

## **SQUAT GAME**

Try to empty your head. Forget about the stresses of your life. Forget about any problems that you might have carried with you into the room for just a few moments. Forget about all the millions of little things you have to do before you go to sleep tonight. Allow yourself to relax. Take a deep breath if you need to.

(wait about a minute here)

Now, try to think about something pleasant. Think about your education and the vast amount of possibilities you have to becoming a doctor, an engineer, a lawyer, a social worker, or a teacher. What will you do when you leave school? What will life be like for you? Will you go to college? Will you have a big house or a small one? What kind of car will you drive? Will you make a lot of money, or will you work for minimum wage? Where will you be? What will you do?

Choices...decisions. Where will you go for vacation? Will you go with friends? With your family? Think of your day so far. Think for just one moment about what you have eaten. Did you have breakfast? What will/did you have for lunch? For dinner? Did you get what your body needs? Could you eat a well balanced meal if you chose to?

Whether you realize it or not, as a leader, ready to take on the challenges before you, are better off than most of your classmates back home at your schools. You may not know them-or they could be one of your best friends-but many of your peers are yearning to be heard-yearning for a little more from life. A huge number of high school kids go to school hungry every day in and out. They are not only starving for food but for nourishment- maybe the simple affection of a peer-maybe a smile- acknowledging that they are actually there. They don't have many choices. They'll never go to college- no money- no desire. They'll never face your decision. If they die, people like you may not even be affected by the loss even though their choice for life is taken away. The quality of life is not even an issue when a person is trying to survive merely until tomorrow. One more day, still hoping that someone will talk to them in the hallway, invite them to a football game or study session.

Who are these invisible kids in your schools just waiting to be touched by your presence, included, invited, accepted by their peers. Can you imagine the emotional pain that they must endure day in and out?

It hurts in the very center of their being. It hurts mentally and physically. They feel it in their legs when they cramp up because they do not get enough of the right food and support, and it is painful. And they wonder if it will ever end. Sometimes they see people who have no pain. They see people who stand free and strong but who are completely blind to what is happening around them. They cannot see the suffering and the pain. They are ignorant to what is happening around them. These people are blind but the others see. They continue to wonder if the pain will ever stop. If this life will ever end.

Some of you have already been touched. You have experienced the presence of a hand that has eliminated your pain. Some of you have been touched twice. You are not only out of pain, but you are fully aware with your eyes open. You see, without question, those who are in pain. You begin to slowly realize how important a single touch can be. You realize the power that a single touch can have. With the single touch, you can relieve the pain of one who suffers, and open the eyes of one who is blind. And you realize the freedom you have to move, to choose. You are free to touch someone, and we are all free to touch the hungry people of the world and bring them from darkness into light.

You may now make yourself more comfortable.