

SILENCE THE NEGATIVE THOUGHTS IN YOUR HEAD

shut up

CHRISTY PIERCE

{ WITH HUNDREDS OF TEENS }

SILENCE THE NEGATIVE THOUGHTS
IN YOUR HEAD

shut up

CHRISTY PIERCE
(with hundreds of teens)

Preview copy of the new book available
on Amazon/Kindle May 2016

Dedicated to dear friends
(our modern-day heroes)

Bill, Kristin, Cole, and Reid Eberwein

In memory of Walker Eberwein

We love you Walker.
May life come out of your
death in Jesus' name

shut up

Preface 1: (For teens and college students)

Preface 2: (For parents and adult readers)

Introduction

Chapter 1: Say “Shut Up”

Chapter 2: Your Voice Needs To Be Heard

Chapter 3: It Takes Guts To Tell Your Story
(Julie, Devon, Justin, Carrie, and Kimm Speak
Out)

Chapter 4: Your Feelings Matter

Chapter 5: What Are The Bad Thoughts Inside
Your Head?

Chapter 6: What Does Your Enemy’s Voice
Sound Like?

Chapter 7: The Most Important Voice

Chapter 8: How to Hear God’s Voice

Chapter 9: Tell That Lying Enemy to Shut Up!

Chapter 10: Finding Safe People (Who Will Shut
Up and Listen)

Preface 1: (For teens and college students)

Wait what? Are two prefaces really necessary for this book? Yes. I didn't realize this, but my three teens, Corey (16), Annie (14), and Benji (12) insisted I add this story. Because this book really isn't for people older than you. I'll admit it. We don't get it. None of us can really understand what all of you are going through in your generation. If anyone pretends that they fully understand what it's like growing up in today's world, and if anyone pretends that they have all the answers about what you should do to feel better, then they really don't get it. The truth is that the pressures, pain, and suffering around you are way bigger than most anything us parents saw when we were your age. If you are in high school and feeling pressured by adults to make good grades, I hope that you know the work you're doing now is what your parents did in college. I overheard one young middle school girl say that her parents locked her in the garage one night because she got a B+ on a test. Seriously?! In my opinion, the extreme pressure put on you (sometimes by parents, teachers, and coaches) to excel in academics, sports, drama, and everything else is crazy. Plus, parents and teachers (me included) really don't understand what social media does to make it even harder to

grow up in your world. Cyber bullying, pressure to post nudes or do drugs are common among your generation. Throw all of this together and no wonder many of you are anxious, depressed, or hopeless about your future.

Honestly, I'm going to say some things that I know will make some adults mad at me. That's ok with me. My heart is broken for all your generation is going through and it's worth the risk to tick off a few parents or teachers.

Here is an embarrassing story (which just might make someone angry...). Last week, I was walking my dogs, Sam and Lizzie, in our neighborhood. As I walked past my kid's old elementary school, a mom (I'll call her Suzy) waved at me from across the street. You have to understand, Suzy drove me crazy when our kids played together in kindergarten. When her little girl was just five years old, she would brag that she was already on the club soccer team, learning French *and* Spanish, and was Clara in the Nutcracker ballet. Suzy would go on to say that her husband had her daughter working out with a trainer so that she didn't get fat before starting 2nd grade. If that wasn't bad enough, Suzy once told me that they got a tutor for her because she got a B in kindergarten math and that was "just unacceptable." That poor child. Every time I saw her on the playground,

Laura (not her real name, of course) looked so anxious and just plain sad.

Now, fast forward to last week. As I was walking Sam and Lizzie in our neighborhood, I saw Suzy down the street and she was waving at me. I'll admit it. I tried to hide. I even stooped down and pretended to pick up Lizzie's poop so this mom wouldn't stop and talk with me. Nope. Here she came, crossing the street, shouting at me,

“Christy! I've been yelling at you! Didn't you hear me? How are your kids? We haven't seen you in forever! Let me tell you about our little Laura. You just won't believe your ears! She is the student council president, and just made the varsity soccer team. She's vice president of the French club and is dancing the lead role in the ballet! Of course, her grades are suffering a bit. She was making a 4.0 in freshman year, but this year, she ended up with a B in Algebra. My husband was so upset that he grounded her for a week.” And then Suzy laughed. I think it was the laugh that got me.

In that moment, something inside me snapped. I felt this incredible rage rising up inside me and, inside my head I could hear myself screaming, *SHUT THE HELL UP!* It was like an out-of-body experience, as if was looking at myself from above, getting more and more angry, until I exploded. For a minute, I froze, and I wondered if I

had actually screamed, “*SHUT THE HELL UP!*” out loud at Suzy. But she was still talking, and talking, and talking. So, I figured that if I had actually said those words out loud, she might be more upset. Thankfully, I had managed to keep a lid on that volcano of rage, and was just shouting those words inside my mind. Finally, I couldn’t stand her talking anymore, and I raised my hand up in front of her face, like a stop sign, and said,

“Suzy, I have a question for you. Did you ask Laura if she wanted to be president of the student body, president of the French club, varsity soccer captain, make straight As, and be a ballerina...*all at the same time?!*” For the first time ever, Suzy was silent. She shut her mouth. With an angry look on her face, she spun around and marched away from me. I’m guessing that Suzy has decided she doesn’t want to be my best friend. She might decide never to talk with me again. And that’s OK with me.

FYI, I’m not in the habit of screaming at people. I’m a pastor, a *Christian* author, and most of the time I think people would say I’m a pretty nice person. But the level of rage I was feeling was new to me, and it left me wondering why I had literally almost shouted, “SHUT THE HELL UP” in the face of another mom. As I was stirring spaghetti sauce that night in the kitchen, the answer came to me: I realized that I have become so angry at the huge pressure on teens and college students

I'm seeing today. I'm so tired of hearing stories of kids who are only sleeping five hours at night because they're frantically trying to finish homework after rushing home following a club sports game. I'm so sad to hear the stories of teens who are depressed, anxious, cutting, or even suicidal over all this pressure.

I'm not a perfect parent (as you can clearly see from my little incident). But I believe that it's time for us parents, academic leaders, and coaches to seriously consider the toll all of this pressure is taking on our kids. More of us need God's eyes of compassion for those of you who feel scared, depressed, or alone with no one to listen to your feelings.

Let me be very clear and honest with you. Believe it or not, the point of this book isn't about saying shut up to other people. The actual purpose of this book is to help you know how to say shut up to the negative, lying, and dark voices that are inside your own mind. These are the thoughts that can make you feel so bad about yourself that you begin to feel anxious, depressed, lonely, hopeless, and sometimes, these thoughts take over.

These thoughts can even whisper lies to you about doing stuff to harm yourself or even give up living. My hope is that by the time you finish this book, you will know which voices inside your head

are from God, which are from your own pain, and which are the lying, dark voices. With God's help, you really can shut up the dark voices inside your head. You can shut up them up and make them stop. You really can learn to hear God's voice of love, encouragement, and peace. You deserve that. You can be happy and have joy in your life.

I will promise you this: I won't pretend that I have all the easy answers to fix your problems. No one can do that. But I want you to know that there is hope. I believe that this book can connect you with God in a life-changing way, because the truth is only Jesus can really fully understand your private world, and He loves you more than any human ever could, including your best friend. In fact, Jesus can be your perfect best friend.

So, I hope you'll keep reading. You'll see that this book is filled with stories of teens and college students who have shared their painful stories to help others in their generation. Over 600 teens and college students have given us their input about what might help people in their generation. If you want, you can listen to their stories and ideas on our website: www.sayshutup.com. I believe that you guys are the ones with the ideas that will help one another. So, if you have ideas that could help people in your generation, please email, text or call us. We would really love to hear your ideas.

But first, let me tell you why I wrote this book in the first place. It began with a tragic story, but God is using the sad story to bring hope, healing, and new life to other teens.

PS: If you are a parent or adult reader, this book is for teens and college students, but the next preface is written specifically for you.

Preface 2: (For parents and adult readers)

If you're a parent reading this book, please know that this book isn't about bashing parents, coaches, teachers, or the other good people who are trying to help teens today. Most parents I know are doing our very best to give our kids a good life. We all want our kids to have a happy future. Obviously, I am not a perfect parent (as you can clearly see from my little outburst in our quiet neighborhood...).

Some of what I've written in this book may make some of you squirm with discomfort – and it may even offend you. I've felt all these emotions as I've learned more about the inner world of today's youth. What is happening among teens and young adults today should offend all of us. One of the reasons so many of us parents are pushing our kids to do well in academics, sports, or whatever else is that we feel pressure from the society that this is the “right” thing to do. We live in a culture where the pressure for our kids to compete in academics, sports, music, dance, drama (...the list goes on) is huge. I know. We feel like if we don't push our kids to do these things, we will have failed them. We worry that their friends, neighbors, and classmates will pass them by, and they won't end up

having a successful life. You should know that as I write this book today, I'm on my way to a varsity basketball game for my son and taking my daughter to her ballet class. Parents, teachers, and coaches are all trying to give our kids great lives. But what the teens are telling us now, if we will listen, is that the pressure is having unintended consequences.

As I write this book, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) reports that suicide is the third leading cause of death for youth between the ages of 10 and 24 in the United States. That's about 4600 lives lost a year. A nationwide survey of youth in grades 9-12 in public and private schools in the United States found 16 percent of students seriously considering suicide, 13% had created a plan, and 8% who had actually tried to take their own life in the 12 months preceding the survey.¹ The CDC also says that approximately 157,000 youth between the ages of 10 and 24 receive medical care for self-inflicted injuries at emergency departments across the U.S.²

The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) reported that 20% of youth ages 13-18 live

¹Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, "Suicide Prevention: Youth Suicide," www.cdc.gov/ViolencePrevention/suicide/youth_suicide.html (accessed February 10, 2016).

²Ibid.

with a mental health condition and 90% of those who died by suicide had an underlying mental illness.³

The National Institute on Mental Health (NIMH) reported this:

About 11 percent of adolescents have a depressive disorder by 18 according to the National Comorbidity Survey-Adolescent Supplement (NCS-A). Girls are more likely than boys to experience depression. The risk for depression *increases* as a child gets older. According to the World Health Organization, major depressive disorder is the leading cause of disability among Americans age 15-44.⁴

Most doctors and psychologists will tell you that these statistics are actually much higher than these studies report, because many teens and young

³National Alliance for Mental Health, “Mental Health Facts, Children and Teens,” <https://www.nami.org/getattachment/Learn-More/Mental-Health-by-the-Numbers/childrenmhfacts.pdf> (accessed February 14, 2016).

⁴National Institute on Mental Health, “Depression in Children and Adolescents Fact Sheet,” <http://www.teachmeceus.com/material/Depression%20in%20Children,%20Adolescents,%20and%20Young%20Adults.pdf> (accessed February 14, 2016).

adults are not reporting their problems and choose to tell no one and remain isolated in their pain.

Teenage depression, anxiety and suicide isn't just a problem here in the United States. Listen to what this news article had to say:

Two teens in eastern China committed suicide after “failing to complete homework assignments” in an extreme case highlighting the immense pressure schoolchildren can face. In a highly competitive education system which emphasizes rote learning and passing exams, Chinese students spend on average 8.6 hours a day in class and can expect several more hours of assignments afterwards. A 15-year-old boy in Nanjing, the capital of Jiangsu province, who failed to finish homework from a three-day public holiday jumped to his death around 11.00am on Thursday, the *China Daily* said a 13-year-old boy in the same town got up at 4.00am on Thursday to complete holiday assignments but was found hanged on a staircase at his home two hours later, it said.⁵

⁵“Two Chinese teens commit suicide over unfinished homework, says report,” *indiatoday*, May 4, 2013, <http://indiatoday.intoday.in/story/two-chinese-teens-commit-suicide-over-unfinished-homework-says-report/1/269192.html> (accessed February 14, 2016).

Crazy, right? It's happening everywhere. In an article published on March 7, 2012 in *The Washington Post*, Will Englund states that Russia has the third-highest teenage suicide rate in the world, just behind its neighbors Belarus and Kazakhstan and more than three times that of the United States. On an average day, about five Russians under age 20 take their own lives.⁶

God called me to write this *shut up* book after a 16-year-old boy named Walker jumped in front of a train and ended his life. Walker grew up in a Christian family and I knew his family well. These friends have a deep faith in Jesus and are some of the best people you could ever meet in this life. Seeing how this could happen to such a loving family is part of how God called me into this mission of understanding society's pressure on youth and the other forces of darkness that are targeting our kids today. You'll hear more about Walker's story in the introduction (which Walker's mom helped me write).

⁶Will Englund, "Teens choosing death in Russia," *The Washington Post*, March 7, 2012, https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/europe/teens-choosing-death-in-russia/2012/03/01/gIQADrhPwR_story.html (accessed February 14, 2016).

Let me warn you ahead of time. Many of the stories in this book and statistics might shock you. They shocked me. We've had input from over 600 teens as we've been writing this book. Their stories would break your heart.

I come from a family of medical doctors. I've also worked in a clinical setting as a counselor. Right now, I'm an author, conference speaker, and pastor. My greatest joy in life is being a wife and mom of three wonderful kids who are now teenagers. Many good people are trying to help this generation that is suffering. Psychiatrists, doctors, therapists, counselors, social workers, youth pastors, underpaid teachers, and parents are doing their best to raise kids in this difficult world. Despite all the help available to teens today, the epidemic of teenage depression, anxiety, drugs, bullying, cyber bullying, cutting, eating disorders, and suicide is increasing at an alarming rate.

What I can tell you is that from my experience over the past two years researching these issues, interviewing doctors and talking with hundreds of teenagers is that the stories and statistics in this book are only the tip of a huge iceberg. If you think these problems aren't widespread among young people that you know, think again. Social media, television, and video games today bombard our teens with images of sex, porn, drugs, and alcohol abuse and violence.

Young people are under more pressure than ever before and the epidemic is real.

This week I received calls from two different parents with teenagers who were hospitalized (on suicide watch) because of stress over the SAT test. Wow. In our San Francisco Bay Area, three kids committed suicide by jumping in front of the train (this month). Recently, one girl jumped off a bridge into highway traffic and died. This stuff is really happening. This is an epidemic in the Bay Area. Things that never happened decades ago is now normal. (My generation rarely heard about suicide happening and now most teens know about someone who is depressed, cutting, suicidal, doing drugs, or privately suffering and telling no one.) Some parents think that once their child reaches college, they will be safe from these problems troubling middle and high school students.

Some parents think that once their child reaches college, they will be safe from these problems troubling middle and high school students. But, in 2012, the American College Health Association (ACHA) conducted a nationwide survey of college students at two-and four-year institutions and found that about 30 percent of college students reported feeling "so depressed that

it was difficult to function" at some time in the past year.⁷

My heart is broken as I hear their stories. My heart is broken for the loving parents who want to help but don't know how. This book is an attempt to help us all, kids and adults together, to stand against these forces and reclaim God's clear loving voice over and against all the negative stuff. I believe there is hope. For every sad story I hear, I also see amazing stories of teens who are overcoming these odds to become incredible young men and women.

Let me be very clear. ***This book is not about telling parents or any person to shut up. The purpose of this book is to help your kids experience God's love in a personal way that empowers them to shut up the negative and dark voices inside their heads.*** You see, while I believe that the pressure on kids to excel in academics, sports and other activities contributes to the current mental health crisis among teens, I want to be very clear I don't believe that is the only factor. Even the Social Media component isn't completely

⁷American College Health Association, "American College Health Association National College Health Assessment II, Undergraduate Students, Reference Group Executive Summary, Spring 2012," http://www.acha-ncha.org/docs/ACHA-NCHA-II_UNDERGRAD_ReferenceGroup_ExecutiveSummary_Spring2012.pdf (accessed February 14, 2016).

responsible. I believe there are forces of good and evil in the world, and these are very real factors in the horrific stories of cutting, school shootings, and suicidal epidemic we are witnessing today. These are the destructive voices that are pushing kids to do drugs, to sleep around, to cut themselves, to starve themselves, or even to commit suicide. Our kids are under tremendous spiritual warfare in addition to the society's pressure. This book and our www.sayshutup.com website is aimed at helping young people understand the different thoughts, voices, and messages inside their minds and empowers them to silence those dark voices with God's power. On our website, you will see many videos of teens and college students telling their own stories and how they've learned to shut up the negative and dark voices in their lives. Whether you are a Christian or not, I invite you to read the stories of the many young people who have experienced healing and freedom through God's love.

Finally, this book is written specifically for young people. It's for teenagers and young adults, written with the help of over 600 teenagers and college students. I'm honored to know these amazing young people. While this book is written for teens (the parent version of *shut up* is coming out soon), I would invite you to read it, so that you might better understand teens today and join the army of people God is raising up to love and help

hurting teens in today's world. My prayer is that God uses this book to bring healing, hope, and freedom to these heroic young people so that they might help others suffering in their generation.

Introduction: Why shut up?

October 14, 2013 was a day like any other day for most. But, for a family in Northern California, it was one of the saddest days of their lives. Their son, 16-year old Walker, took his own life. Walker's journey with depression started a year prior to this event when his depressive mood took hold of his thoughts, feelings, and ultimately his life. It started with the onset of puberty and grabbed a hold of him until he spiraled down to the point where his family and friends could no longer reach him.

I knew Walker and his family very well. His parents are great people and committed Christians. Bill, his father, was an elder at his church. Kristin, his mother, dedicated her life to her boys. Walker's siblings, Cole and Reid, were close to him. They all tried many things and many ways to help him, yet it wasn't enough to fight back the demons that depression instilled in his psyche.

Why wasn't it enough? This might be the first question. What thoughts were going through his head to keep him beyond reach. Walker was like a baby bird in a tree with the whole family cheering him on to fly, but Walker couldn't break free and do it. He didn't fly. He couldn't fly. This baby bird, with its broken wing, fell out of the nest and they

couldn't catch him. They were left at the bottom of the tree with their arms wide open, looking up, and trying to figure out why their outstretched arms couldn't reach or catch him.

Why couldn't they catch him in time? Why was he so lost? Why did he not have hope? Why did God do this to his beautiful, God-fearing family? Years prior, Bill was diagnosed with cancer. Was that the trigger for Walker's depression? Was it the onset of puberty's flood of hormones that were wreaking havoc on him? Why were their words of encouragement deflected and heard as discouragement?

Six months after Walker took his own life, Bill died of cancer. A family of five was reduced to three in six months. I was driving home from the Eberwein's house the day after Walker died, and I sensed the Spirit of God speak to me. Honestly, it was one of the clearest messages I've heard in my life. I was praying for Walker's family and I saw a dim picture in my mind of a book with the words "Shut Up" written on the cover. Confused, I prayed silently. God, is this you? And this is what I heard:

"Christy, I want you to write this book for youth so they can understand the difference between My voice, their own pain, and the dark destructive voices."

As I write this book, the Center for Disease Control (CDC) reports that suicide is the third leading cause of death among young people 10-24. But if you're a young person, I'm pretty sure that you already know these stats. Most teens and young adults know way more than their parents about these problems. You guys see it first hand. Bullying, depression, cutting, eating disorders, academic pressure, and suicidal thoughts are all around you. If you are a young person in today's world, chances are you've either had friends who suffer from these problems or you have experienced them yourself. (We surveyed over 600 teens and 81 percent of them told us that they have known someone at some point in their lives, or know someone right now, who is considering suicide.) I know that many of you often suffer alone for reasons we'll talk about in this book.

Here's my sneak preview before you read this book. In chapter two, you'll hear me rant about the pressure to excel in sports and academics being put on you guys today. (Honestly, I might not be too popular among some adults after they hear me vent.) Too much homework, too many demands to be "successful" in everything from geometry to Honor's club, to sports practices that last until 8 PM only to go home to study until midnight. Too many sleepless nights from anxiety over homework or other pressures. Did you know that the American

Academy of Pediatrics recommends you guys get 8.5-9.5 hours a sleep a night? Are you laughing? Many teens I talk with say they're getting five hours or less because they are up studying after sports or other activities after school. You maybe sick of math homework, so I don't want to throw more statistics at you, but I think you might be encouraged to see what the "experts" are saying about how important it is for you guys to get good sleep. In fact, good doctors at the AAP are even fighting to get middle schools and high schools to start the day later. Here is what they say about the stress that is causing many of you to lose sleep:

Many studies have documented that the average adolescent in the U.S. is chronically sleep-deprived and pathologically sleepy. A National Sleep Foundation poll found that 59 percent of 6th through 8th graders and 87 percent of high school students in the U.S. were getting less than the recommended 8.5-9.5 sleep hours on a school night.⁸

⁸American Academy of Pediatrics, "Let Them Sleep: AAP Recommends Delaying Start Times of Middle and High Schools to Combat Teen Sleep Deprivation," (August 25, 2014) <https://www.aap.org/en-us/about-the-aap/aap-press-room/pages/let-them-sleep-aap-recommends-delaying-start-times-of-middle-and-high-schools-to-combat-teen-sleep-deprivation.aspx#sthash.3M0kLw6e.dpuf> (accessed February 14, 2016).

That same article quotes Dr. Judith Owens, lead author on the policy statement on the issue, as saying, “The research is clear that adolescents who get enough sleep have a reduced risk of being overweight or suffering depression, are less likely to be involved in automobile accidents, and have better grades, higher standardized test scores and an overall better quality of life.”⁹

If you are a young person reading this book, I want to encourage you that you guys are doing the academic homework now that your parents did in college. The expectation is you must excel in both school and in sports (or dramas, music, or dance, the list goes on!). I know several kids right now who are so stressed over their college applications that they’re severely depressed (one is cutting and the other contemplating suicide). Wow. How crazy is that kind of pressure on a 16-year-old? (BTW: Kids are now expected to take their SATs way before they hit senior year on top of their studies. Uh, what sense does that make considering you need senior material to study for the SATs?)

I didn’t write this book alone. I’m a mom with three teenage kids and they tell me what they’re seeing and hearing. It breaks my heart. Over 600 middle and high school students helped me write this book. They were real with their pain

⁹Ibid.

and courageously shared their stories. Not only that, they have some great ideas. I'm convinced that you guys know more about the real issues facing your generation than your parents, teachers, doctors, therapists and youth pastors understand. You probably have some good ideas that will help other young people in your generation.

Negative and dark thoughts can become so loud that it's hard to hear the loving voice of God. I'm not sure what you believe about God or if you've ever experienced the Spirit of God speak directly to you. You may not even believe in God. That's OK. Please read on and understand that I'm not encouraging anyone to be a religious person or having to do stuff to earn God's love. (I'm not a "religious" person myself even though I'm a pastor.) Instead, I'm a broken person who has made mistakes in life, and the loving presence of God has healed me and given me hope. This God is love. No matter what you believe, or what you've done in your life, the Spirit of God can heal you and help you experience God's very real love in a way that will change your whole life. Whatever pain you're experiencing right now can be healed and I promise you there is hope. There is always hope.

God wants to give you and your generation spiritual power to shut up the negative messages inside your head. These may be quiet messages whispering inside your mind (*You're ugly; you're*

fat; you're stupid; no one likes you, you're all alone, etc.). You know what I mean. Sometimes, they are louder and darker messages (Stop eating and you'll be skinny; cut yourself; kill yourself; it will be easier for everyone if you just died).

Here is the truth: God can help you silence the negative voices in your mind. You really can experience God's love and power and tell those lying voices inside your head: "*SHUT UP* in Jesus' name!"

From Christy

Thank you for taking time to read this preview of our *shut up* book that will be available on Amazon and Kindle by May 2016. If you have ideas or thoughts, I would love to hear them and you can reach me at Christy@sayshutup.com. Please check out the back cover to see what some of the teens and college students have said about it already. You can also see videos of teens and college students on our website or give us your feedback at www.sayshutup.com, and please let us know if you would like a copy of the *shut up* book and we will get one in your hands.

Do you or a friend need help now?

If you or someone you know would like to connect with people who can help you right now, I would encourage you to connect with your youth pastor or a trusted teacher. Prayer is one of the most healing things you can experience. My *God is Whispering to You* book teaches you how to hear God's voice. It's available on Amazon and Kindle, and if you can't afford to buy one, please let us know at julie@sayshutup.com. We have donors who have given some money in order to give these books to teens and college students who can't afford a copy. Listed on the next page are some resources of safe people that can be trusted to help.

Crisis Text Line (Text “HELLO” to 741-741)

Crisis Text Line serves anyone, in any type of crisis, providing access to free, 24/7 support and information via the medium people already use and trust: text. Here’s how it works:

- 1: Text “Hello” to 741-741 from anywhere in the United States, anytime, about any type of crisis.
- 2: A live, trained Crisis Counselor receives the text and responds quickly.
- 3: The volunteer Crisis Counselor will help you move from a hot moment to a cool one.

www.golantern.org

Lantern is a private and confidential web and mobile program to help you improve your emotional well-being and develop effective coping skills. Scientifically designed and based in Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, Lantern gives you tools and coaching to improve body image, reduce disordered eating behaviors, manage stress, reduce your anxiety, or elevate your mood.

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

Get connected to a live, trained counselor 24/7. You can call 1-800-273-TALK (8255) to speak to someone in person or go to www.SuicidePreventionLifeline.org and you can online chat. There are options for Spanish-speakers and the Deaf as well.

We need your help!

We really need your honest, unedited advice after reading this sample book. The full *shut up* book is a work in progress and not published until May 2016. Please email us with any input, stories, or thoughts. Your ideas matter and will make this a better book. Thank you!

Love,
Christy and our teen writers

R E V I E W S

Check out what teens and college students are saying about the new book, *shut up*, which will be available on Amazon and Kindle by May 2016.

“This book is so important because we simply cannot stay silent anymore. *Shut up* has helped me see the truth and realize the negative voices in my head are simply not valid. The book helped me learn the ways I can press on in life and discern the voice of God. I see a movement coming with this book!” – Taylor {22}

“This is a really good book that I think is going to help a lot of teenagers my age.” – Caitlyn {11}

“This is an eye-opening book that will really change the twisted perspective our society has on success and the pressure teenagers are under today. I would recommend this book to anyone my age!” – Minji {16}

“*Shut up* dives head-first into the important topic of mental health disorders through both Christy’s unique perspective as a mother and the all-important perspective of Millennials who face these obstacles on a daily basis. Rather than hide from the depths of these issues, Christy’s writing sparks an essential conversation aimed at helping youths combat mental health disorders through Christ’s love.” – Austin {22}

Teens and college students have also posted videos on our website about how they have found hope when life was hard. Check out their videos at sayshutup.com.