

THE HAVEN EFFECT

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Image: World Atlas

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Special Note: Due to the sensitivity of this topic, and for the safety of the community I’ve worked with, the names of the organizations, and specific country are omitted from this process paper.



Todo Sobre Las Chicas (All About The Girls), is a project that explores how to support teen girls in Central America to socially reintegrate after in-home abuse and trauma. It looks to envision a girl-led future of safety through independence, inner confidence, faith-based activities, and the development of sisterhood. Developed in collaboration with a local organization, the intervention includes co-created self-reflective tools as they grow into restored versions of self, offering communities like theirs and beyond ways to heal, flourish, and restore faith for generations to come.

JOY



ROACH

BIENVENIDO!

I am a first-generation American gal, with roots from the most southern isle of the West Indies, Trinidad and Tobago, about 7 miles off the coast of Venezuela. Given the essence of my identity, one of diversity and rich culture, I use the duality of my experiences to support others to live whole and healthy lives. My positionality in the world helps me to recognize those similar to my own and gives me a burden to create pathways for inner renewal. My passion is to help communities heal from pain and experience freedom from oppression, by creating tools of impact. Using this passion, my lifelong goal is to participate in the continual shift of the paradigm and rebuild harmful societal norms with care.

I believe so much of who we become as adults stems from our childhood. Whether conscious or unconscious, we live from the context of our past experiences. In many ways, if we don't heal from hurt and trauma, we won't show up as our best selves throughout life.

As a designer and social innovator, my purpose is to create intentional tools that build emotionally healthy lives that thrive. From healing the past to flourishing into the untapped version of self, my work supports communities alike mine to walk in wholeness and purpose.

TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

SPIRITUALITY, FAITH AND CHRISTIANITY

These three terms are used interchangeably throughout to express the act of being in relationship with Christ, as opposed to religious acts, while practicing its ideals, and journeying through life's experiences.

EMOTIONAL HEALTH, RESTORATION AND INNER HEALING

These refer to Biblically-based processing methods to explore one's current state using the message of Christ, in order to envision, plan, and move towards a more whole version of self.

FULL LIFE, HEALED LIFE AND THRIVING

When these are mentioned, they allude to the girls living life at its fullest capacity. One that walks in purpose, with the privilege of joy, despite the nature of hardship around them. It becomes enjoyment that starts inwardly and reflects outwardly.

ORGANIZATION, COMMUNITY AND PARTNERS

My community partners and accompanying organizations are those who joined this project, providing access to the girls, formulating strategies and co-creating interventions for the community. Based in the US and on the ground in Central America.

RELATIONSHIP OVER RELIGIOSITY

The experience of using Christ's message and Biblical precepts to guide your relationship with God, as opposed to practicing ritualistic stagnant acts of faith that exclude the human experience and heart.

GIRL- HOOD



What is GIRLhood?
What does it mean to be a girl?
To be safe? And express yourself freely?

I believe GIRLhood is the essence of being a girl. It embodies the fullness of safety, and the freedom to express oneself fully. Every girl deserves the opportunity to live out her childhood and girlhood, with the experience of care, exploration and love.

thrive.





GIRL POWER

THE POWER OF GIRLHOOD

GIRLhood exemplifies the fullness of being a girl, not only in the aspects of gender identity but also in the rights, freedoms, and opportunities that every girl should inherently experience in her childhood. In a world where girls have to navigate the complexities of society, the discovery of self, finding purpose, and the power of voice should stand as eminent drivers towards fulfilling every dream and aspiration. To be a girl is to exist in a world that often presents difficult challenges yet a world with endless possibilities. The realities of societal norms and expectations burden the sentiment of girlhood, while also striving to limit and pre-define who she will be in this world. This is why highlighting the importance of their innate beliefs guides them into the path of inner and outer freedom — driving the reality to live a full life, and even making an impact on those around them.

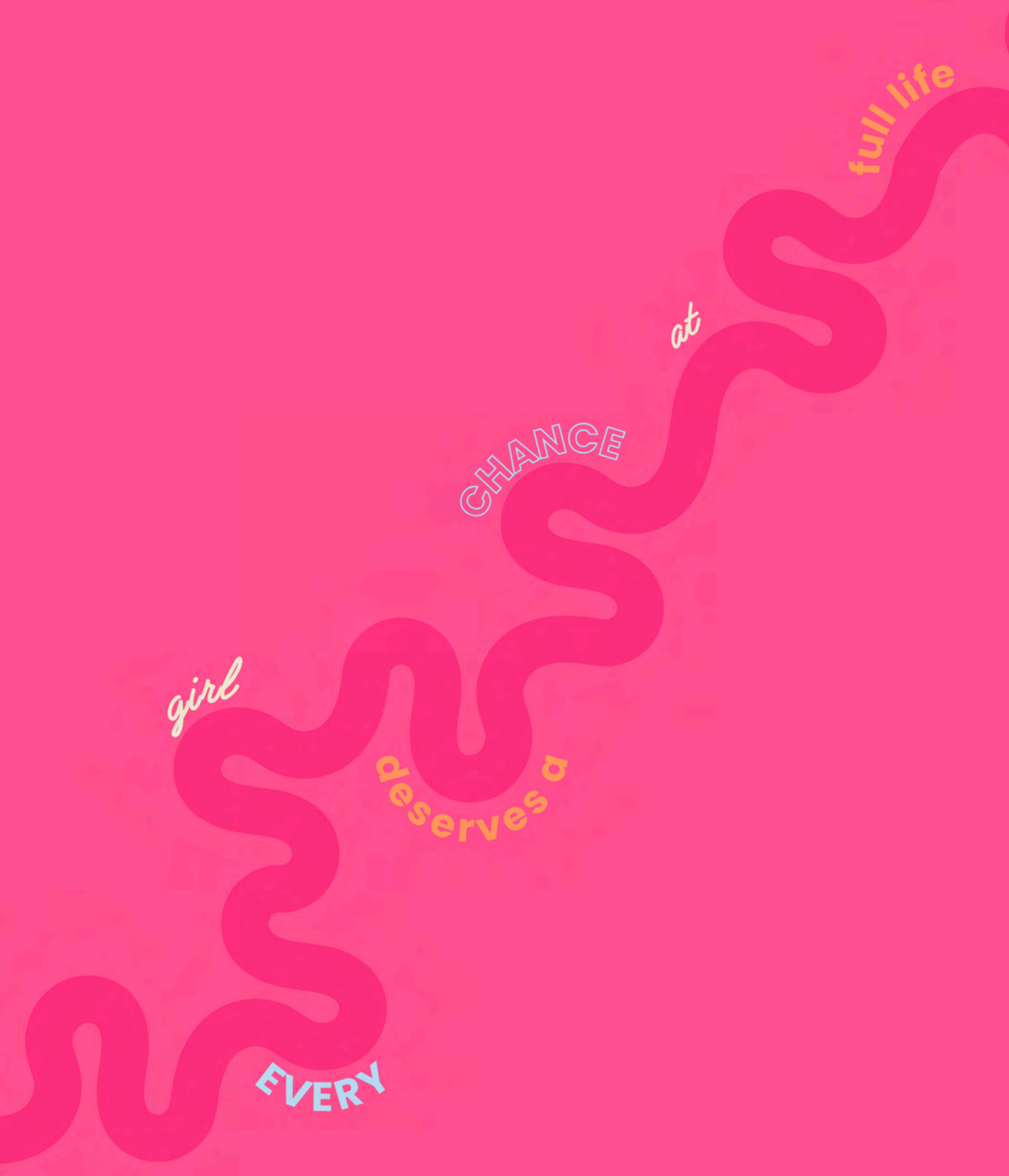
“Girls everywhere are strong, they are capable, and they will determine our future. It is our responsibility to help them fulfill their dreams.”

– Angelica Fuentes, CEO, Philanthropist, and Girl Up Global Advocate

The essence of GIRLhood lies in the recognition and actualization of human rights (Dardon, Ana Maria Mendez). Every girl, regardless of background or circumstance, deserves the chance to experience the fullness of childhood and girlhood, thriving in a world that celebrates and supports her journey toward self-actualization and fulfillment. Promoting and upholding these values is the very thing that empowers girls around the world to become the leaders, innovators, and change makers of tomorrow.

Cultivating a girl’s voice to express her thoughts, opinions, and emotions without restraint, fosters revolutionary confidence. In addition, safe spaces develop the freedom needed to fully explore and express herself, cultivating purpose without fear. Whether through art, education, sports, or activism, girls should have the opportunity to assert their agency, make decisions for self, and allow their voices heard.

But, this can’t be done without the crucial factor of safety. Safety becomes a fundamental aspect of GIRLhood, encompassing physical, emotional, and psychological well-being. Every girl needs to feel secure in her environment, free from harm and violence.



EXPLO -RING THE SOCIAL DILEMMA

THE SYSTEMIC DILEMMA

"Violence against women and girls or gender-based violence is a barrier to economic growth and a driver of out-migration."

Jenny Villatoro

Unfortunately, for many global communities, the aspects of safety, freedom, and expression are not realities. This has become especially true in regions of Central America. The fact is that many girls in this region have experienced depths of harm through emotional, physical, and sexual abuse in their homes. In a society that has been riddled with Machistma culture, patriarchal values cause imbalances in how society has cared for, supported, and protected women. This lies especially true for young women. These societal and cultural challenges coupled with economic stressors from the political divide have caused a heightened lack of basic resources for survival, and leave the most vulnerable exposed to harm.

The recourse from widespread physical and emotional abuse results in communities experiencing deep forms of depression and lack of hope. More than two-thirds of all sexual violence reported were committed against girls under the age of 17 years old. Nearly half of these female victims were under the age of 14 (NISVS 2010 Summary Report, 2010). In short, this means the majority of girls impacted by in-home violence are extremely young and by trend and continually have poignant parts of their girlhood stripped from their journey. This tends to have generational and societal impact, as these issues of abuse lead to larger notions of negative systemic cycles, ingrained poverty, and oppressive injustice.

The Wilson Center states "Gender-based violence remains one of the most significant yet overlooked drivers of out-migration across Central America and the broader region. Violence against women and girls is often excluded from conversations... and over the last half-century, topics such as economic empowerment, democracy, transparency, and security have dominated the root-causes conversation." (Villatoro, Jenny)

"Gender-based violence affects one in three women worldwide, making it an urgent and important policy challenge. Violence against women and girls is often excluded from conversations on the nexus of Central American democracy."

Natalie Gonnella Platts

Violence against women and girls affects about 1 in 3 women around the world. In Latin America and the Caribbean, 12% of women aged 15 to 49, which is around 19.2 million women, have experienced physical or sexual violence from their current or former partner in the past year. (Ortiz, Sara)

In Central America, women face some of the highest rates of sexual assault and gender-based violence. Shockingly, 95% of these crimes go unpunished (World Bank Group, 2024). Leaders who thrive on chaos often use this violence to their advantage. This problem connects to past oppressive governments outside of Central America, immigration issues, and deep divisions that result in societal harms trickling down to women and kids hurt in the home.

Violence against women and children has a long history in Central America. In the 1980s, during civil wars, both sides used rape, abuse, and torture to forge towards political power. Today, many females, about 80%, face sexual assault while seeking safety. This coupled with no clear laws to address gender-based or sexual violence leaves it hard for many women to seek justice. In addition to the systemic effects, the personal and intimate effects run deep from increased rates of pregnancy, disorders, self-harm, and substance abuse. (PRB, 2001)

Plan International's research study "Girls in Crisis" analyzes the situation of abuse towards adolescent girls in Central America, showing:

"22% of surveyed adolescents consider that social violence and gender-based violence are equal factors in school drop out rates."

1 out of 5 surveyed adolescents believe that sexual violence or gender-based violence are reasons to migrate."

Some of their interviewees shared...

"Adolescent girls become pregnant and that does not allow them to continue studying, because they leave their homes or because they don't want to stay in school." - Adolescent girl, 18, from Venezuela interviewed in Guatemala

"I am not afraid inside the University, but it is far from the city and I do need to walk and that whole block is dark and no one is there, there is no security outside." - Adolescent girl, 16, interviewed in Honduras

"Sexual violence towards women is another reason for school dropouts, also because there is a lot of violence towards women in schools, a cultural element that makes the girls remain silent about these situations and they just stop going to school; or violence in the family that puts them in an emotional situation that makes them stop going to school." - Key informant adult woman, interviewed in El Salvador



PARTNERS

With vulnerable communities increasingly at risk, providing aid has become more complex amidst ongoing systemic challenges. Each case is unique yet far too common, leaving organizations grappling with unprecedented scenarios and uncertain futures. As girls reintegrate into environments that previously harmed them, the loss of these safe havens exacerbates their vulnerability.

Many of these organizations equip young girls with essential emotional and physical skills, yet the dire circumstances in local communities often deprive them of the opportunity to discover themselves and live purposefully. The concept of refuge and safe havens is now a distant reality for many in these communities.

This is why I partnered with a local organization.

Within the community, about 30% of the population live below the poverty line, residing in local barrios (neighborhoods), and experience the damaging effects of being marginalized (Freedom House 2023). Many having faced physical, verbal, and sexual abuse, the girls in this boarding program receive an opportunity to access safe housing, basic needs like clean water, and 3 meals a day. In addition, they've been able to receive uninterrupted access to education (including tuition, transportation, and tutors). The program has existed for 16 years and has had over 100 girls throughout its many cohorts. The age of entrance into the program ranges from middle school to high school-aged girls, who continue to receive support throughout the completion of their university studies.

As the program has thrived and been an asset to the local community over the years, the nation as a whole has been riddled with governmental, political, and economic unrest as leadership has transitioned into a dictatorship empowered by authoritarian neighbors. As this unrest heightens, the government has shut down and forced status changes on around 1,200 local organizations, and expected for another 1,000, especially those that have international support. Unfortunately, this organization experienced a full shutdown and has now resurged with a local status change. With the new changes, they are no longer able to host girls under the age of 18 on their property which threatens the program they've built over the past 16 years. The program is built around having a safe home and house mother that helps them navigate and manage life. They have chores, responsibilities, and systems of getting work done. Think boarding school meets social needs. They also have access to physiologists and therapy when needed, and emotional health plans that are integrated into recovery. In addition, their families receive benefits, being sent food and resources weekly to stay afloat. The girls typically have the option to go home on the weekends, depending on the level of safety.

As the girls have lived together for many years, built lives around the community, and developed habits they'll carry for a lifetime, in one moment everything had been compromised. The government came in, shut down their operations, and demanded the girls be removed from the property. With this, many girls have been sent back home, and for others where home wasn't safe, many of the staff have opened up their homes.

This situation becomes pertinent to address, as girls participating in this program are transitioning from a healthy environment built for them to break cycles and progress in life, to now transitioning back into their old environments that come with an array of challenges.

These girls have been through an array of hardships, but have overcome in an even larger way with the help of this organization. The impact that the organization has made over the years has allowed these girls from the city center to reimagine life and live realities that were never imaginable before. The need is to provide resources that help them get through the difficulties of transition while glean inspiration from the previous running program that allowed them to live together. Because living together is no longer a reality, yet one of the most important elements of the previous process, the aspects of growing and thriving in a healthy community will continually be a driving element that informs this intervention.

I've learned more about the current structure of the organization on the ground, and how they plan to progress their strategy to adhere to new governmental regulations. By restructuring, and learning ways of expanding into the local barrios, the organization can expand its impact.

A local couple started this organization in partnership with a stateside faith-based missions non-profit. They were connected to my local church, which helped me to form stronger connections for partnership.

Growing up with a global perspective has made me a firm believer in providing strategy that creates long-lasting impact, as opposed to fleeting short-lived acts of service. This looks like sitting down to make strategies with the community and developing strategic plans for tackling systemic issues, rather than rebuilding a roof, or helping out with a landscaping project. Once I found a community to work, with I ensured that their mission aligned with the values of the Design for Social Innovation program.

"Creating a better world requires teamwork, partnerships, and collaboration, as we need an entire army to work together to build a better world..."

Simon Mainwaring

DESIGN FOR SOCIAL INNOVATION VALUES

- **Strengthening Relationships and Care:** Advocating for health, equity, anti-discrimination, justice, joy, and healing, Supporting shared values and interdependence, and honoring nature's wisdom.
- **Intentionally Co-Creating:** Collaborating with communities, advocating for mutual benefit and abundance. Centering lived experience, while reducing harm.
- **Embracing Complexities:** Breaking from things that no longer serve us. Recognizing the continuum and pluralities, and making the invisible visible.

VALUES

PARTNER ORGANIZATION'S VALUES

- **Relationships:** Encouraging volunteers and staff to embrace the reality that relationships are more than accomplishments and people are more important than projects.
- **Local Leaders:** Always partnering with passionate and dedicated believers who lead long-term programs and initiatives in their own communities.
- **Empowerment:** Those who volunteer to help those impoverished shouldn't be seen as "heroes" to "save" those living in poverty. Instead, they're servants always focusing on doing things WITH people, not just FOR them.
- **Discipleship:** Those partnering should always consider the ways their efforts relate to the rest of their life and will always be provided with resources and training to help them integrate what they've learned in the global community into their lives back home.



GOALS

30% of the local population in the Central American community I worked with, lives in poverty, on average making less than \$2 a day. (UN World Food Programme)

As my partnering organization on the ground has become a source of refuge for girls across the region, many of their goals set to address:

- The root of poverty and give access to basic needs
- Combat low levels of opportunity with access to education
- Develop a sense of self-worth to eliminate patterns of abuse and violence

The goal of partnering with this community is to:

1. Aid the girls with safely transitioning from their safe haven, back to their old neighborhoods
2. Aid the organization with an innovative strategy that helps to restructure the program to accommodate local visits to the girls
3. Create experiential materials to foster restoration and healing from trauma, while celebrating incremental wins





TACKLING THESE ISSUES CAN HELP TO CONNECT THE SPIRITUAL ELEMENTS OF THEIR FAITH TO THE JOURNEY OF GROWTH, HEALING AND RESTORATION.

The faith-based approach in this project has acted as a core element to help birth each intervention point. A faith-based approach uses aspects of inner healing, relational spirituality, and experiential tools to foster a healed and healthy emotional state. It works by becoming introspective with a Biblical perspective and discovering who you've always been made to be.

As the community depends on its ingrained Christian ideals, developing a way to combine the full self with spiritual beliefs becomes important in creating a holistic perspective of healing, to ensure the full self is honored, physically, emotionally, and mentally.

These elements become crucial given the historical context of Christian spirituality, ideals, and perspectives. In so many ways, communities have excluded the emotional and mental aspects of life, which limits the ways they have access to express their full self.

Compartmentalizing the emotional and spiritual has proven itself time and time again that it hinders the experience of connection and relationship with God. This directly goes against what the Christian faith is about at its core, as Jesus came to condemn those who practiced ritualism within their faith journey, without real relationship. In fact, He himself invited the tax collector who took advantage of his own community (Matthew 9:9-13), and the prostitute whom everyone including the religious leaders had shunned (John 8:1-11). He looked beyond the surface actions to reach their heart, so they would truly understand that they're loved, have a purpose, and could heal through the pain of their past experiences.

This is the same scenario that's being tackled in this social design project. The pain of one's past can lead to destructive behavior, altered mental states, and lowered self-worth, but that doesn't have to remain the narrative.

A FAITH BASED APPR- OACH

A LETTER OF CONSIDERATION

This letter extends to those who have experienced the harmful effects of having the Christian faith weaponized against them, emotionally and mentally. The historical context and oppressive nature of how some individuals have interpreted and applied the faith have led to grievous wrongs such as slavery, colonization, and exclusion in modern times. As someone who identifies as a Christ-follower, I want to acknowledge the pain and suffering caused by these misinterpretations and misuses of the Christian message.

In reflecting on the misuse of Christianity, I am reminded of Luke 4, where Jesus speaks about the mission of the gospel being one of liberation and freedom. The true essence of Christianity is about breaking chains that hold us down, uplifting the oppressed, and fostering a community of love and compassion. However, throughout history and even in modern times, we have seen how this message has been distorted to justify acts of oppression and discrimination.

I also recognize that the Christian faith has not been without fault within my own community. As part of a larger body of believers, I understand that when one part of the body hurts, we all share in that pain. It is our collective responsibility to address the injustices and hurt caused by the misuse of faith, and to work towards healing and reconciliation.

Being a minority that practices Christianity, I've personally witnessed and experienced the pain caused by the misuse of our beliefs. The wounds run deep, highlighting the urgent need for collective responsibility, while also reminding us of what the true essence of the faith is supposed to be about. Love, care, restoration, healing.

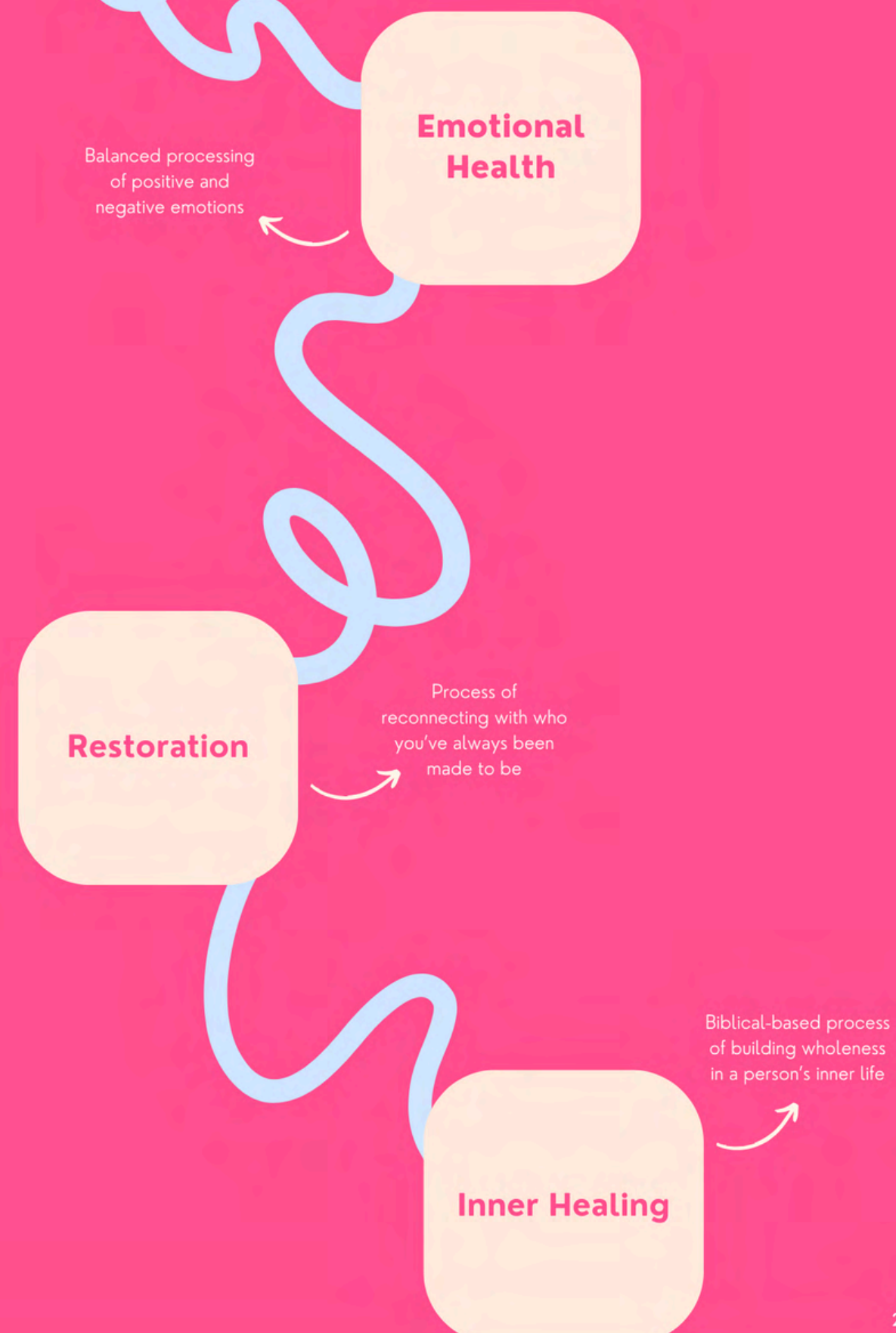
Amidst the pain and wrongdoings, I firmly believe in the transformative power of the Christian faith. For me, the journey has become deeply personal, shaping my identity around principles of care, love, and empathy that transcend human limitations. It is a source of strength and resilience, especially in the face of adversity and oppression.

This brings me to the importance of projects like Todo Sobre Las Chicas, where the intersection of faith and the human experience is explored and honored. By bridging these realms, we can foster healing and reconciliation. It is a commitment to confront the shadows of our history and actively work towards a future where the true essence of our faith—compassion, justice, and liberation—is upheld and celebrated.

In accountability for the acts of my community, I offer my sincere apologies towards anyone who had experienced pain caused by the misuse of the Christian faith. I'm committed to standing in solidarity, learning, unlearning, and walking together on a path of healing and transformation for a healed and compassionate world.

"IGNORING OUR EMOTIONS IS TURNING OUR BACK ON REALITY. LISTENING TO OUR EMOTIONS USHERS US BACK INTO REALITY. AND CONFRONTING REALITY IS WHERE WE HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO DEVELOP REAL RELATIONSHIP WITH OURSELVES, OTHERS AND GOD"

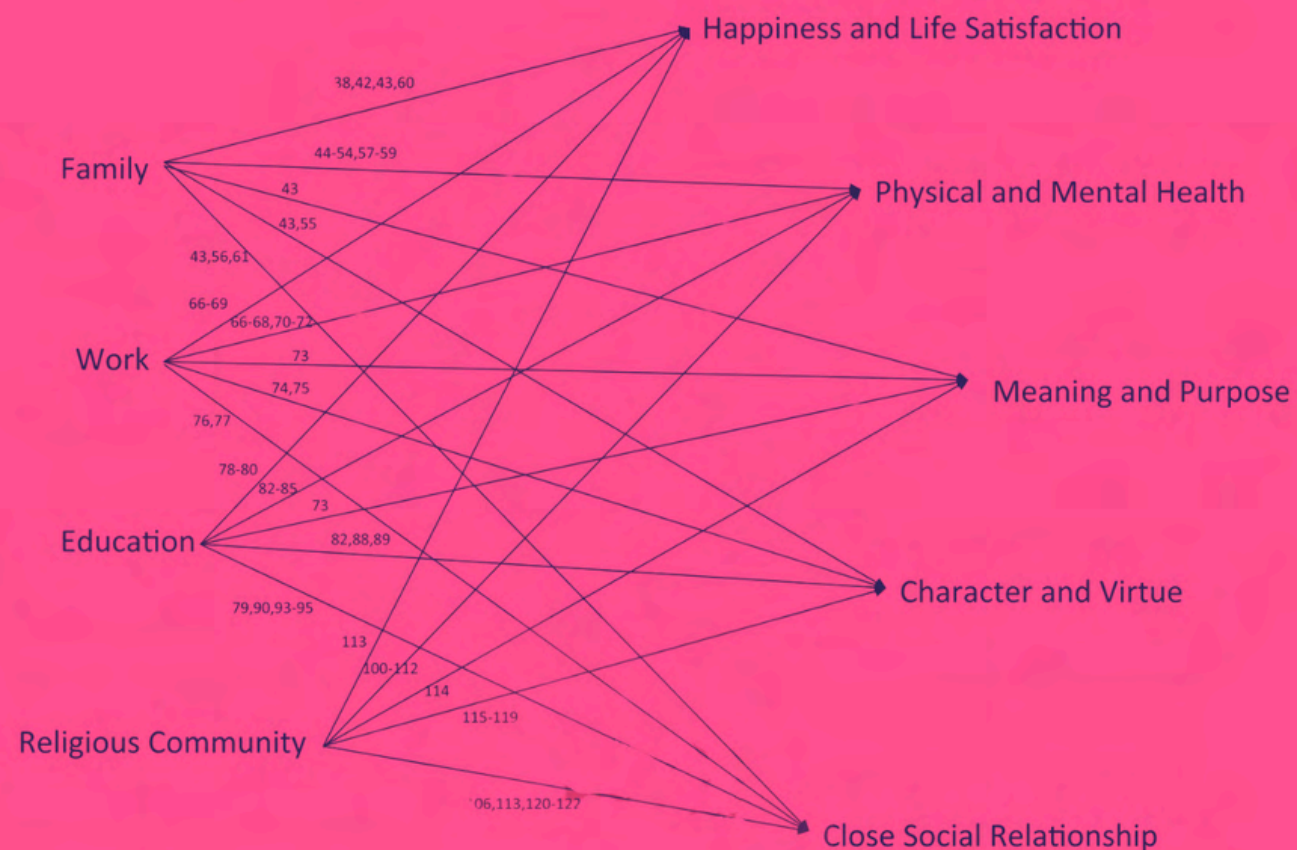
THE CRY OF THE SOUL, DAN ALLENDER



LET'S GET TO THE RESEARCH

HUMAN FLOURISHING

Foundationally, I grounded my research upon the concept of Human Flourishing. Human Flourishing is a theory that measures and indexes the concept of complete human well-being and gathers determinants on “living in a state where all aspects of human life are good” (Vanderweele, 2017).



**IN MANY WAYS, RESEARCH
HAS HISTORICALLY LOOKED
AT EMOTIONAL HEALTH AND
THE MATTERS OF THRIVING
WITH ONE OR A NARROW
SET OF MEASURES.**

As I grounded this work in secondary research, the concept of Human Flourishing proved itself to align with the impact I hope to make with my intended interventions. Human Flourishing is a theory that measures and indexes the concept of complete human well-being, using determinants to establish how flourishing exists within the human experience and gathers relativity for “living in a state where all aspects of human life are good”. The natural basis for Human Flourishing allows for a measurement index of constituents to determine how holistic elements of life can impact one’s level of thriving in the world. The World Health Organization defines health as “a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being.” This can be seen through the theory’s five domains, used to measure well-being: happiness and life satisfaction, physical and mental health, meaning and purpose, character and virtue, and close social relationships. The sixth determinant, material, and financial responsibility, was later added to consider the sustainability of flourishing and act as an indicator of long-term progression over time (Vanderweele, 2019). These domains satisfy two criteria, where each is seen as an end in itself, and are also universally desired, globally. The four pathways considered for how the determinants can be experienced are: family, work, education, and religious community. These are primary examples of how the concept of Human Thriving uses and tests the theory to prove itself, but by no means limits the pathways to more traditional viewpoints, being sure to mention engagement with the arts and other forms of community involvement.

This theory became important to ground my work in as it covers a holistic viewpoint of what thriving is proven to look like with interdependent communal factors. Each of the five main determinants shows up in my work to constitute what thriving and flourishing might look like for this community as they transition from one state of being, to another. Finding equilibrium in the balance of life and its moving parts becomes an innate part of the journey. It’s never one or the other, but suits itself as intertwined elements that lead to inner and outer benefits of the individual or community.

Emotionally Healthy Spirituality, as conceptualized by Pete Scazzero, is not just a book and self-development course, but a way of life. It advocates for integrating the physical, emotional, and spiritual aspects of daily life, bringing harmony where compartmentalization has become typical in the Christian community. Practicing faith in a healthy way becomes crucial as it negates the trend to overlook important aspects of our humanity, which often lead to unrealistic and unhealthy lifestyles. By prioritizing the holistic healing of the girls and their faith journey, especially with Christianity deeply rooted in their community, the focus shifts to fostering a fulfilled, more authentic self.

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

& EXPERIENTIAL SPIRITUALITY

Scazzero often mentions how the lack of integrating emotional health with the Christian faith, can be destructive — to yourself, the people around you, and your relationship with God (Scazzero, 2017). The Iceberg model shows how 10% of who we are is shown on the outside and exposed to the world. On the flip side, 90% of our being exists below the surface, stemming from our childhood and past experiences, typically untouched and not dealt with on a large scale. When it comes to the girls, it's important to address the full self, as their most recent life experiences have become a part of their 90% below the surface (Scazzero, 2013). Scazzero mentions "the sad reality is that most of us will not go forward, until the pain of staying where we are is unbearable." From poverty, to sexual and physical abuse, and now transition from the place that once ensured their safety and well-being, not addressing these factors in the primary development of my intervention would limit the impact on helping them heal and transition well.

EHS determines that emotionally unhealthy spirituality (Scazzero, 2006) can be determined by 10 symptoms that we commonly see in the Christian faith when we practice it as a stagnant rule-filled religion as opposed to a relational fluid experience. Some of the symptoms this project addresses include:

1. IGNORING THE EMOTIONS OF ANGER, SADNESS AND FEAR

Disallowing yourself to feel the negative, and ignoring real human emotions, become detrimental to the faith experience, yet becomes very common in strict religious settings. When one treats negative emotions as sin, it disconnects you from bringing your full self to the faith, becoming impractical and imbalanced.

2. DENYING THE PAST'S IMPACT ON THE PRESENT

When we don't go back to address the real hurts and pains we've encountered in life, it acts as a detriment to progressing forward and growing in our faith in God.

3. DIVIDING OUR LIVES INTO "SECULAR" AND "SACRED" COMPARTMENTS

Compartmentalizing our faith can be a hindrance to experiencing the fullness of what it has to offer. When Christians create a drawer for their spiritual life and another for their real life, it creates an internal dilemma that doesn't allow the two to collide, integrate, and help each other to grow.

MICRO- PROTOTYPE EXPLORATION

Before heading to Central America, I wanted to gain a grasp on how today's youth have experienced the concept of "relationship over religiosity". To begin exploring how this unfolds, I reached out to Christian girls and youth leaders across the U.S. to understand more about their journey of growing their faith and how it's impacted them during difficult times.

META THEMES

1

MANAGING
EXPECTATIONS

2

UNDERSTANDING
MISCONCEPTIONS

3

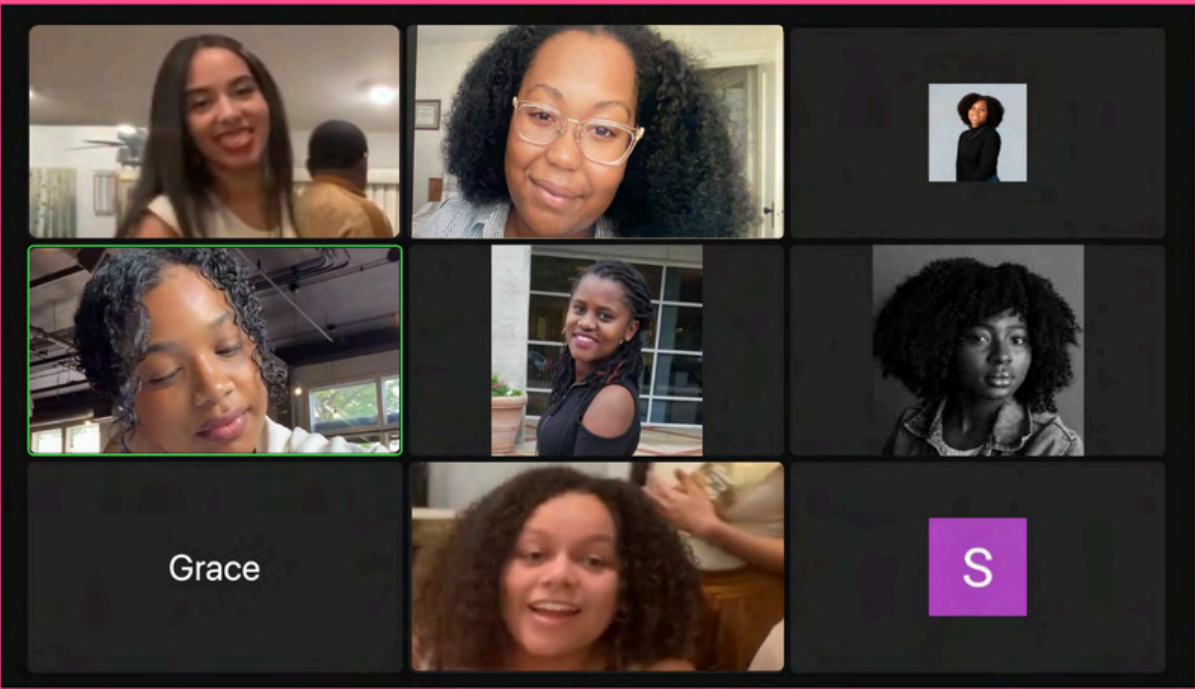
JOURNEY
NECESSITIES

FRAMING

How might exploring the milestones of one's faith journey become a driver toward healing in difficult times?

THE METHOD

I created a variety of digital sheets on Canva to set up a virtual workshop. Using memes widely known on social media, themes were created to have the participants open up about their spiritual journey with God. We met on Zoom as each person took time to look at the examples, and then duplicate the sheet to fill it out on their own. Each section was allotted 10 minutes to read the prompt and fill in the space with words and images. Afterward, we were able to share our responses and gather insights about overlaps in our experience. Ages ranged from 18-35 and spanned across many states across the U.S.

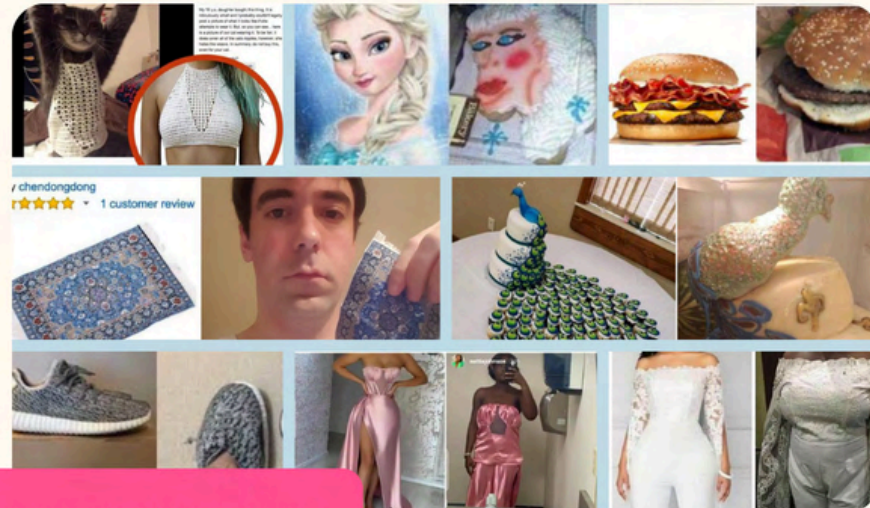


How might exploring the milestones of one's faith journey become a driver toward healing in difficult times?

ACTIVITY 1

Managing Expectations

TREND: WHAT I ORDERED VS WHAT I GOT



The image above shows photos from the viral trend, What I Ordered vs What I Got. Below, I created a sheet with a side-by-side chart that allows them to express what they thought they were expected to feel, do, and be when starting their spiritual journey. The right side gives space to express, through images and words, what happened when they personalized their spiritual journey and applied faith to their human experience. Here are some of their responses below.

Image: Google Images

HIGHLIGHTS

1. Life didn't become easier just because they knew God on a personal level
2. Different aspects of their life changed once their perspective shifted
3. There was grace, love, and freedom on the other side of applying faith to their life in a personal way
4. They didn't have to earn the love, but it became a part of the holistic experience

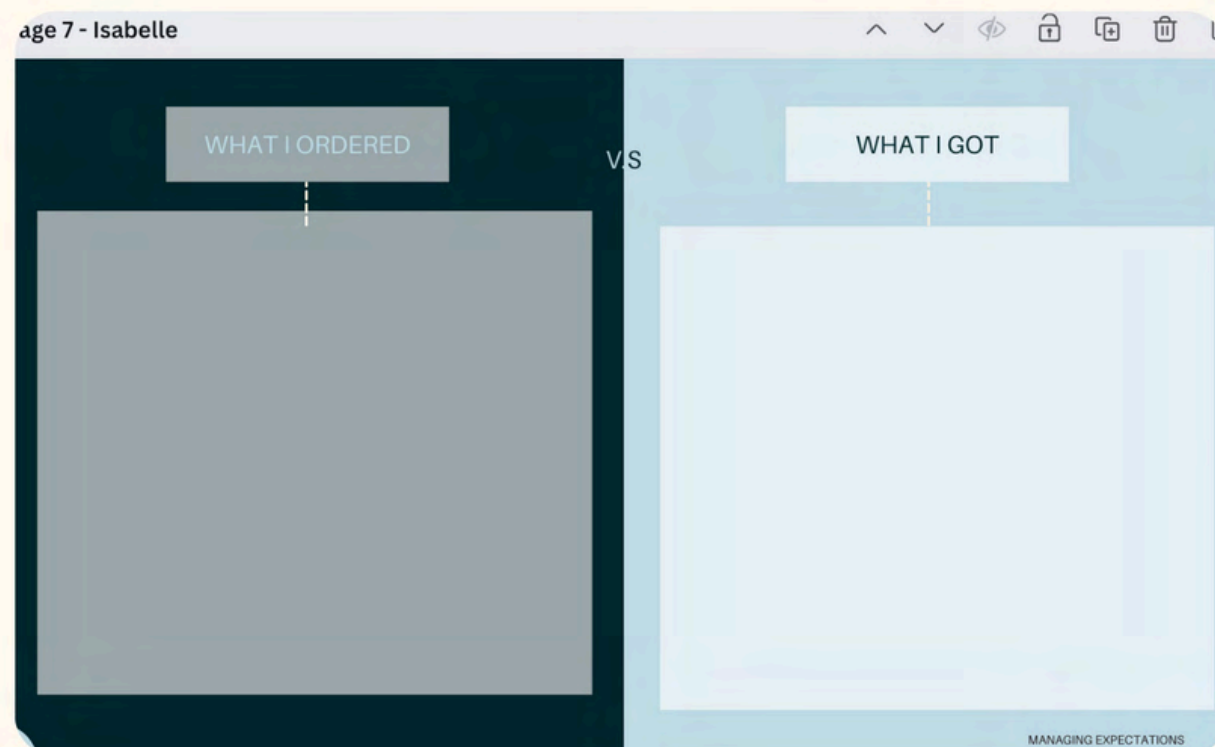
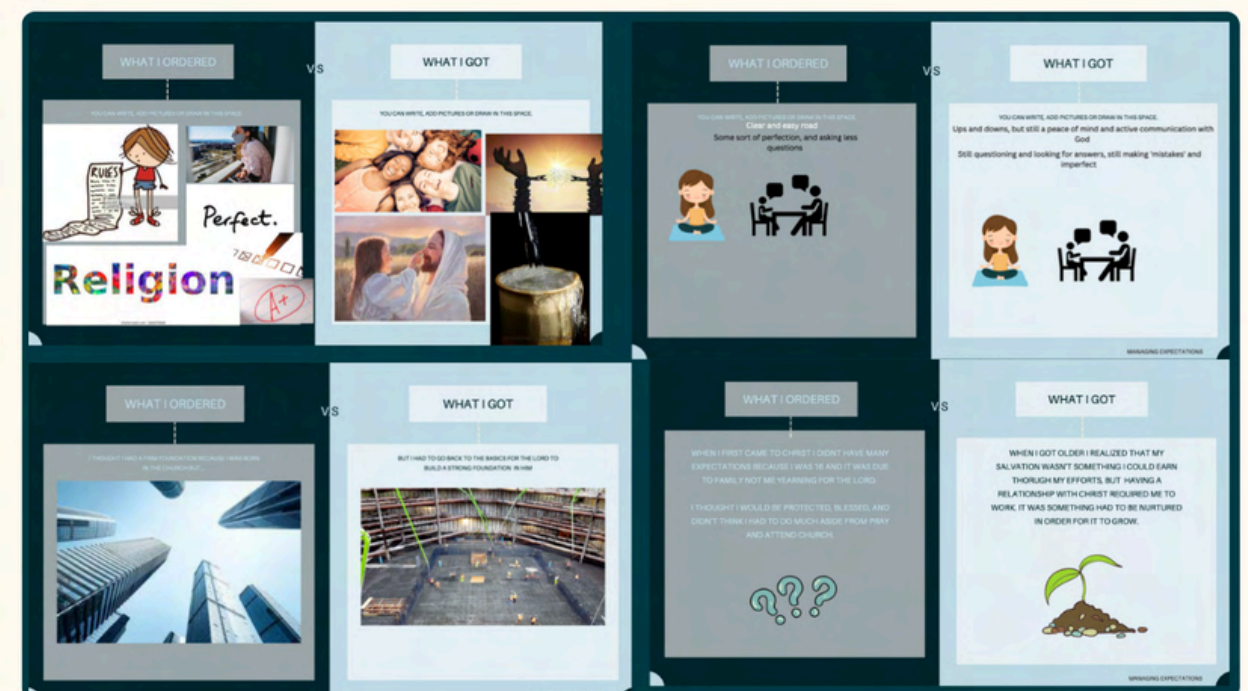




Image: Instagram

ACTIVITY 2

TREND: BUT YOU SAID...

The second worksheet was inspired by the Real Housewives of Beverly Hills meme screaming at a confused cat. The premise shows the ways she overreacts and claims that she is right in a situation she misinterpreted.

In this activity, I asked the participants to give insights on misconceptions they've heard from others or things they've misinterpreted in their own journey with Christ. These are some responses below.

INSIGHTS

1. Not everyone who claims Christianity (or is a leader in the faith), lives it out in a way that reflects relationship with God, but rather a set of rules they'd rather follow in pride
2. Thinking they needed to strive for perfectionism and that God was angry if they did something wrong
3. Emotional healing takes time, comes along the journey, and is not a "one-and-done" process
4. Realizing that God is in their every day and that he cares about their personal life

One

I thought all I had to do was go to church, read my bible, and pray.

This journey and relationship requires action. It's a walk not a to do list.

Two

I believed God was the same as my earthly parents and realized, my earthly parents are imperfect and are prone to fail me, but he can't because he is a PERFECT God.

Three

I thought I had to be perfect for him but in all reality, he is made strong by our weakness. Jesus was perfect so that we didn't have to be.

Four

I used to believe that Jesus was with a clipboard grading my life but he is not, he DOES NOT KEEP RECORD OF SINS. He's love is unconditional and I see it as like a permanent marker written on our heart I LOVE YOU regardless.

Five

I thought God was the type to always say "Well I told you so" but I should not let his character to ever bring me shame but instead he is full of compassion waiting for me to turn to him for help.

LIES, LIES AND MORE LIES!

What are some misconceptions or misinterpretations you had about your journey with Christ? How were these thoughts and lies redeemed through the Lord and his revelation?

One

I thought I had to be perfect for him but in all reality, he is made strong by our weakness. Jesus was perfect so that we didn't have to be.

God gives us challenges to build our faith. It's not meant to be an easy walk, but a comforting one knowing he's here.

Two

I thought I had to be perfect for him but in all reality, he is made strong by our weakness. Jesus was perfect so that we didn't have to be.

Three

I thought I had to be perfect for him but in all reality, he is made strong by our weakness. Jesus was perfect so that we didn't have to be.

Four

I thought I had to be perfect for him but in all reality, he is made strong by our weakness. Jesus was perfect so that we didn't have to be.

Five

I thought I had to be perfect for him but in all reality, he is made strong by our weakness. Jesus was perfect so that we didn't have to be.

LIES, LIES

What are some misconceptions or misinterpretations you had about your journey with Christ? How were these thoughts and lies redeemed through the Lord and his revelation?

ACTIVITY 3

TREND: CAN'T LIVE WITHOUT IT

CANT LIVE WITHOUT IT

NEECITIES

What are some things that are necessary for the journey with Christ?

What are some of the most crucial and important resources?

Think about the spiritual resources that help your physical, spiritually, and emotional state in your day to day life.

What are some of the things you do or use that others outside of the Christian journey may not?

L LIST THEM HERE!

read read read your word. Take everything you read of the word take it to the bank. every word in the bible is true and still stands today. seek life over yourself and others. Your words are so powerful. you been given power to decree and declare so you must be careful what comes out your mouth. Your mouth is a door. Need to be in constant communication with the Lord speak to him as you would with a best friend. write down your prayers they are petitions and are very powerful. tlaq to the Holy Spirit he is there to help you

L LIST THEM HERE!

- Community of others new and experienced in their faith
- A vision of what My journey should look like for me
- Church and a place of worship
- My Bible
- Non-secular music artist to listen to
- Prayer
- Faith based books that teach
- The right pastors that teach God's word

L LIST THEM HERE!

Community of other christians
Reading my bible
PRAYER everyday
accountability

L LIST THEM HERE!

His ways are higher than you. Let go of control
Having intentional time with the Lord
Learn the foundations of the faith - identity, authority, destiny, calling, be friends with the Holy Spirit, love God, yourself and others well.
Practicing spiritual disciplines such as prayer, Bible study, fasting
A loving and accountable community
Emotional healing

Insights

The last section addresses what important tools and resources they need in their day to day journey as they grow.

List of the top 10 things they need in their journey:

1. Communication with God
2. Prayer
3. Community
4. Reading the Bible
5. Accountability
6. Emotional Healing
7. Faith-based resources
8. Speaking positive words
9. Learning the foundations of the faith
10. A vision for the journey/learning what works for you

INSIGHTS TO IDEAS

As I set out to learn some of the disconnects young girls experience in their journey, the goal of this exercise was to:

1. Understand the ways their journey with Christ has been a tool in connecting deeper with the human experience
2. Understand the hindrances they faced and how they were able to break through those barriers

In many ways, there are significant disconnects between the perception of the faith and how it could look when actually indulging in the relationship. This research helped me to further grasp how the liminal space in hardship could help foster growth, restoration and healing.

These activities help me formulate further ideas before going into research on the ground. It also acted as a precursor to hearing real stories and the impact of faith on real life, as difficulties ensue.

GROUND RESEARCH

GROUND RESEARCH

Starting my initial research, understanding the community's sentiments was crucial to approach the issue with care and intention. To delve into the depths of the situation and its impact on daily life, I knew traveling was necessary. But before I hit the ground running, I strategized how to build trust, foster open conversations, and learn with an open heart.

GOALS

On the ground research in Central America helped me understand the changes being made in real time. It entailed how they intended to keep the girls safe and gain a better grasp on what flexibility looks like with fast paced changes. This information would help me to co-design future ideas that aid them in transitioning home and the new realities that come with this.

I needed to invest intentional quality time with the girls and engage in processing activities, to cultivate strong personal bonds. This approach helped me to understand their experiences intricately and envision their future with them. I also built trust with the staff to host honest discussions about aiding the girls in their transitions.

The trip initiated ideation sessions within the community, fostering agility amidst evolving norms. Preset activities, rapid processing tools with small-scale workbooks, staff interviews, backcasting, and envisioning sessions for the future were key components. This collaborative approach aimed to start building the girls' capacities and plan for the future.

Before landing on the ground, I needed to plan how I would engage the community upon arrival.

Drawing from previous visits and identifying relevant elements, I designed activities that helped them express their emotions, needs, and desires during the transition period.

This involved exploring the broader concept of girlhood as well as their specific cultural experiences and challenges. Seeking inspiration from national girl-led organizations, the goal was to foster hope and envision possibilities for the future.

making.

Methods and themes for booklet

Future-casting: Futurecasting is a strategy used to help think and process thoughts about potential scenarios for the future. It's used to help make informed decisions in the present by considering how different factors of life can evolve over time with shifts and changes.

Dreaming: Future casting is a strategy used to help think and process thoughts about potential scenarios for the future. It's used to help make informed decisions in the present by considering how different factors of life can evolve over time with shifts and changes.

Reflection: Creating a holding environment for the girls to reflect on their experiences and bringing light to how far they've come, throughout the hardships of their journey. This acted as a driver to spark hope and inspire new possibilities.



proto- typing



CHARLA DE CHICAS

BOOKLETS

Each workbook page is a canvas for their dreams and aspirations, a space where they can unleash their creativity and delve into the depths of their emotions. Through storytelling, drawing, and reflective exercises, girls are encouraged to imagine themselves in different scenarios, exploring how they feel and how they want to feel.

OUTCOMES

One section of the workbook prompts them to create charms for a bracelet that represents important things to them, getting them to think about their hopes, fears, and aspirations. Another section helps them to write a blog about a superpower they'd have to help people connect, allowing them to express themselves creatively.

Dreaming became a methodology for processing emotions as girls are encouraged to envision their ideal selves and futures. It helped us to later have conversations about identifying their strengths, confronting their challenges, and developing strategies for dealing with difficult emotions.

Ultimately, the methodology of using imagination and dreaming in these workbooks began the process of understanding themselves more deeply, embracing their emotions, dreaming boldly, and navigating life's challenges with resilience and creativity. It also gave me a strong foundation in understanding which life experiences and emotions were most applicable to their faith journey.

PRE-TAKEOFF

inspiration.

As I embarked on the discovery of how to begin empowering the girls, I found inspiration in the collaborative efforts of organizations like the National Girls Collaborative Project, Girl Scouts, and Girls Inc.



The National Girls Collaborative Project stands as a source of collaboration and inspiration, to lead girls in their purpose. Their model of fostering partnerships and sharing resources became influential when building my strategy.

With Girl Scouts, I admired their holistic approach to girl empowerment. From leadership development to outdoor adventures, they provided a well-rounded experience that nurtured confidence and skills. I sought to create a similar environment where girls could explore their interests in community, develop leadership abilities through finding purpose, and build healthy relationships.



Girls Inc. focuses on advocacy, education, and mentorship, highlighting the importance of creating supportive networks for girls. I eventually mimicked this by including access to mentors, educational resources, and opportunities for girls to advocate for themselves and their communities, in my intervention.

I also took inspiration from courses, brands, and ministries that connect the human experience to one's personalized faith journey.

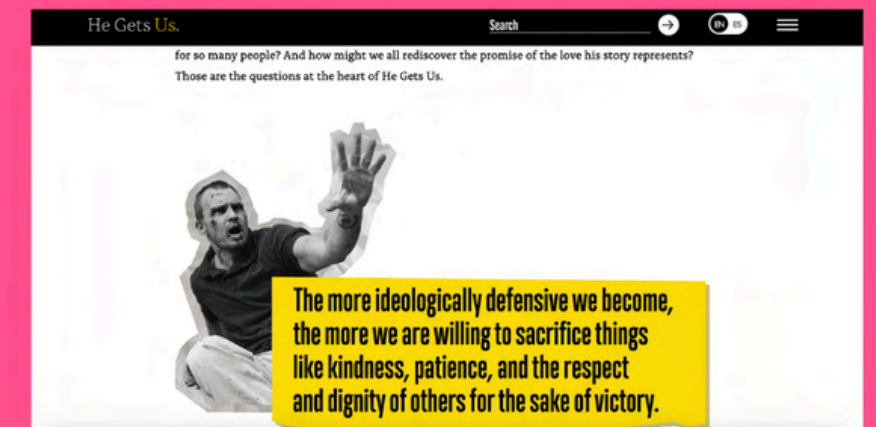


ORIGINS

Origins is a youth prayer course that helps young people, age 11-16, explore the basics of how to pray. Over 8 weeks, the course walks through how prayer can be experiential and personal, while still honoring the essence of one's faith on God.

He Gets Us

He Gets Us strives to reflect the essence of what real faith is, dismantling misconceptions, and helping people to practice a real relationship with God, over religious manmade acts. They pose their message to the masses, challenging preset narratives, and inviting others to explore what could be true for them.



RUSH Podcast

With the slogan of Holy Spirit in Modern Life, Jennifer and Justin understand the challenges of practicing relationship with God in our busy lives. These podcast episodes are quick, experiential and interactive guides that help Christ followers find connection, grace, and healing in the midst of the modern person's day-to-day grind.

journey

on the ground

QUALITY TIME, BUILDING TRUST, JOINING EVERYDAY LIFE



GAME NIGHT

This night was meant to let loose, learn more about each other, and get a little goofy. We had everything from line dances to duck-duck-goose to musical chairs. It served as an introductory way to see their interaction skills amid hardship and the ways that they were willing to let loose in the right environment.

HOME VISITS

As the crux of this project deals with the dilemma behind transitioning back into the environments that once caused harm to these girls, I found it important to understand the depths of transition they were going through. The organization's boarding program is clean, has running water, 3 meals available a day, on-demand transportation to and from school, supportive staff, and peers alike. When visiting their homes outside of the boarding program, I began to understand how much all of these things become real challenges and difficulties in daily life. A campus that could very fool anyone as a 4-star resort to a 24x24 concrete home with towels and sheets hanging from the ceiling for room separators. Where trying to catch the bus for school as a young schoolgirl becomes a safety hazard, and parasites rule the water systems (typically with no plumbing in the house). The intensity of preparation for my visit couldn't suffice, with the shared stories about their experiences of harm, resurfacing fears, and hopes for the future, as we try to develop solutions for their new norm.



COOKING COMPETITION

The idea behind having the girls participate in a cooking competition was to see their resilience in action. 11 girls were split into two teams and competed with food baskets, similar to one of their favorite shows, Top Chef. Locals from my partnering organization took me to the grocery store beforehand to help pick out non-traditional foods. This prevented them from making a dish they were familiar with, but fostered thinking outside the box. Cooking a meal outside of their everyday norm tested the ways they needed to:

- work together
- think quick
- be agile in unprecedented situations

I gained insights on the resilience innate within these girls, and witnessed how they were not only up for any challenge, but also attentive in figuring out how to solve it. Even though they were split into teams, they were so keen on helping each other and making do with whatever they had. In one team's instance, they miscalculated how many plates they needed for the "judges' table", and somehow scrapped up a special French-style plate from the little that was left. I witnessed the ways that they became relentless in the face of adversity, but also used humor and fun to get them through the rocky waves.



STAFF INTERVIEWS

Sitting down with the staff, I began to learn the intricacies of the matter from an organizational standpoint. The challenges of having regimes become dogmatic in the ways they operate, to managing how they can transition well with the girls. The reality is that the non-preferable environments for these girls were inevitably becoming their new norm, but they were willing to partner ideas and strategies with anyone wanting to help create fluid operations for the future of the organization.

GIRLS INTERVIEWS

For those who weren't able to make it to the cooking competition and booklet workshop, I scheduled time to meet with them separately. We worked through the booklet side-by-side and had a future-casting activity. We imagined how they would reinvent their program's resources from the perspective of being at home instead of living together. I gathered insights on their desire to create new ideas with leadership, but needed help in finding their voice when it was time to use it.



THE
STATS

some super cool numbers

COOKING COMPETITION

The cooking competition brought in 11 girls split between 2 teams, and 2 judges!

GAME NIGHT

The game night drew in 20 girls, 15 volunteers and staff, and many games!

DANCE PARTY

Included music from many nations worldwide, and even showcased traditional folklore dances!



14 nightly dinners
11 staff interviews
4 home visits
1 dance party!

TIME TO SYNTHESIZE

insights.

THEMES FROM INSIGHTS

Faith, Purpose, Self Discovery, Autonomy, Community, Career Planning

STAFF INTERVIEWS

- Their biggest concern was to **ensure continual safety** for the girls
- They needed more pathways for building **emotional health** in community
- **Sustainability of the program** to was pertinent to continue making an impact

VISITS

- Their **access to social connection** and accountability drastically lessened
- They re-experienced the trauma of **limited resources**, including a lack of basic needs, and supplies for school
- **Transportation and overall safety** became much more difficult

DINNERS

- The girls expressed concern about what **life** would be like **after transitioning** from the safe haven
- They questioned the amount of **autonomy** they have over their own life experiences
- They expressed the desire and **need to be heard** and have supportive leadership
- The girls valued learning how to **heal through faith** and reflective practices

CHALLENGING MY BIASES

Las Chicas: Originally, I would pause and question the phrase “las chicas” (the girls) commonly used by staff and others. I had reserves because the language seemed somewhat limiting and didn’t embrace the essence of these girls becoming young women, some even transitioning into college. But the biggest caveat was that it came from my own Western perspective. While asking them about what they liked to be called during our workshop, they expressed how much pride they valued being called “las chicas”. It identified them as girls who were provided for and safe in the hands of a locally known organization. And while they don't like being treated as “kids” they do like being referred to as “las chicas” because it gives them a sense of meaning and belonging.

THE UPSIDE

Delving into the girls' transitional experiences, they shared newfound independence gained through travel and having to do more things alone. They also had the opportunity to apply life skills from their program to real-world scenarios.

SYSTEMS FOR INDEPENDENCE

Independence and autonomy are crucial in the girls' journeys, both personally (handling responsibilities, faith practices) and in their interactions with supportive organizations. With this the question becomes, how can they maintain this independence safely, alongside trusted allies?

TRUST BECOMES PERTINENT

After the girls trauma from abuse, and now sudden transition, building and maintaining trust can make or break an experience. Co-creation only happened by building trust and remaining intentional during our time together.

ENVISIONING THE FUTURE

In addition to forms of healing post-trauma, incorporating methodologies for dreaming to envision the future becomes a part of the strategy for their healing process and helps them to transition intentionally into new environments with a plan in mind.

COMMUNICATING

By creating deeper forms of understanding between themselves, their experiences, and the organization’s staff, developing more pathways for expression and clear/healthy communication become avenues that foster positive feedback loops.

CREATIVE PROCESSING

As the girls began the work of exploring their ‘sense of self’ through the booklet activities, developing creative ways to process spiritual and emotional health became a leverage point that guides my process in creating effective tools for them.

PURPOSE CONNECTS THE DOTS

Discovering God-given purpose through learning more about self and being in community, helps to connect the dots of how they will intentionally show up in the complexity of becoming their true selves, thriving in healthily built community, and practicing the skills they'll continue to use throughout life.

LET'S MAKE A PLAN

SCOPE

SCOPING THE INTERVENTION

To start scoping how these insights would unfold into an innovative solution, I created some framing questions to guide my direction.

MAIN QUESTION

How might we use the tool of faith to build the inner self in the face of adversity and allow it to help foster healing and restoration?

SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTIONS

How might honoring past experiences act as a driver for restoration and empowering lifelong strength?

How might we create habits that help the girls merge their faith and life experiences for inner healing and emotional processing?

How might the power of voice be highlighted to bring attention to their needs and heighten self confidence?

Through this, I started to discover what community meant to them before and after the transition, the ways they wanted and needed to foster strength with the help of each other, and what creative processes they already use that could be brought into the intervention.

i realized...

belonging + process becomes the binder between
provided resources and transformative change

META THEMES

Exploring a deeper sense of self to show up in the world wholly and fully

The act of dreaming to envision the greatest capacities for the future, steering away from settling

Expressing self creatively to showcase the journey and non-tangible emotions

Exposure to new opportunities and creating partnerships for healing

Communal support and sisterhood to maintain mutual connections despite being separated

Creating space for integral leadership from girl to girl and organization to girl

META-THEMES TRANSLATED INTO INTERVENTION POINTS

Building Hope Through Contextualising Experiences: Creating partnerships to help envision what they're restored future could look like, and use creative methods to contextualize non-tangible emotions and feeling a part of the journey.

1. Making connections to aid generational impact
2. Honoring the growth they've made through creative expression
3. Developing new life and career skills

Restore Through Self Discovery: Combining elements of emotional health and biblically based inner healing methodologies through a series of creative and interactive activities.

1. Healing the inner version of self after pain
2. Creating self-worth and belonging in the state of abrupt transition
3. Developing purpose around innate skills

Commune to Empower the Necessity of Voice: Creating new forms of healthy community with meaningful connections and uplifting the power of voice.

1. Building trust by practicing community in new ways
2. Expressing honest emotions and feelings, especially with authority figures
3. Practicing integrity and open/honest communication with each other

THE HAVEN EFFECT

THE HAVEN EFFECT

THE AESTHETIC

No matter where you go around the world, girls will be girls. Despite the dire need in these girls' situation, they are still the most girly of girls. They love to dress up in cute clothing with painted jeans and accessories flowing down their hair. And pink everything... lots of pink. From braids to posters on their walls to celebrity crushes, they fulfill the embodiment of The Haven Effect's aesthetic. From mood boards to colorways, the girls shine through.

THE INTERVENTION

The Haven Effect is a functioning social design response that addresses the needs of these girls, as they transition back into the places that originally harmed them, and equips them with tools to thrive in their new environment. It's a three-sided intervention that looks at Building Hope to Contextualize Experiences, Restoring through Self Discovery, and Communing to Empower the Necessity of Voice. Keep reading to dive into each one!

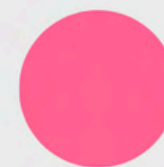


BRANDING

COLOR PALETTE



#FF508F



#FF6393



#FF89BE



#B9D5F6



#F6F2EA

FONTS

Aa

Nourd Black

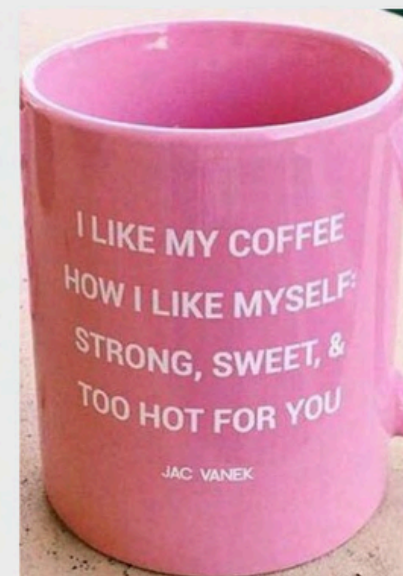
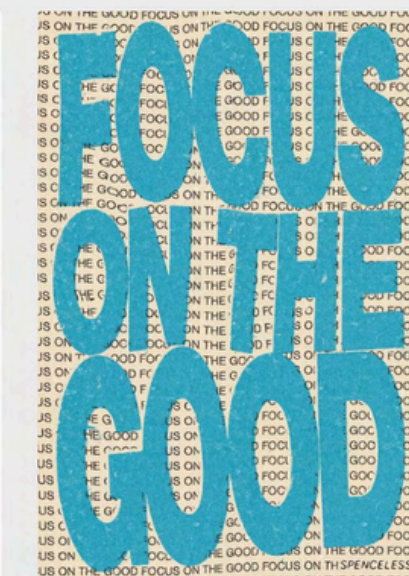
Aa

Glacial Indifference

TODO SOBRE LAS CHICAS

The color palette is set to reflect the essence of Girlhood, emulating the soft power, strength, and grace needed to live life fully.

MOODBOARD



BUILDING HOPE

TO CONTEXTUALIZE EXPERIENCES

Many times on the journey of healing and restoration, there isn't built-in time for intentionally celebrating the wins of the journey and pausing to reflect on their grandeur. In addition, many times the journey of growth and healing brings an intangible development that can't be seen. But what if there was a tradition of making the intangible tangible? The invisible, visible?

I partnered with local women business owners who have overcome similar scenarios of abuse and trauma. Making it to the other side of the odds, they're now running their own businesses and healthy households. Working with the girls, we identified different types of internal growth they've had so far, and how we could depict it creatively. We chose to represent this through symbols and imagery that could be turned into pieces of jewelry that act as a physical remembrance of how far they've come. Working with the girls and local women who serve as inspiration for the girls, the 6 categories of growth were:

1.

Partner with local women business owners that have overcome similar hardships, in order to inspire hope

2.

Contextualize the non-tangible parts of their journey with six different themes

3.

Create a tangible representation with wearable jewelry that acts as a reminder of hope

These were the 6 co-created categories.

- **Choosing positive futures**
- **The broken pieces coming together**
- **The rhythm of new skills being used**
- **Blooming confidence**
- **Healthy partnerships**
- **The ebbs and flows of learning**

Each one being represented by symbols of their choice, I created bracelets that would be given to each of them to honor their experience. Working with my partner organization, we tested how they would be able to adopt this processing method during their Semana Santa (Holy Week) retreat. The girls gathered at a location to stay overnight with the supervision of the organization and made a variety of bracelets for themselves that represented growth to them.



CHOOSING POSITIVE FUTURES



BROKEN PIECES COMING TOGETHER



BLOOMING CONFIDENCE

BRACELETS



RHYTHM OF NEW SKILLS



EBBS AND FLOWS OF JOURNEY



BROKEN PIECES COMING TOGETHER

RESTORATION

THROUGH SELF DISCOVERY

CONTEMPLATION

Self-reflection to fill the inner self with the freedom identified in the moment

Activity: Palms Up, Palms Down

EXPERIENTIAL PRAYER

Creative and interactive ways of connecting life experiences to faith journey
Activity: Lectio Divina

self

discovery

EXPLORING PURPOSE

Restoring the inner self by discovering innate skills and putting them into action
Activity: Enneagram

As the girls have gone through the transition of losing what was once a safe haven, they've had to once again redefine what safety and community mean to them. Transitioning back to the locations that once inflicted pain, hurt and trauma has been no simple or easy feat, yet, they've begun to learn how to take strides in the path forward and redefine what a haven looks like. Because it was previously experienced as a physical location of refuge, it was hard to imagine how this transition could accelerate them into a heightened version of self. But being catapulted into change helped us all to imagine and co-create our new definition of a haven, one that starts from within, and gleans outwards to make impact, and honor the variety of their journey.

This part of the intervention exists to discover who they were before trauma, heal, and flourish into new capacities for living life fully. Living at full capacity not only helps them to live more fulfilled lives, but creates a pathway for others to imagine these possibilities of wholeness, giving way to generational impact and systemic change.

From here, we created a guide that helps the girls to process their emotions and feelings through biblically-based resources, connecting the spiritual journey to the human experience.

This Self-Discovery Toolbox is made to be used as a beginning step in gaining tools process emotions. The goal is for the girls to start by using the pages to help guide them, but eventually create their own methodologies that help carry them through the uniqueness of their own daily experiences, and become a sustainable model for them.

Being able to reflect holistically through this tool gives them the opportunity to offer their biggest dilemmas to God and let Him become a source of healing through biblical meditative practices and explorative prayer. This type of meditation fills the mind and soul with positive words and scripture that serve as encouragement to get through tough situations.

The last part of this tool is to take what they've learned about who they are, and the skills of processing emotions healthily and translate it into becoming the future version of themselves. It sets out to explore how they can become intentional in the ways they show up in the world, honoring who they've been made to be, and discovers how they want to make an impact in the world.







COMMUNE

TO EMPOWER THE NECESSITY OF VOICE

When being a part of a community that has shared similar experiences, and created a sense of safety, leaving those bonds can be difficult. With this, creating a sense of autonomy and confidence in new places or with those in authority can cause fear-inducing worries that limit the ways these girls are comfortable interacting in public. After hearing about their need for developing heightened interaction skills, the Chica Advisory Initiative was created.

The **Chica Advisory Initiative** is a peer-to-peer mentorship that helps the girls regain healthy forms of communication building healthy boundaries. The main idea is to use a series of processing tools that help to uplift their voice and opinions and ensure that their needs are met, according to what they identify they need in the moment.

The first tool helps them to gather their words. In the essence of being overlooked throughout their experiences of trauma, practicing awareness about what they're feeling, thinking and needing in the moment becomes a trait that has to be relearned.

The gathering words sheet helps them to use shapes and symbols to develop consciousness about what's taking place internally and helps them to take action if needed. It becomes valuable when interacting with those in positions of power, so they can develop preventative measures against being taken advantage of and practice self-assurance.

The second helps them to bond from their now dispersed settings. In the research phase, they expressed issues of feeling isolated and lonely because they went from living with their best friends, to not seeing them at all. Because many of them have been forced back into these undesirable environments, a booklet was created to travel incrementally to each girl's home, which has step-by-step guides to help them plan and host activities with each other. The goal is to continue fostering deep forms of connectedness and sisterhood, while also practicing life skills like planning, hosting, and accommodating others.

These guides have helped the girls to create:

- Authority and confidence in decision-making
- Communal support and sisterhood from girl to girl
- Practice for safe and meaningful connections after trauma





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IMPACT

Self-Discovery to Self-Assurance: The girls understanding themselves better is important, as it becomes the cornerstone of healing, creating new norms, and spreading the effects of their new selves into the world. Developing a deeper understanding of who they are—their strengths, weaknesses, beliefs, and aspirations—helps them to become better equipped for the journey of restoration ahead, instead of settling into toxic norms. It begins to encompass the fullness of physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being, connecting all elements of the human experience.

Displayed Worth and Value: As these girls learn to care for themselves, they inherently begin to recognize their worth and value. The narrative shifts from having to find external validation to valuing their true identity and uniqueness. Valuing themselves now means that setting boundaries, prioritizing personal growth, and making choices that align with their values, are primary.

Influencers to Community: The ripple effect of building hope, restoring, and communing extends beyond individual impact. As this isn't something that was a part of their reality before, tools to transition and thrive become transformational in the ways they now walk through daily life, but also in the ways they can now help others to do the same. This has inspired them to share their personal growth, insights, and experiences as a way to uplift and inspire others.

Communal Resilience: As they deepen their connections and sense of belonging with their new community, a supportive environment where both the girls and organization can learn, and work in tandem to overcome hardships together in new ways.

Generational Impact: I foresee how this is already leading to generational impact as they take these tools into their homes and inspire the next generation of young girls who will aspire for more because of the introduction to healing, restoration, and thriving.

Systemic Change: Personal transformation is always the catalyst for systemic change. When a community becomes comfortable in valuing themselves, they then have the power to advocate for others, and ensue change in their areas of influence. Being a part of creating methodologies for communities like theirs, serves as an honor, as it's only the beginning of the internal growth it takes to combat larger systemic cycles of abuse, poverty, and oppressive injustice for generations to come.

Intervention Sustainability: I plan to visit this community in a couple of months to familiarize the staff with how the methodologies can continue to work for them and become a sustainable model for transition and growth. After fully integrating the plan, I look forward to exploring how The Haven Effect can be translated into other communities for transitioning out of detrimental times or inspiring the value of healing to experience the fullness of life available.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

Social Design Overseas, Carbon Footprint, and Travel

With limited travel to Central America throughout his process and keeping in touch with the community virtually, I was able to limit the carbon footprint made on the environment and become intentional about the ways I needed unorthodox ways of doing research abroad. This included having a proxy on the ground to test prototypes and revisions.

Energy Reductions

With the girls transitioning back home and the organization meeting the girls in their local neighborhoods, the organizations now have the opportunity to lessen the amount of fossil fuels, energy, water, and other resources used at the hosting location.

Effects of Environmental Awareness

Creating methods of healing and restoration leads to a higher quality of life, which directly correlates to an increase in environmental awareness and a more personal relationship with the land around them.



THEORY OF CHANGE

THEORY OF CHANGE

THE HAVEN EFFECT

Envisioning a girl-led future of safety, independence, and inner confidence, faith-based activities and the development of sisterhood support sets the stage to offer communities like theirs and beyond, tools to heal, flourish, and restore faith, for generations to come.

When reading through this theory of change (TOC), you'll first notice that there were many intervention routes I could have taken, from developing methods for political collective action to creating alternative solutions for safe housing. But, ultimately, this project addresses the emotional state of these girls as they make their transition back home. The preconditions explain the things that are to be achieved throughout the implementation of the innovation, whereas the outcomes explain the effects of those things being achieved. Then it walks through the specific intervention items output for success and the community has received it as input. Lastly, it walks through the assumptions I've had throughout each section. If the TOC is flipped upside down, it should depict a cohesive step-by-step story from low-level assumptions at the beginning to high-level creation of the intervention by showing the impact of the intervention.

I've split the intervention into three sections to address poignant parts. This is established by the three different columns. The first is building hope, which uses trauma-informed and emotionally sensitive inspiration from local women business owners to help process the varying emotions they carry during the journey of transition. As the women become a source of inspiration, this helps the girls develop a sense of resilience and pride in their journey, and create physical representations of their personal wins.

The second is Restoring Through Self Discovery, which helps to increase self-value, process feelings, and bridge their faith to emotions for long-term restoration during transition. Rooted in VanderWeele's Human Thriving theory, I've introduced tools that help the girls process emotions with experiential faith-based activities, facilitated by the partner organization. Creating safe spaces around learning and caring for themselves better, adds to their sense of purpose and confidence as they reintegrate into society. Ideally, after a series of practice with the tools, the goal is for them to choose to implement one or more of them into their weekly rhythm of life.

Within the last section, Communing to Foster Healthy Norms, I walk through the elements that increase their ability to make meaningful and healthy connections while utilizing practical skills for the real world. This also supports them in heightening their decision-making skills and gaining access to emotionally sensitive mentorship. To test the impact, we've developed a quarterly retreat that focuses on community building, using the power of voice, and accountability, with processing worksheets for contextualizing the growth they've made over time.

The Haven Effect is the intervention supported by these three sources of intervention, where the organization supports a peer-to-peer, girl-led effort, to rebuild emotional, relational, and skill capacities for the future ahead, post-transition.

THEORY OF CHANGE

THE HAVEN EFFECT



MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Monitoring and Evaluation Plan

The impact of The Haven Effect as an intervention for these girls acts as a methodology to help them reintegrate back into the places that once hurt them, healthily and wholly. The accompanying Theory of Change walks through the three-pronged process that aids their transition, becoming mindful of self, and those around them, and ultimately celebrating the growth they've made throughout the time.

The qualitative measure includes the ways the girls have experienced change in their lives due to using these tools, whereas the quantitative asks how much have the girls adopted these tools into their lives.

Key Monitoring Question: How might the girls experience change in their journey by interacting with tools for building hope, restoring, and communing?

- How many girls participated with these tools?
- Which tools were most helpful in the integration process? (Building Hope, Restoring, and/or Commune)
- How many times were the tools used for each girl during the process? (per week/month?)
- How many girls are being introduced to these tools over time? What's the rate of increase?

Key Evaluation Question: How much have the girls adopted these tools into their daily lives, to create a smoother and healthier transition into society?

- How might more girls get introduced to these tools during times of transition?
- How do the girls feel about using these tools in their daily lives?
- How might the local organizations on the ground continue to foster, support, and facilitate these tools to local girls?
- How has specific behavior changed/shifted since using these tools?

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