Japanese young people are under a great deal of pressure to excel, to do what culture expects of them, and to keep their emotions to themselves. Are these situations similar to things GAs experience? What do each of these girls need to know?

1. Airi’s grandparents bought her a violin because they dreamed of having a musician in the family. But Airi hates the violin. She would rather play drums.

2. Chiasa’s parents lost their cleaning jobs at the factory and have little money. Chiasa is ashamed of her family’s circumstances. She wants a new dress for the school program and knows she can’t ask her parents for one.

3. Etsu’s older siblings are all stellar students. Etsu is not. All Etsu’s teachers ask, “Why are you not like the rest of your family?” Etsu feels worthless.

4. Harue tags along when her parents visit the local Buddhist temple. She doesn’t think her parents really believe that Buddha can help their daily lives; going to the temple is just a habit. She feels uncomfortable talking to her parents about it.

5. Kaida’s family and friends have pushed her to excel at school, in sports, and in life. She is tired of the pressure and feels depressed. She rarely leaves the house. When she does, she ducks her head so she doesn’t have to look people in the eye.

6. Mikasa’s father has a great job, but he sometimes works six or seven days a week. Now the company wants Mikasa’s family to move to a different city where they don’t know anyone. Mikasa is very angry, because she has just joined an honors orchestra at her school.
Japanese young people are under a great deal of pressure to excel, to do what culture expects of them, and to keep their emotions to themselves. Could things be different for these children if they knew and trusted Jesus? If you were an MK in Japan, how could you help?

1. Akio’s grandparents bought him a violin because they dreamed of having a musician in the family. But Akio hates the violin. He would rather play drums.

2. Haruo’s parents lost their cleaning jobs at the factory and have little money. His family visits a soup kitchen so they can have healthy meals. Haruo is ashamed that his family needs help. He thinks, “I will be so embarrassed if my friends find out!”

3. Daiki’s older brother is a stellar student. Daiki is not. All Daiki’s teachers ask, “Why don’t you work harder so you can be like your brother?” Daiki feels worthless.

4. Eisen goes with his parents to visit the local Buddhist temple. He doesn’t really believe that going to the temple affects his daily life, but he wonders what does. He feels uncomfortable talking to his parents about it.

5. Joji’s family and friends push him to excel at school, in sports, and in life. He is tired of the pressure and feels depressed. He rarely leaves the house and stays indoors with his video games and his manga books.

6. Satoru’s father has a great job, but he sometimes works six or seven days a week. Now the company wants Satoru’s family to move to a different city where they don’t know anyone. Satoru is very angry.