

Shaping Hearts



An Image-Based Research Project

How to Experience This Report

Word-based research is often quickly read or scanned for new ideas. Sometimes a detailed reading is required or desired. The goal is the **ADDITION OF KNOWLEDGE** for the reader with the possibility of making better informed decisions and actions.

This image-based research is very different. This is a *“taste and see”* experience. Before and as you read the words, spend time reflecting on the images chosen by the participants. These images are **VISUAL WINDOWS** into the landscape of their hearts. These visual understandings can help you better connect with and minister to the intended audiences.



All images in this report were selected by research participants.

Landscape of the Heart

Of Adolescents and Parents



Summary of Themes

1. Happy Loves
2. Hopeful Imagination
3. Hectic Stress
4. Spiritually Conflicted
5. Often Disoriented
6. Hiding Shame

Note: The images on the next pages are illustrative and were chosen from the responses of the 106 adolescents and parents.

1 – HAPPY LOVES

The images selected by both adolescents and parents suggest that they are pursuing happiness in the various loves of their daily life and relationships. Participants in all groups reported wanting to feel happy. The longing for happy loves appears important across most all of their relationships.



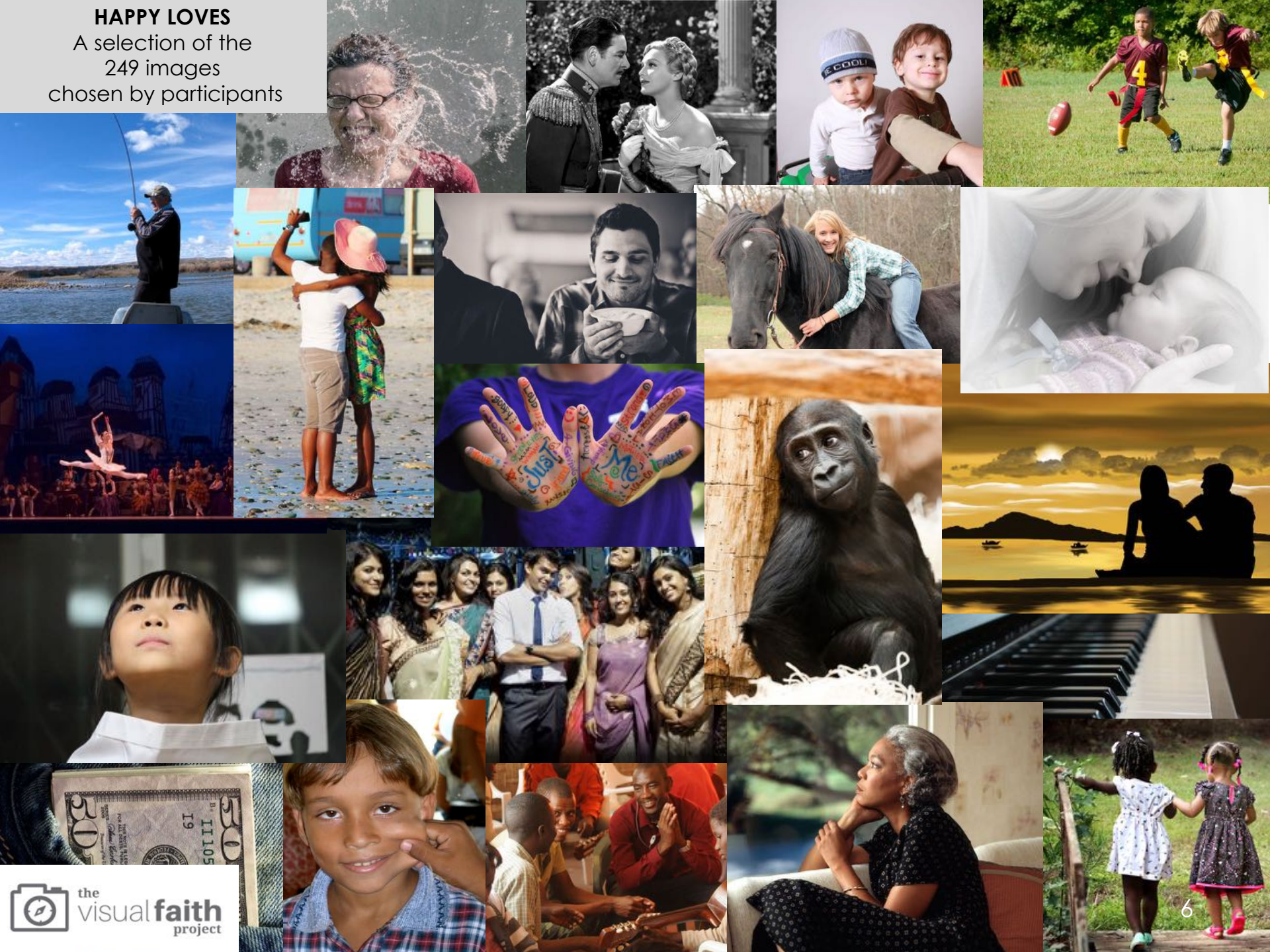
PREFER TO BE SEEN:
happy, confident

HAPPY LOVES



HAPPY LOVES

A selection of the 249 images chosen by participants



2 – HOPEFUL IMAGINATION

Images selected by both adolescents and parents suggest that they are on an imaginative journey to become new innovators in a new world—a new global world order. These innovations focus how they view what it means to be fully human and how we can live together on a sustainable planet. Their hopeful imaginations reflect rapid technological changes required for a re-creating of what it means to human within our ecosystem. These new innovations show a rootedness in the mysteries of quantum realities rather than classical certainty. Their image choices show levels of paradoxical, cyclical reasoning of “both-and even with seeming contradiction.” These images of hope imagination show them thriving on emotions that foster their imaginations. Spiritual myths are often present in their imaginative journeys.



TODAY: creative, colorful; living in a different world

HOPEFUL IMAGINATION



HOPEFUL IMAGINATION

A selection of the 70 images chosen by participants



3 – HECTIC STRESSED

The images selected by both adolescents and parents suggest that they experience high levels of stress. These stresses come from deadlines, test, money, pollution, nuclear threats, etc. Images chosen often show stress without help from family, friends, church, government or God. The stresses feel hectic and frantic with no way out.



TODAY: frantic, hectic, stress, number of things that need to be done

HECTIC STRESS



HECTIC STRESS

A selection of the 55 images chosen by participants



CHILDHOOD VULNERABILITY



4 – SPIRITUALLY CONFLICTED

The images selected by both adolescents and parents suggest that they are spiritually conflicted. However, no groups indicated that spirituality was a driving part of their lives. Though God can be galactic love to them, their experience with him was also described as unconnected. Jesus is mostly viewed positively, but he is also associated with a dark church and with Christians who are too concerned about appearances. The Holy Spirit is both perfect and dull at the same time. And the Bible is a book that is powerful and yet mean. The Bible was also not seen as relevant for life. Adolescents and parents alike seem to be in the process of checking God out to decide his relevance and trustworthiness in today's world.

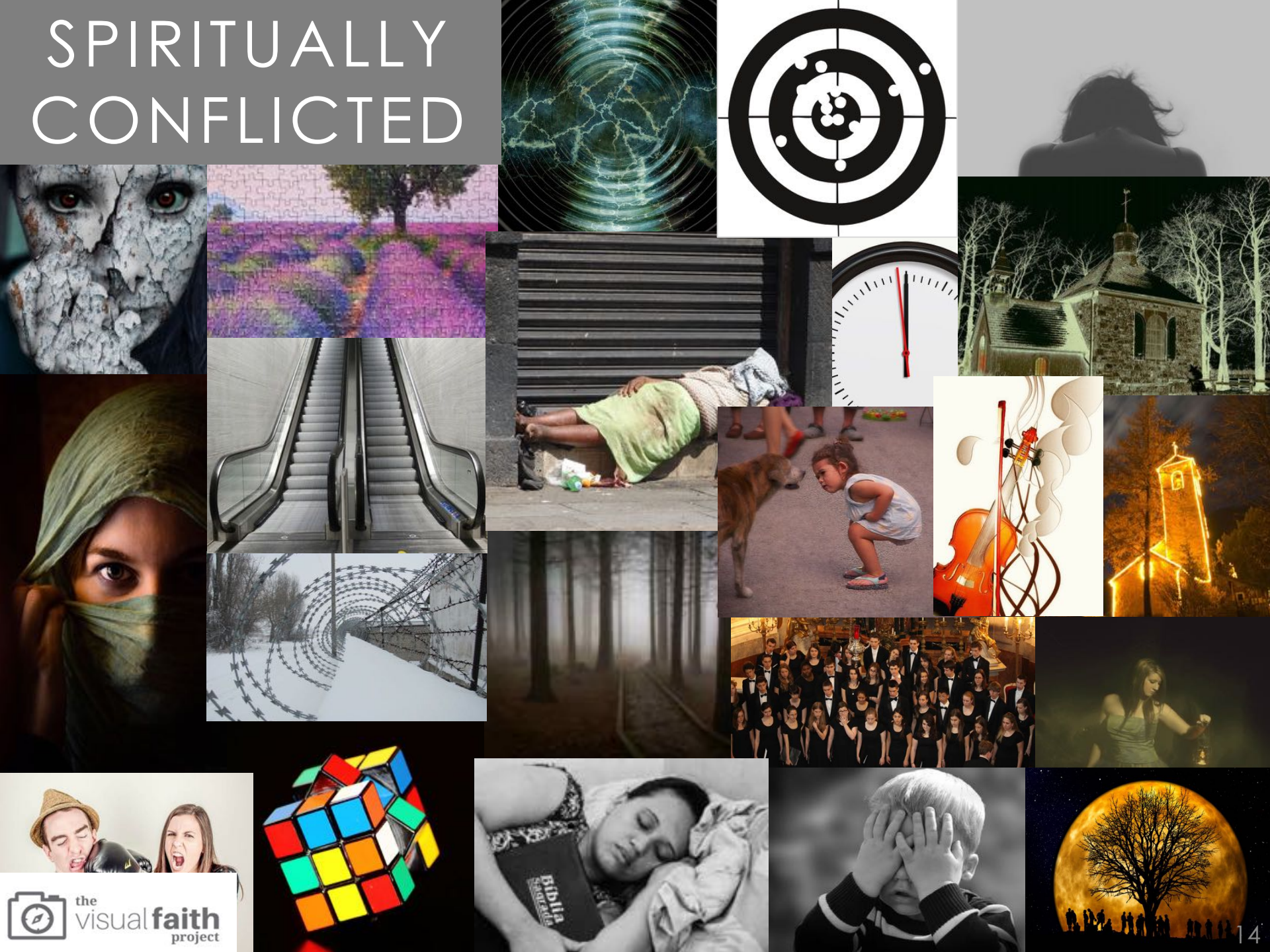


GOD: eyeball test; who is looking at who



JESUS: church, dark

SPIRITUALLY CONFLICTED



SPIRITUALLY CONFLICTED

A selection of the
47 images
chosen by participants



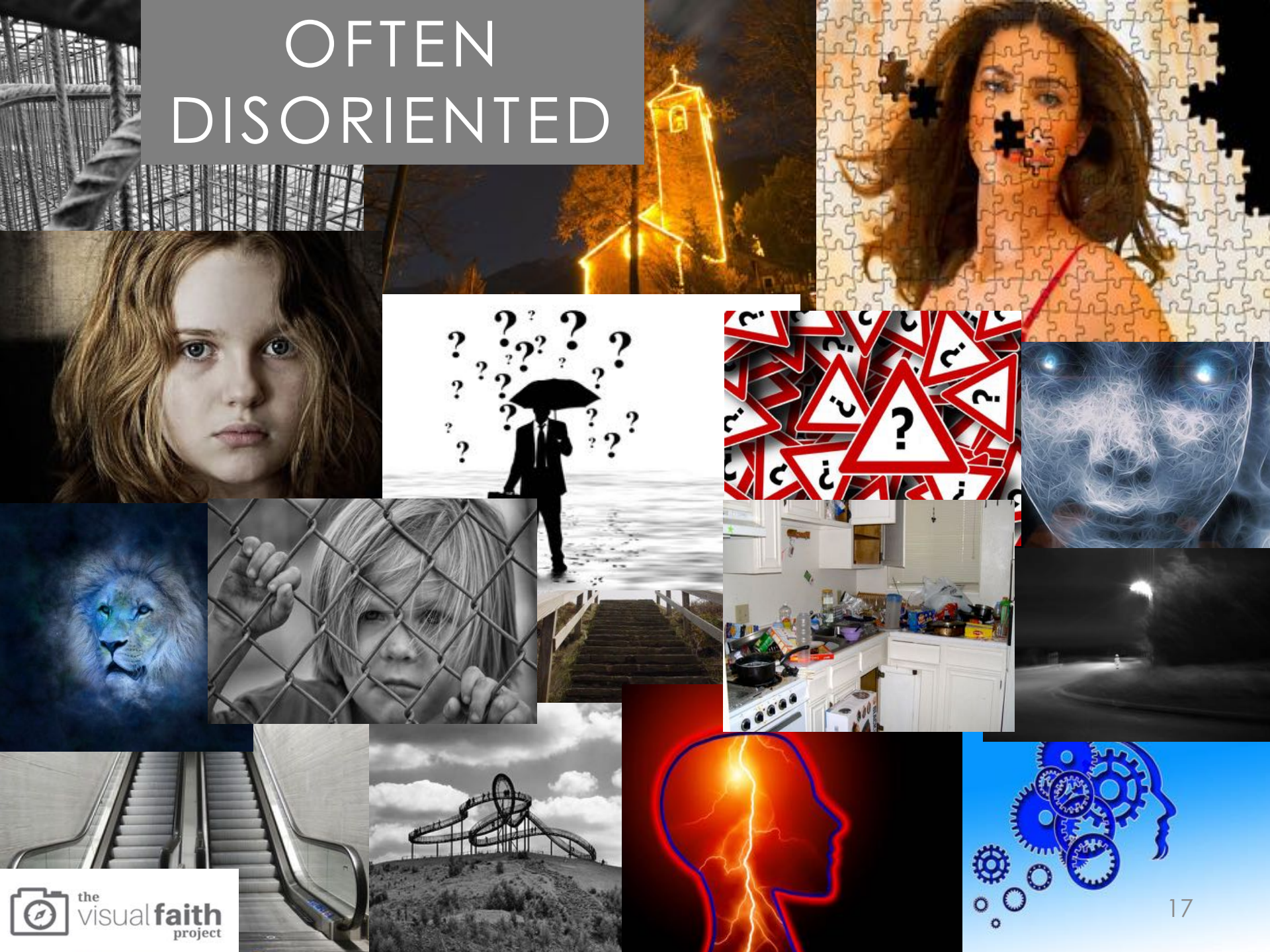
5 – OFTEN DISORIENTED

The images selected by both adolescents and parents suggest that they have an uncertain pathway forward in life. This uncertainty leads to confusion which adds to their stress. They are disoriented by the increasing quantity and conflicting nature of the options before them. This disorientation impacts career directions and personal identity issues. Often life seems to be going in different directions with no clear choice—pieces seem to be missing or misplaced. Life is described as a continuous power struggle.



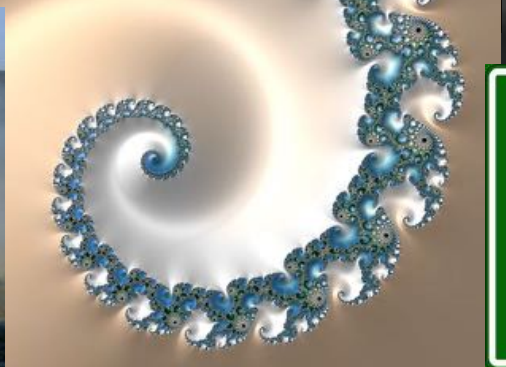
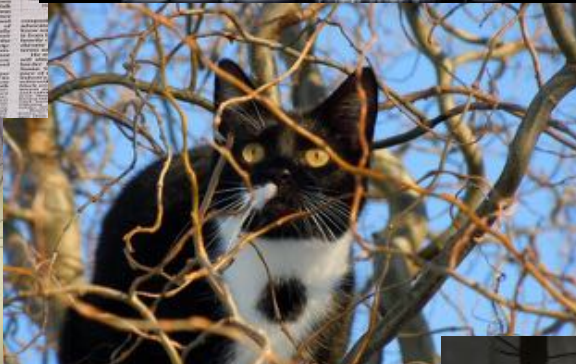
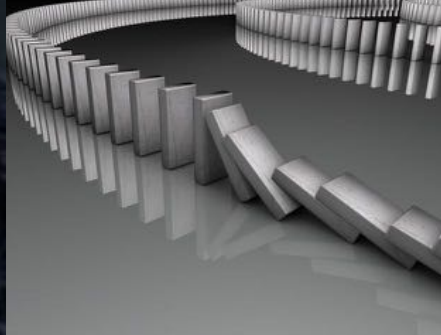
TODAY: all the ?'s piled high; layers upon layers;
too many to count

OFTEN DISORIENTED



OFTEN DISORIENTED

A selection of the 50 images chosen by participants



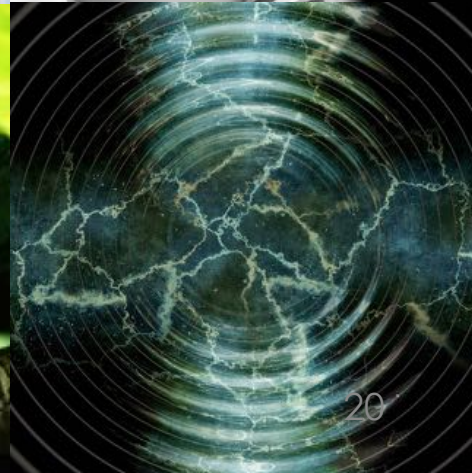
6 – HIDING SHAME

The human reaction to feeling shame is often to hid or mask our flawed sense of identity. The adolescent and parent participants chose images that reflect a strategy of hiding one's true self. Though not as frequent as happy loves or the other emotional themes, the theme of hiding/masking shame surfaced frequently. In the future, they would like to be transformed—to break free from their current flawed identity.



FUTURE: transformation, realization, breaking free, bright

HIDING SHAME



HIDING SHAME

A selection of
36 images
chosen by participants



CHILDHOOD VULNERABILITY



HECTIC STRESS

HOPEFUL IMAGINATION

OFTEN DISORIENTED



THE LANDSCAPE OF THE HEART

HAPPY LOVES

“But Jesus, knowing the reasoning of their hearts..”
Luke 9:47

SPIRITUALLY CONFLICTED

HIDING SHAME



Results of Vibrant Faith Starting Points Research, Adolescents and Parents. 2015

So What?

Empathy is a essential in ministry. As we understand the heart of a person or a group of people, we become much more equipped to speak the words of Jesus to them in a manner that connects with their hearts.

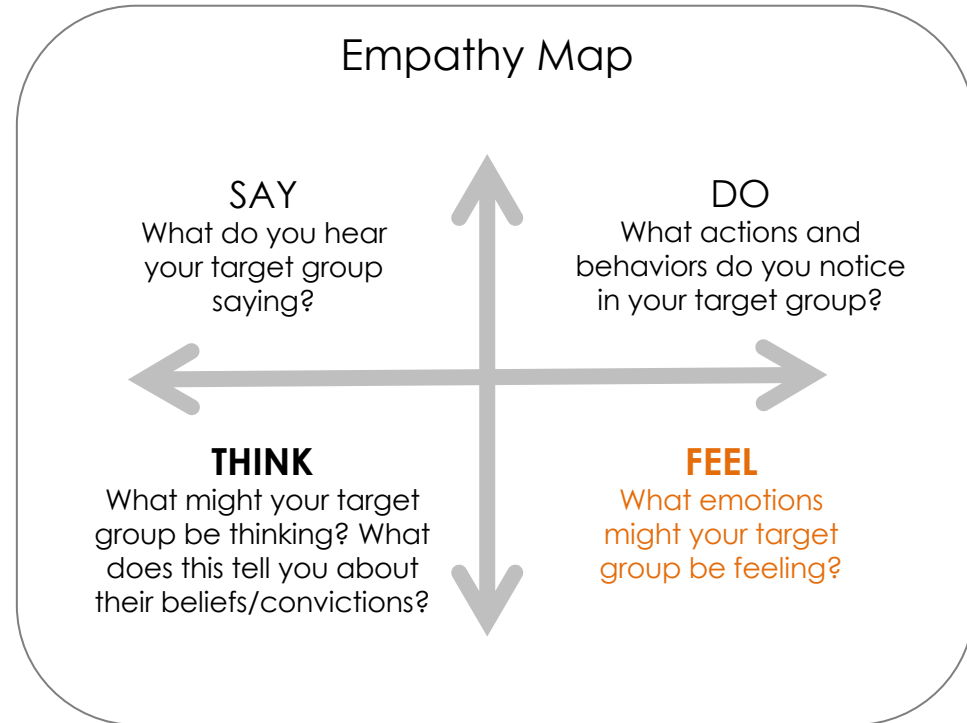
Take time to review these six heart themes. Which ones do you identify with? Which seem pertinent to those you minister to? How might Jesus address each of these heart themes? How might Jesus address someone with all these heart themes?



Back Up Information

Why the Heart?

By exploring the emotional themes of the heart, we seek to empathize with adolescents and parents as we share Jesus' Good News. Though beliefs and behaviors are highly important, Jesus spoke to the people's hearts. From the Sermon on the Mount to the Samaritan woman and His training of the twelve, Jesus exposed the heart issues of people and brought the redemptive love of God to them.



Empathy Map developed by the Stanford School of Design

“But Jesus, knowing the reasoning of their hearts ...”

(Luke 9: 47 ESV)

Using Image Research Findings

Suggestive – NOT Definitive or Predictive

These findings are suggestive of the emotional landscape of the heart that our target audiences may have across the USA. The findings are NOT definitive, and they are NOT statistically predictive of future behaviors by these audiences.

Central Tendencies – NOT Stereotyping

These findings suggest the central tendencies of our target audiences. These findings do not suggest that all people within an audience fit these descriptions—that would be stereotyping an audience. You will undoubtedly be able to cite people within these audiences that do not exhibit these tendencies.

Profitable for Exploration

These findings are profitable for explorations within our target audiences. We encourage ministry leaders to grapple with these findings and together develop their actionable implications. We have provided a variety of implications in the final section of this report called “Shaping Hearts in Ministry.”

Landscape of the Hearts

for Adolescents and Parents



For Easy Memory: **HIS-CDs**

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