can the Bible Help Me?

### WHY IT MATTERS

The Bible says that “all Scripture is inspired of God.” (2 Timothy 3:16) If this is true, then the Bible can give you the direction you need.



### WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

Imagine this scenario: David is driving in an area where *nothing* looks familiar. The street signs and landmarks show that he is not where he should be by now. David realizes that he is lost. He must have taken a wrong turn at some point in his journey.

If you were David, what would you do?



### STOP AND THINK!

You have several options:

- A Ask for directions.
- B Consult a map, or use a GPS.
- C Keep driving, hoping that somehow you will find your way.

Obviously, Option C is the *least* effective.

Option B has an advantage over the first. After all, a map or a GPS will be at hand throughout the journey, helping you to guide your course.

The Bible can help you in a similar way!

This best-selling book can

- ▶ guide you through life’s problems
- ▶ help you to learn about yourself and become a better person
- ▶ show you how to have the best life ever



## ANSWERING LIFE'S BIG QUESTIONS

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From the moment we can talk, we ask questions.

**Why is the sky blue?**

**What are the stars made of?**

Later we begin to ask questions about the world around us.

**Why do bad things happen?**

**Why do people die?**

What if the answers to those questions have been in the Bible all along?

Many people say that the Bible is full of myths and legends, that it's outdated, or that it's just too hard to understand. But is the Bible really the problem, or is what people have heard about the Bible the real problem? Could they be misinformed?

For example, people think that the Bible says that God controls the world. But how could that be? This world is out of control! It is full of pain and suffering, sickness and death, poverty and disaster. How could a loving God be responsible for all of this?

Would you like to know the answer? What the Bible says about who controls the world may surprise you!

Likely you noticed that the advice found in this brochure is based on the Bible. Jehovah's Witnesses are convinced that the Bible is a reliable source of guidance. That's because it is "inspired of God and beneficial for teaching, for reproving, for setting things straight." (2 Timothy 3:16, 17) You owe it to yourself to examine this ancient—yet modern—book!

## DISCOVER MORE!

Watch the video *Why Study the Bible?* at [www.jw.org](http://www.jw.org).

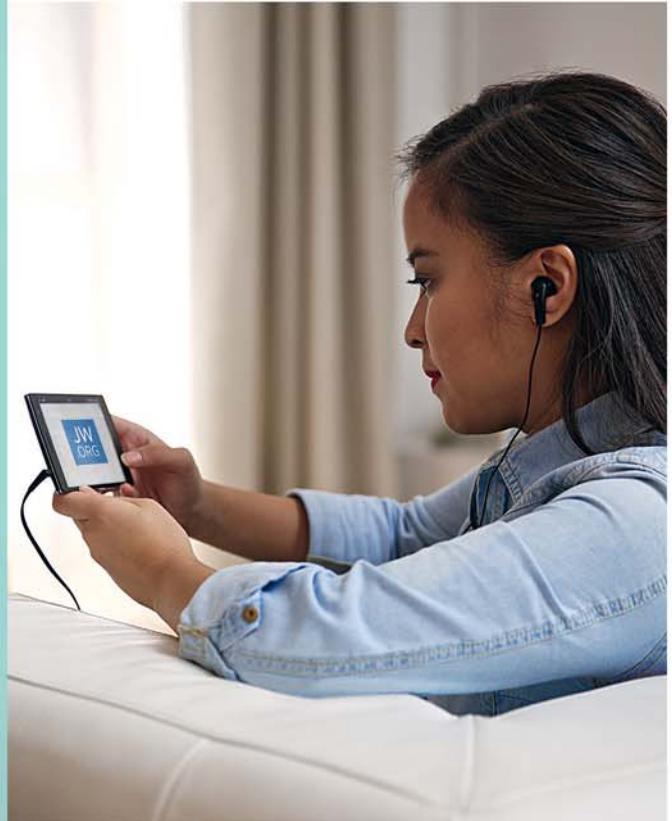


# Help for Young People

Find answers to questions such as:

- ▶ Who Am I?
- ▶ Why Do I Worry About My Appearance?
- ▶ How Can I Talk to My Parents?
- ▶ How Can I Fix My Mistakes?
- ▶ What if I'm Being Bullied at School?
- ▶ How Can I Resist Peer Pressure?
- ▶ How Can I Deal With the Pressure to Have Sex?
- ▶ What Should I Know About Sexual Assault?
- ▶ Should I Believe in Evolution?
- ▶ How Can the Bible Help Me?

These questions are addressed in this brochure.



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