

# Introduction: Breathe

Welcome to our newest CBOQ curriculum resource for youth: **Breathe**.

The modules offered in this package stream from our vision to serve God by mobilizing and developing Youth Workers and Churches across Ontario and Quebec, alongside Christian Youth Agencies in effectively engaging youth with the person and message of Jesus and empower them in their journey towards being fully-committed Christ-Followers:

Connected to a faith community (I Belong)

Clear in their identity as a child of God (I Believe)

Cultivating intimacy with Jesus and developing Christlike character (I Breathe)

Contagious and Active in living out their faith (We're Becoming)

CBOQ YOUTH has a spiritual growth cycle that begins with students coming to a place where they would say **I BELONG** (i.e. connected in a faith community). Then they toward seeing who **I AM** (being Clear in their Identity in Christ as a child of God) followed by living out **I BREATHE** (growing as a Christ-Follower by cultivating intimacy with Christ and demonstrating Christ-like character). This leads to a realization that this spiritual journey is not about ourselves but that **WE'RE BECOMING** (engaging with others in a contagious and active faith). The cycle continues again as those students further deepen their spiritual depth and encourage others in that direction.

This year we are focusing on helping students to cultivate intimacy with Jesus and develop Christ-like character by guiding them to see that they need to **Breathe** spiritually. A healthy Christ-Follower is one that both inhales (grows spiritually, understands the message, submits to Christ) and exhales (lives out love and service, that is a reflection of Christ in their day to day life). If we only inhale then we drown. If we only exhale then we will suffocate. It is only through breathing that we live life to the fullest.

The lessons in this curriculum are meant to help students learn to breathe on their own extending to the context of community. We provided some examples from Scripture of people who have done just that. We explore the ways in which God has created them to serve him and others through Spiritual Gifts.

Each of our lessons ends with a **Breathe In** and **Breathe Out** component. Breathe In is intended to help them develop a new habit or understanding in their own life, while Breathe Out is designed to push them towards an outward expression of the concepts or ideas that they have encountered during your time of study.

## Modules

Included in **Breathe** are 4 different modules that have been designed with a ten-month youth ministry calendar in mind. While there are not enough lessons to fill every week of the ministry year, this has been done intentionally to allow room for you to insert your own ideas into the instruction. In particular, you may use your own local ministries and projects or yearly events like Christmas and Easter to 'flesh out' this curriculum in rather unique ways.

Because **Breathe** is formatted as modules, you can choose which modules can be most effective for your youth ministry. While there will be a suggested order, they do not necessarily have to follow one another in this way. With that said, there are 2 modules that complement each other and might be of more benefit if done in the order provided. Although both Modules 2 and 3 deal with Spiritual Disciplines, Module 2 (**Individual Spiritual Disciplines**) begins with a general introduction that would be a helpful starting point. We have chosen **People who Breathed** to be the first module because case studies are often a good way to unpack new concepts or begin a new way of thinking through concrete examples. You may also find that some lessons in Module 1 could also serve as “appendices” for the other 3 modules.

## **Lesson Structure**

On the first page of each lesson, you'll notice the module name and lesson number/name. Following this are Objectives for the lesson, as well as a Materials Needed list. The lesson objectives let you know up front what the point or goal of the lesson is. It tells you what you should hope to achieve in the lesson. Lesson goals are written in student-centred language, reflecting our philosophy of constructivist learning. Lessons should be taught with the success of the learner in mind.

The Materials Needed list will help you be prepared in advance. All required materials, including photocopies, objects and media clips are listed. Preparing a lesson requires that you be aware of this list and think ahead to ensure that you have what is needed for each lesson. Items such as pens and pencils are typically assumed and therefore not always listed separately. If a media clip is suggested, it is assumed that the requirements to show the clip are also required.

In some instances you will find the term “Board and Markers” or something similar listed in the Materials Needed. This is a general term that could mean a) a chalk board and chalk, b) a white board and markers, c) an overhead projector, blank overheads and overhead pens, d) chart paper and markers, or e) anything else that works for you in the space that you use.

## **Lesson Format: The Three-Part Lesson Plan**

Each of the lessons in this package follows the three-part lesson plan. Educational research tells us that this approach to teaching ensures a well-rounded learning experience that will better enable students to really link new understanding to already-existing ideas in their schema. The three-part lesson follows this structure: Minds On, Action, Consolidate/Debrief. Each part of the lesson can be modified to fit with specific time requirements as instructors see fit, although it is important to ensure that all three sections of the lesson plan are included. Instructors are often quick to cut the Consolidate portion of a lesson when time is lacking. Before doing this, please

consider that current research confirms it is extremely important for youth to have an opportunity to consolidate learning and debrief with peers and/or adults as part of the learning process.

### **Minds On**

This section acts as a type of “warm-up” or introduction to the lesson. It features something to engage the group and get them thinking about the lesson topic.

### **Action**

This portion of the lesson is typically the longest part and contains the 'meat' or chief goals of the lesson. This is the section of the lesson where students may be working on constructing a concept or idea, often by working through a “problem” of sorts. Students are often occupied with active work through various learning intelligences that promotes understanding of the topic.

### **Consolidate/Debrief**

This is the lesson summary that provides an opportunity for students to consolidate their learning and clarify their understanding. It typically requires learners to participate in some type of independent or shared reflective activity to link new ideas to already-existing “files” of a similar nature in their brains. Often this section ends with ideas being brought together in a group prayer of sorts. Sometimes students are encouraged to pray or reflect individually on the topic explored in the preceding lesson. As mentioned previously, this year we are making this process more explicit with the use of the Breathe In and Out portion.

### **Media Use**

Please note that presenting a video in public (e.g. in a church) does require a license (similar to a CCLI license for music). You can obtain a license that will cover most distributors such as Universal, Disney and 20th Century Fox, at Audio Cine Film ([www.acf-film.com](http://www.acf-film.com)) or Criterion Pictures (<http://www.criterionpic.com/>).

We suggest that you preview the movie clips suggested in each specific case. This will help you determine whether the clips are suitable for your group. Occasionally, Youtube or similar online resources may be referenced. Most of those resources are public domain, however, we encourage you to preview these to ensure the links are still active and appropriate.

## **Tips on Teaching the Lessons**

It is important for instructors to be prepared before the lesson begins. Be sure to arrive early and ready your materials required for the upcoming lesson. You will need to make sure that you have enough Bibles, pencils, pens, and other individual materials. You may also wish to review the lesson notes before the students arrive.

Many of the modules in this package make use of group work. Group work can be a very effective way for students to learn. In particular, it promotes a friendly and safe environment for all. Research tells us that group work is best when it is cooperative, or when the students have specified roles in the group. For example, students can take on the role of reporter, recorder, encourager, timer, etc. This ensures that all participate in the work and share responsibility. Try to be creative in how groups are chosen. There are times when you will want students to choose their own groups. At other times you will want more control over group choice.

There are three notations used often:

- **Prompt:** These are statements you can use as segues or transitions. Don't feel the need to have to read it word for word.
- **Leader's Note:** These are side statements to bring your awareness with a specific approach.
- **Think/Pair/Share:** This frequent strategy provides students with a space process a thought or question and then to contribute by sharing with a partner.

The philosophy of those who wrote and edited **Breathe** is student-centred (or constructivist) learning. Following the work of recent educational research, we believe that students learn best

when they are actively engaged in activities of learning, as opposed to sitting and listening to a lecture. In part this relates to the fact that we all have different pre-dominate learning styles (e.g. auditory, visual, kinaesthetic) and are smart in different ways (e.g. multiple intelligences). It also relates to the fact that students are more engaged in learning when they have an opportunity to construct the knowledge for themselves through a hands-on approach.

## **The Writing Team**

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