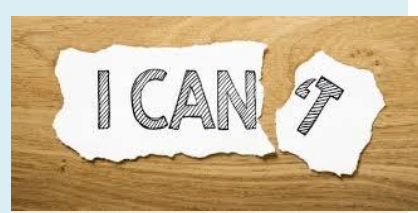




## Precious Times - Term Two 2018

Mentoring Weekend - Precious Blood School Riruta – 28<sup>th</sup> & 29<sup>th</sup> April 2018



Dear Precious Girls,

It is a joy for me to, once more, compile an edition of Precious Times – summarising another great weekend of mentoring, learning and interacting with girls from other schools and our faithful mentors.

### Introduction

During this mentoring, we had the largest number of girls we have had in school. With 118 in the five schools, 101 turned up for the mentoring event. We are excited to welcome our newest addition – Mary Hill Girls' School. The event was a great success. In this our second mentoring event this year, the theme was **Self-Belief** which is the B in our ABC theme. (Remember, A stands for Ambition; B for Self Belief; & C for Commitment.)

### What Is Self-Belief?

Wallace defined self-belief as **developing a strong sense of who you are and valuing yourself in order to achieve**. He reminded you the following:

- ❑ “What is important to you is not other people’s opinion of you but your opinion of yourself”. It all starts with you!
- ❑ The driving force for your success is inside you and won’t come from anyone else
- ❑ Every second that you spend doubting your worth is wasted. Every moment that you use to criticise yourself is a moment of your life thrown away
- ❑ Don’t compare yourself to others. It undermines your worth. ‘Poor me’ doesn’t work. Believe in yourself, your qualities and what you are good at
- ❑ Create a positive image of yourself for yourself; like yourself, have dignity – being worthy of honour and respect, be proud of who you are
- ❑ Challenges should make you stronger – they help your emotional muscles. Every problem that you face is an opportunity for you to grow. Circumstances are the rulers of the weak
- ❑ Once you put on the school uniform you are the same as any other girl in the school, no matter where you or she comes from
- ❑ Speak up, loudly and clearly, and look at who you are talking to. Be confident. Your point of view is important
- ❑ Find friends at school who are positive influences and not ones who drag you down. Understand the difference between healthy and unhealthy relationships. Connect with others who build your self confidence
- ❑ Know yourself. Find out about yourself, what you good at and find a career that fits your skills and interests. Feel good about yourself and how you look and have lots of self-esteem and a positive image about your body
- ❑ **Each of you is a Phenomenal Woman**



### Self Esteem and Body Image

The introduction was followed by a session with Lucy Simiyu (a psychologist) on Self Esteem and Body Image. She defined self-esteem as our feelings about our self-worth. Body image was defined as the perception that a person has of their self and thoughts and feelings that result from the perception. Poor mental health leads to poor body image that results in low self-esteem.



LOVING  
YOURSELF  
IS THE  
GREATEST  
REVOLUTION

Internal factors that influence body image include your own thoughts and feelings. These are influenced by external factors such as: poor background, media, culture, peer pressure among others. Lucy gave tips on how to build your self-esteem as follows:

- ❑ identifying your strengths and weaknesses
- ❑ trying out new things that interest you
- ❑ setting and achieving goals

- ☐ accepting compliments
- ☐ avoiding unrealistic comparisons
- ☐ being active
- ☐ laughing and smiling
- ☐ helping others and positive self-talk



Be careful what you tell yourself because you are listening.

Lucy explained that most of us wear masks and we need to take a step of confidence, remove them and discover the reality about ourselves. Positive self-talk focuses on facts and reality and each of you was asked to come up with five positive words that describe yourself.

I hope each of you has done it and you can write them here:

I am.....  
 My motto is .....  
 A personal motto should be: short and memorable like a slogan, focus on one or two ideas and use slang.

Negative self-talk focuses on imagination and assumption for example thoughts like; 'I cannot do this, I am not as beautiful as she is, I was born a loser, I am a failure .....'. Remember, you will all face challenges and if you deal well with them it is an opportunity for growth. Do not be a victim of circumstances but a master as your point of view is important.

### Group Sessions with the Mentors

Our mentors arrived early and were ready for the sessions with you and, as a result, the group sessions went very well. During the session, you met with your mentors and shared your thoughts on the theme of self-belief. In the groups you learned that you should be in-charge of yourselves, develop a positive attitude towards what you are good at, be proud of who you are, develop dignity for self and respect self. You interacted with girls from other schools and discussed challenges that you go through in your day to day life. The girls in the group helped you come up with solutions and you encouraged one another.



### One-on-one Session with a Mentor

The afternoon session of 1-1 gave you a wonderful opportunity to share with your mentor at an individual level. During the session, you were able to discuss last term's performance and ways of how to make it better. The mentors gave you individual support and allowed you to explore your learning objectives. You also touched on social and family lives. Many of you have said that you found the mentors friendly and free to share parts of their life story – education life, social and even family life which allowed you to understand that you too can make it. The following are some of what you have shared about your 1-1 session:

- ☐ 'I was able to openly talk about things that were troubling me socially and academically and was shown an outline of how to excel through self-belief'
- ☐ 'I was advised on study techniques'
- ☐ 'I was encouraged to pursue my talent'
- ☐ 'My mentor encouraged me, boosted my self-esteem and helped me remove my self-doubt'
- ☐ 'My mentor told me, "I have to make it till I make it"'
- ☐ 'My mentor told me to keep telling myself positive things and find a friend who can encourage me when I feel low'
- ☐ 'I should treasure opportunities'

While the 1-1 sessions were going on, and as some of you who were waiting to see a mentor, you were divided in two groups. The groups facilitated by Muthoni and Lucy allowed you to participate in public speaking forum. This is usually meant to enhance your speaking skills and boost your confidence. Each of you was to catwalk in front of the group like a model and speak loudly the five positive values that Lucy had asked you



to put down in the morning. You discussed factors that hinder you from knowing who you are which are: peer pressure, comparison and background. You learnt that what matters is what you see in yourself.

## Sunday Morning Skits

The skits that you had been asked to present in groups of ten were either in form of a dance or a poem about appreciating your body image. Each group composition was to have girls from each school and across all classes. Unfortunately, although the skits presented were good, you did not group yourself as you had been asked to do and this made all of you in Forms 2, 3 & 4 to miss out on enjoying a bar of chocolate. I hope you learnt your lesson on following instructions.

Muthoni read for you and had you recite the poem below – **Phenomenal Woman** by *Maya Angelou*

*Pretty women wonder where my secret lies.  
I'm not cute or built to suit a fashion model's  
size  
But when I start to tell them,  
They think I'm telling lies.  
I say,  
It's in the reach of my arms,  
The span of my hips,  
The stride of my step,  
The curl of my lips.  
I'm a woman  
Phenomenally.  
Phenomenal woman,  
That's me.*

*I walk into a room  
Just as cool as you please,  
And to a man,  
The fellows stand or  
Fall down on their knees.  
Then they swarm around me,  
A hive of honey bees.*

*I say,  
It's the fire in my eyes,  
And the flash of my teeth,  
The swing in my waist,  
And the joy in my feet.  
I'm a woman  
Phenomenally.  
Phenomenal woman,  
That's me.*


*Men themselves have wondered  
What they see in me.  
They try so much  
But they can't touch  
My inner mystery.  
When I try to show them,  
They say they still can't see.  
I say,  
It's in the arch of my back,  
The sun of my smile,  
The ride of my breasts,*

*The grace of my style.  
I'm a woman  
Phenomenally.  
Phenomenal woman,  
That's me.*

*Now you understand  
Just why my head's not bowed.  
I don't shout or jump about  
Or have to talk real loud.  
When you see me passing,  
It ought to make you proud.  
I say,  
It's in the click of my heels,  
The bend of my hair,  
The palm of my hand,  
The need for my care.  
'Cause I'm a woman  
Phenomenally.  
Phenomenal woman,  
That's me.*


## Career Talks

We had two amazing career speakers on Sunday morning:

 Amos – an Information Technology (IT) Specialist who challenged you not to give up despite hardships. His success is due to passion and zeal. He shared with us his background, having come from a humble family and although he was admitted to a county school, he had to settle for a day school due to lack of finances. He worked hard and performed well in the KCSE but again finances prevented him from joining university. He found a casual job sweeping at a cyber café but due to his diligence, hard work and interest in computers, he was allowed to learn how to operate a computer

### **Our take away:**

- We need to work hard, avoid 'poor me' syndrome, be humble enough to take on any job, look out and grab opportunities that come our way.
- There are three important E's – Education, Exposure and Experience. These will determine how you make it.
- Where we are going is not defined by where we come from, take one step at a time.
- Passion and perseverance lead to success.

 Franklin – Also in IT owes his success to focus. Although he is from an area where many boys drop out of school, he managed to overcome peer pressure and excel in school. He had a passion for writing and ran a blog that was nominated for best blog award in Africa. Although, he did not win the award, he was able to make connections that have helped him.

### **Our take away:**

- With negative force, only tough people can make it. Don't lose sight of where you are going
- Our biggest strength lies in our talents
- You are the only ones to decide whether to become better or worse
- Connections are very important for future opportunities
  - Do not take your talent for granted as it can grow to something big
- Do not be swayed by peer pressure – each of you has their own lives to live.

Ann Waithaka, an alumna from Precious Blood Riruta also had a talk with us. She is now working for Muthoni at Storymoja as she waits to complete her degree at Nairobi University. She told us that she underwent the mentoring sessions of the Precious Sisters and it has helped her a lot. This gave us more aspirations to be more like her and not to be shy about sharing our ideas. At the end, we learnt that when we fall we rise, when we fall again we rise, but when we fall the third time, we crawl to our destination.

**Quote from the weekend:**

*The size of your dreams must always exceed your current capacity to achieve them. If they do not scare you, they are not big enough.*

**Our Alumni –** *compiled by Nancy Wangari*

The alumni session was educative and fun at the same time. The topics discussed were: How to present oneself for job opportunities and Youth and Social media.

**How to present oneself for job opportunities**

This was a pretty much challenging session. We were made to think critically and this broadened our outlook. We learned how to present our CVs in a way that captures the attention of the interviewers. The aspect of being very specific and detailed while writing a CV was emphasized, not omitting the fact that a CV should be sincere and perfectly written (no typos). We took turns mentioning our hobbies and the mentors helped us to phrase them in ways that met the standards for a good CV and give a positive impression.

**Youth and social media**

This topic could not have come at a better time than a week after the trending "#ifikiewazazi" saga (where the trending topic was on images of college students that were circulating on social media). This discussion was heated up and got everyone talking. We were challenged to think of better ways to use social media.

Each of us gave our opinion on the social media craze. Who is to blame for the way the youth are using social media? We all agreed that we are individually responsible for everything we put out for public viewing. Not forgetting.....that the internet never forgets and nothing on phone is private! And remember that potential employers can check us all out on social media so make sure there is nothing out there that you wouldn't want an employer to read about you!

No words can wholly narrate the benefit we got from that single event. This has given us some courage to go ahead and develop our CVs by taking part in productive activities.

**Reports compiled by**

*Gatimu – Mary Wambui, Salome Wanjiru & Christine Mukami*

*Starehe – Veronica Kakyete*

*Kilungu – Cynthia Ndili and Rose Njeri*

We greatly appreciate all our Mentors for making the time to come and mentor our girls; you are a source of motivation to our girls and every Saturday you turn up to mentor the girls is an investment in their lives that is of enormous value. Thank you once again to all the Administration and Catering staff of Precious Blood Secondary School, Riruta for your wonderful hospitality. The girls always mention how well they are treated and fed. We appreciate all our Sponsors for believing in Precious Sisters and partnering with us to 'Give the Bright Girls a Chance to Shine'



**5** Things to tell yourself each day

- 1: Today will be my day
- 2: I am the best me there is
- 3: I know that I'm a winner
- 4: I can do it, I know i can
- 5: God will always be with me

Be positive and believe in yourself