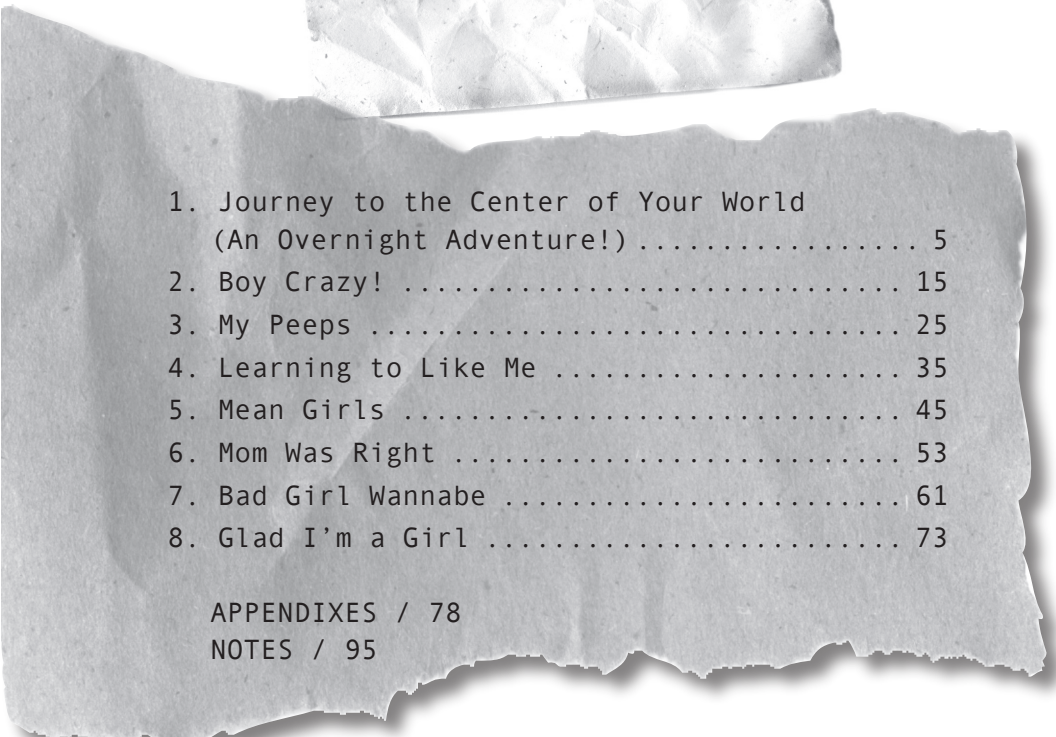




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JOURNEY TO THE CENTER OF YOUR WORLD (AN OVERNIGHT ADVENTURE!)



THE GOAL:

Enjoying a “getting to know you” session that visits both contemporary culture . . . and the ancient world of the group leaders!

THINGS YOU'LL NEED:

- Games from your decade
- DVDs of your favorite old movies (VHS or even Beta!)
- Old music
- Atari or Genesis video games
- A corded wall phone, etc.

GETTING READY:

- Read chapters 1–2 of *Secret Diary Unlocked*
- Preview study guide materials
- Set up/decorate large livable space for a huge retro slumber party (music and DVD capabilities needed)
- Name tag/arrival station
- Leaders need to bring old photos/yearbooks to event

- Leaders create “How I Feel About Me” collages
- Rent an appropriate “time travel” or classic decade movie
- Purchase lots and lots of slumber party treats!



THE PAJAMA PARTY

THE GAME: NAME TAGS

TIME: 20 MINUTES

THE RULES: CREATIVITY

PARTY SUPPLIES: CREATIVE, THEMED TAGS

THE GAME: PHOTO SHARE

TIME: 15 MINUTES

THE RULES: LEADERS ONLY

PARTY SUPPLIES: OLD PHOTOS/YEARBOOKS

THE GAME: FAST GAME OF CHOICE

TIME: 30 MINUTES

THE GAME: COLLAGES

TIME: 50 MINUTES

THE RULES: NO RULES, JUST RIGHT

PARTY SUPPLIES: A LOT OF CREATIVE ART SUPPLIES

THE GAME: TRUTH OR DARE

TIME: 30 MINUTES

THE RULES: LEADERS CHOOSE ALL GAME OPTIONS

PARTY SUPPLIES: NONE

THE GAME: DISCUSSION

TIME: 40 MINUTES

THE RULES: NO STORIES LEAVE THIS ROOM

PARTY SUPPLIES: COPY OF SECRET DIARY UNLOCKED

THE GAME: MOVIE

TIME: 2 HOURS

THE RULES: TIME TRAVEL

PARTY SUPPLIES: SCREEN AND DVD PLAYER

The idea behind this session is that the girls would get to know you as leaders and get a taste of what a slumber party might have been like “back in the day.” Choose your theme! A fifties party with hair curlers and Frankie and Annette movies? The seventies, chock-full of black light posters and lava lamps? Or would your girls love a sports-themed night with a lot of active games and a viewing of *A League of Their Own*? Have fun . . . and think outside the box!

THE ARRIVAL



As the girls arrive, have theme-oriented music playing on an appropriate sound system. How cool would it be to actually be playing records—yes, vinyl—as the girls arrive? Direct the girls to an area where they can custom-make their own name tag for the event. Try to keep name tags in line with the theme of the party; for instance, if your theme is the seventies each of the girls could make a beaded necklace that has her name on it, or let them design their own “pet rock.” An eighties name tag could have a Rubik’s Cube or Pac Man theme.

THE GREETING



Welcome the girls to the party and take a couple of minutes to introduce the leaders. Have the leaders share a picture of themselves from their middle or high school years as part of their introduction, as well as a story or diary entry from that time of their lives. Tell the girls that tonight is all about

girl time, getting to know one another, and a reminder that a girl is a girl is a girl . . . They will soon see that despite any age differences, girls know how to be girls, and you never have to tell a lady how to have fun at a slumber party!

GAME NUMBER ONE



Kick the night off with a rowdy game of some sort. Sardines might be a good option (hide and seek, group style, in the dark) if you are in your church building. Capture the Flag could be fun in good weather. Keep-away in the pool? A big snowball fight? It depends on your girls, your theme, and the weather . . .

but make it loud, fast, and fun! Google the phrase “fun group games” if you want a plethora of great ideas!

SESSION ONE: IT WAS A GOOD YEAR



Read chapter 1 of *Secret Diary Unlocked: My Struggle to Like Me* out loud to the girls. Have the girls circle around in their pj's, supply plenty of junk food—or health food if you think it will actually be consumed—in the center of the circle, and invite those stuffed animals to attend too! Choose a leader

who enjoys reading and can communicate with a variety of vocal inflections to do this reading. You'll want to be sure the girls are fully engaged. *Though girls often enjoy the opportunity to read aloud, they tend to process information better if an experienced reader is covering the material. If you want to include the girls, allow them to take turns reading the diary entries included in each chapter.*

Allow girls a few minutes to complete the “My Struggle” journal entry at the end of the chapter. For larger groups, this session may be done in smaller groups of twenty girls or less.

Provide the girls with a huge supply of various art mediums—paper, magazines, digital camera and printer, stickers, stamps, confetti of various sorts, noodles, ribbon, feathers, etc. Ask them to create an abstract art piece that reflects how they feel about themselves—physically, spiritually, socially, in their family, tonight specifically . . . Show them your own artwork (prepared in advance) and explain some of the choices you made. You know, of course, the more vulnerable and transparent you are willing to be, the more the girls will feel free to be the same.

GAME NUMBER TWO



Play the most famous slumber party game of all . . . Truth or Dare! Use the list found in appendix A or create your own, but be sure all questions and dares will be pleasing to God first and foremost. This is a game that needs to be redeemed for many of these girls, and you probably need to ask the girls if they have ever played a game of Truth or Dare that they have regretted.

*** There is a Web site called www.tordol.com that allows you to play a G-rated game of Truth or Dare. It may be a bit less personal than the appendix questions, but is easy and fun to use. The G rating is truly*

appropriate, and there are over 9,500 questions, some of which I have borrowed for this section.

SESSION TWO: COLLIDING WORLDS



Go over the *My Struggle* session on page 28 of *Secret Diary Unlocked*. Try to keep this time light and fun, keeping stories from your own past short and allowing the girls to have fun with your “old-fashionedness.” They will love it. If you can, bring a few pictures along—pictures of yourself when younger (the more embarrassing and dated, the better), pictures made famous by a magazine such as *Life* during your teen years, and perhaps a few pictures of the big heartthrobs of your day. Bring in a high school yearbook or two and allow the girls to flip through these. And trust me, you don’t need to be afraid to let them read the things written by classmates on the autograph pages. One of the best things I ever did for a student who was rebellious and making some big decisions about what direction her crowd would be taking her was to give her my diary, a bowl of popcorn, a big pillow, and a warm blanket and send her into my walk-in closet to read for a couple of hours. I was a mess back in ’79! And yet her response was, “Oh my gosh . . . you were just like me.” She told me later that it was on that day she decided to trust me with her life.

After 20 minutes or so of stories and laughing, look together at the *Your World* section of chapter 2 together. Use the following questions for discussion, but before you begin, remind the girls of the importance of this cardinal rule: What is said in this room stays in this room. There will be no sharing of someone else’s story after tonight!

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

- What kind of impact do the statistics in this chapter have on you? Do you feel scared? Astonished? Like “it won’t happen to me”?
- How aware do you think your parents are of the things you see and hear daily?
- What aspect of a teenager’s daily life, in your opinion, places her in the most danger?
- How would you feel if parents became more technologically savvy? (It would undoubtedly ruin some of your friends!) Would you like parents to take more interest in what is on your computer screen, what you are listening to, and what movie you’ve just been to see?

READ THROUGH 2 TIMOTHY 3:1–5 AND THEN INSTRUCT THE GIRLS AS FOLLOWS:

I am going to read these verses again, and I want you to close your eyes and get a picture in your mind. There is a room in which you have gathered all of your friends—those with whom you hang out on a regular basis. It’s a party room and your friends are free in this room to do whatever they please, whether good or bad. Take note of what your friends are doing as I read through these verses.

READ 2 TIMOTHY 3:1–5 AND ALSO VERSE 9 THIS TIME.

ASK: **What were your friends doing?** *(Allow girls to respond either verbally or by what will inevitably happen—they will look at one another and giggle. Verbal chaos may even ensue for a moment!)*

Tell the girls: A lot of you may have just seen your friends in obvious folly. While it may be best to separate from a friend or two whom you just observed in your mind, there is another action step you can take to avoid being a statistic. During the course of this Bible study we are going to deal with self more than with others. Back in the eighties this was kind of a taboo thing to say in the church, but we're beginning to see again that it is pretty important: We need to love ourselves. We need to know that we are loved by God, that though we have done nothing to deserve it He values us, that our lives have a purpose, and that He is madly jealous for our love. If all of the girls in your "party room" truly knew all of that, do you think it might have an impact on their choices? Do you think it might keep them safer? I think so. His love and our obedience to the One who loves us is the greatest shield we have ever had, way back in my world, and here in your world today.

Close this session by praying for the girls, that they would in the course of this study come to see how deeply and passionately they are loved by God the Father.

MOVIE TIME



After a 20-minute snack and chat break, call the girls back into a common area and play a fun "back in time" movie to end the evening. There are a lot of time-travel movies out there—your local video store clerk should be able to help you.





LESSON 2

