



'I HAVE LOVED BEING ABLE TO TALK WITH
SOMEONE ABOUT WHO I AM AND FOR
SOMEONE TO LISTEN FOR ONCE'

- Rachel, 13

Rooted is not a programme, it's not something that you 'do' for ten weeks with a group of young people.

Rooted is a way of being, a way of thinking about long-term relational ministry with young people. Rooted works in any context, with any level of faith development and with any level of ability.

Rooted is adaptable, accessible, invitational and creative.

The Rooted model places the young person at the centre, and seeks to provide space for that young person to grow, flourish and be nurtured in a safe, committed and compassionate Christian community.

Rooted aims to unlock the potential in each young person, enabling them to be the very best version of themselves, enabling them to be all that God intended them to be.

Rooted embraces the messiness of life and encourages young people to wrestle with big questions authentically.

The material contained within this resource gives you ideas for helping young people to explore their identity and self-worth.

As a leader, you have the privilege to journey alongside these young people and help them in their exploration, whilst sharing something of your own journey so far. You will notice that there is very little in the way of explicit 'faith discussion' or 'God-slot'-type material. Instead, within the material for each theme, you will find several prompts and questions for leaders designed to open up discussion around sharing testimonies or exploring the Bible. I hope that you will naturally, authentically and appropriately share your own experience of how faith and life meld together as you spend time with your group.

Rooted isn't about the activities you 'do', the venue you 'inhabit' or the resources you can provide. It is about facilitating genuine conversation that develops positive, meaningful and long-term relationships.

The Rooted material in this resource covers nine key themes (outlined on the next page) and is designed to be adaptable to any context. The suggestions for activities are exactly that – suggestions. You should absolutely expect to mould and shape them to suit your context and the young people you are working with. The tenth session will help you explore 'What next?' for your group.

If you're not already in contact with a group of young people, you might be wondering how you can even begin to develop Rooted in your community. At the end of this book you'll find some advice on running your own Rooted Hub - a tried and tested approach that will help you make initial connections with young people in your area.

I pray that God will use you to share his love with young people as they discover what difference his love can make to the challenges and adventures of life.



Lucy Pearson

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Rooted Pioneer*



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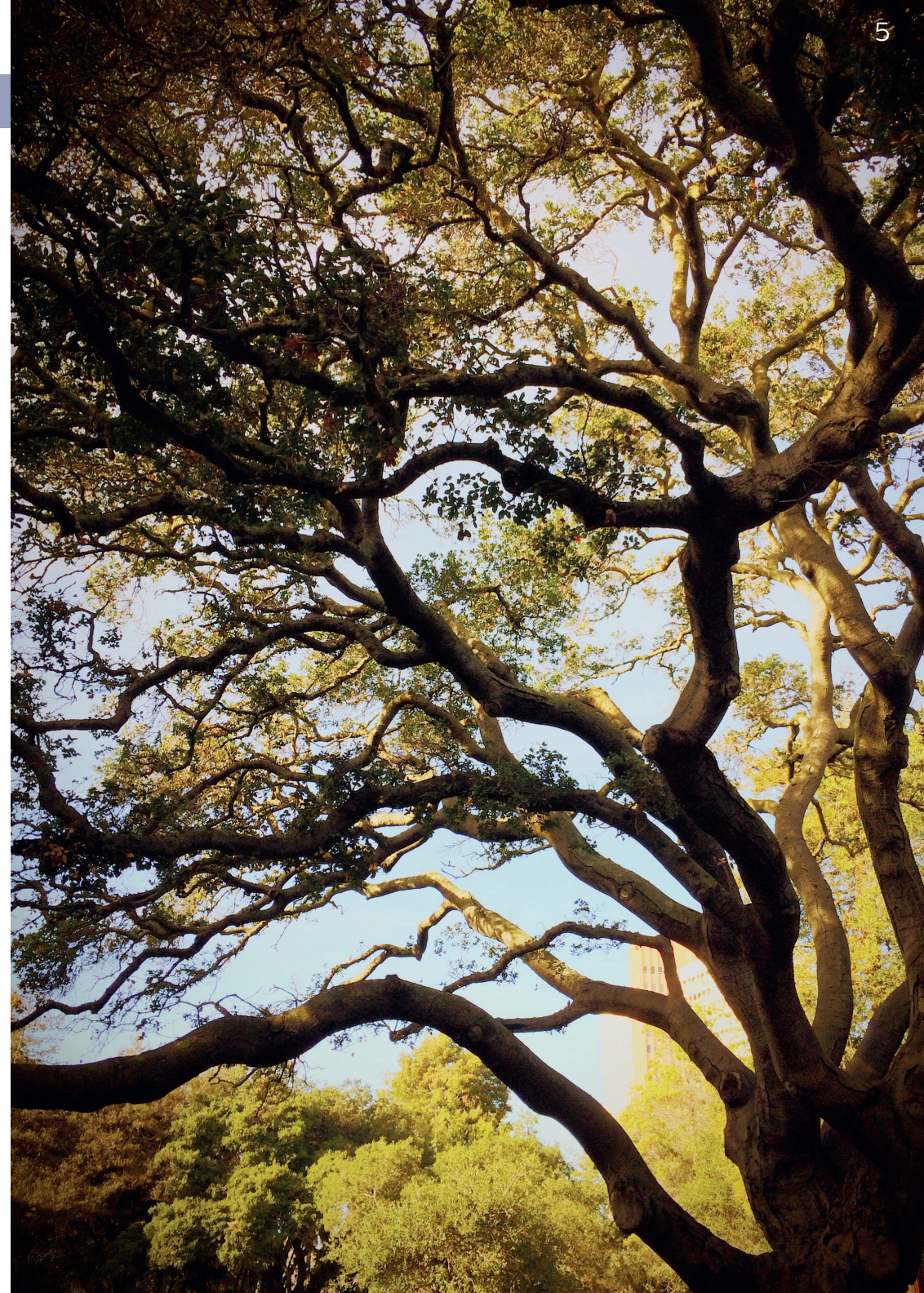
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WHERE DO I BEGIN?

A few questions to consider before embarking
on the Rooted journey...

- Who are you working with? Why are you doing this?
(For advice on making initial connections with young people in your community turn to the 'Rooted Hubs' section at the back of this book)
- Who will work with you on your Rooted team?
- Where will you meet?
- What resources do you have?
- What are the young people expecting?
- How will you explain to the young people what Rooted is?
- Are these young people exploring faith?
- Are there any particular issues that you want to focus on?
- How might you look to adapt some of the material in this resource to better suit your context? *(eg If the group you are working with doesn't enjoy creativity - what activity would they enjoy? Perhaps sport, drama, outdoor activities, etc. How can you make sure your activities will help you to relay the message?)*
- Have you made sure that your group gatherings will adhere to the safeguarding policies of your organisation? What additional pastoral support will you offer? *(You might consider a mentoring programme and/or referrals to other agencies or key workers.)*
- What's next? (See page 44 for a few ideas.)





WHAT IS MY NAME?

Objectives:

- For the group to get to know one another and gain an understanding of what their time together will be about.
- For the leaders to gain an understanding of the group dynamic.

EXPLORING IDENTITY

This may be the first time the group has met and some may be feeling uneasy. It's good to take the opportunity to make it clear that this is a safe space for them to explore new ideas, ask big questions and try new skills – but most importantly, it is a space for them to be themselves.

Identity can be a challenging subject for many young people, so be prepared for some difficult, but honest conversations. Make sure you have created a structure, in line with your organisation's safeguarding policy, around your Rooted group that offers extra support to young people who need it. This might include a mentoring programme, referrals to other agencies or key workers.

Suggested activities

Discussion

My name

Invite each person in the group to share the meaning of their name – if they know it! (If they don't know, a quick google should help!) Talk about the importance of names – and how

they form a foundational part of identity. If someone asks who you are, usually the first response is to say your name.

After this, hand out copies of the 'All about me' worksheet (available to photocopy from page 59) and invite each young person to take a few minutes to fill it in. Make it clear that you will keep hold of their completed sheets until the end of the course when they'll be asked to complete a similar task exploring their Rooted journey.

Game

Would You rather

Talk briefly about the importance of the decisions and choices we make in forming our identity. Then play a simple game of 'Would you rather?' – giving young people a simple choice between two conflicting scenarios (listed below).

Encourage the young people to move to one end of your meeting space if they would choose one option, and to the other end for the other option.

Would you rather:

- *eat mayonnaise on ice cream, or eat ice cream with mushy peas?*
- *always smell of onions or always burp loudly before speaking?*
- *be sad forever, but live in a beautiful mansion, or live in a shed and be happy?*
- *have a dog that loves you but poos in your room, or have a cat that hates you but never makes a mess?*
- *watch as much TV as you like, but only on CBBC, or only watch 15 minutes a week of whatever you want?*
- *be forced to listen to hard core rock constantly, or never listen to any music again?*
- *eat garlic bread for breakfast every day, or eat a jar of jam for dinner every day?*



- *wear a superhero outfit to school or be forced to wear your school clothes every weekend?*

After the game, remind the young people that today you will be inviting them to explore what really makes them who they are.

Reflection

Exploring identity
(pieces of card, pens)

Explain to the young people that the way we feel and think about ourselves is an important part of who we are. Give out pieces of card and pens, then invite the group to write down any words that come to mind when they hear the word 'identity'. Share the responses.

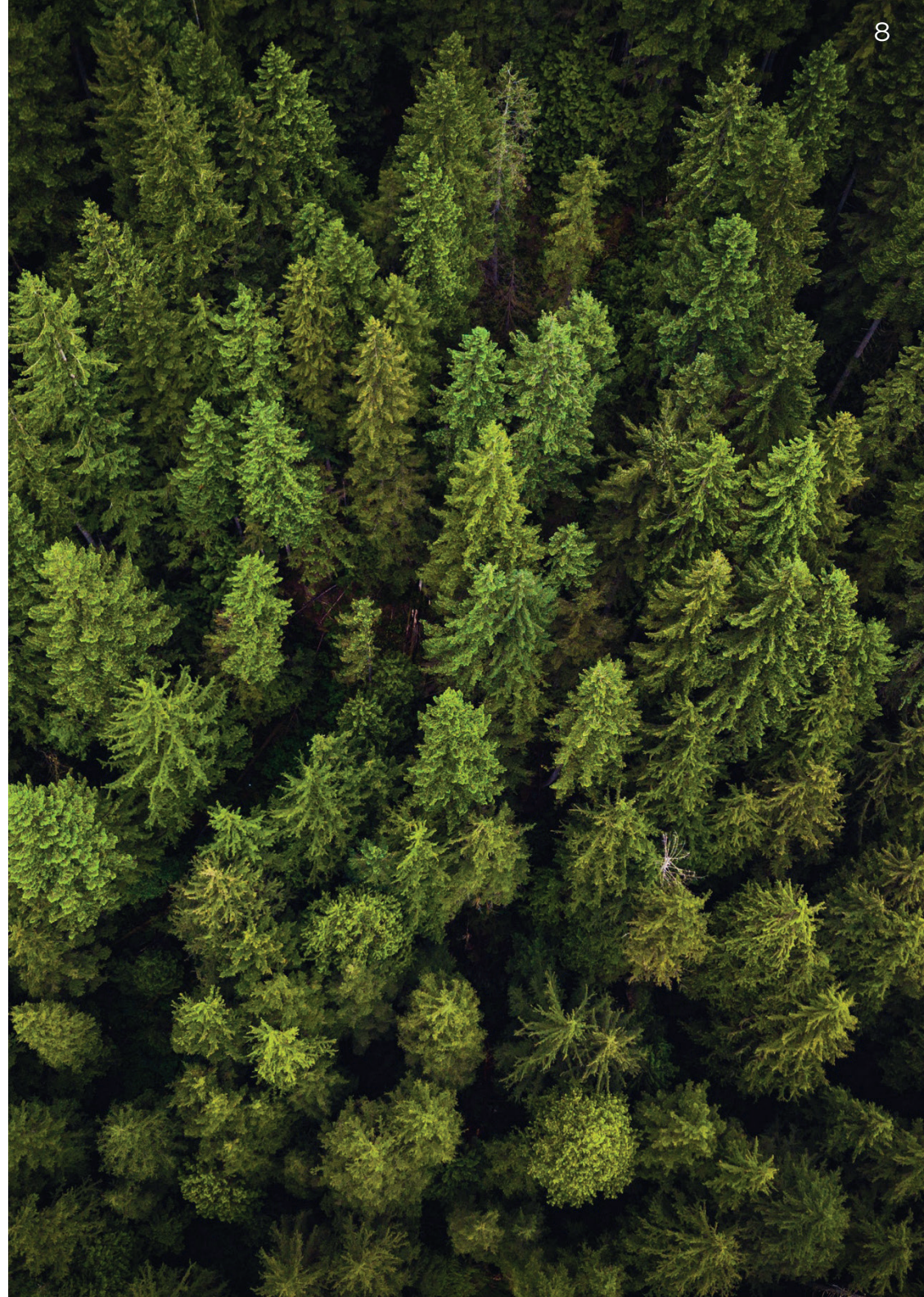
Community

Valuing respect
(paper, pens)

It's important that everyone in the group respects one another – including leaders. Explain to everyone that the time spent in this group is valuable and therefore it is a time where everyone must respect one another, respect leaders and respect the venue.

Hand out paper and pens and invite each group member to write down three 'rules' they think would help to grow a positive sense of community as you work together.

Bring all the ideas together and establish eight 'rules' that everyone can agree on. Display these in your meeting space whenever you meet.





Creative space

Collage

(magazines, photos, glue, scissors, coloured paper, pens, pencils, assorted craft materials)

Spread a variety of craft materials around the room. Explain to the young people that they now have an opportunity to express who they are, using the materials provided.

This is a good opportunity for leaders to get to know their group as conversations evolve whilst the young people create.

Faith exploration

God values everyone

During the collage activity (or another activity of your choosing) you could use the following questions to open up conversations with young people individually, or in small groups.

- *Have you ever wondered if God is really there?*
- *Have you ever thought about who God says you are?*
- *Do you believe your life has a purpose?*
- *What would it feel like if you knew that you were created to be you and only you by the one who created the world?*

You might choose to have some Bible verses printed out on small pieces of paper and spread them around the room whilst the young people engage in the collage activity. Encourage them to read the verses and add them to their collages, if they wish. Talking through with each young person what a particular Bible verse means to you, and why, will help to open up a faith exploration conversation.

You could also ask a leader to speak about how they believe God values and loves everyone – either as the young people engage in an activity, or simply as they sit and listen.