



Balanced Diet—Session #3

Weathering the





BALANCED DIET

Session #3 – Weathering the Storm

Purpose: To show people where the Love of God is when you're dealing with a life crisis. Do you turn away from God or towards God? Why? Can you become closer to God? Life crisis is a part of the path or steps on our journey. How can we grow spiritually through a life crisis? It can move us to a healthy place if we find people to talk to and with about our crisis.





TIME	ACTIVITY	SUPPLIES
15 minutes	<p>Introduce Stress Inventory</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Explain that this session will be about the sources of stress (stressors) that come and go throughout our life journey.▪ These stressors can multiply and put extreme strains on our life, creating a crisis.▪ Explain that stressors are not all bad things – a wedding or a vacation are also a major life stressors.▪ You can't truly appreciate the good if you don't experience the bad. What would life be like if it was your birthday every day?▪ Hand out inventory and ask everyone to complete it based on their life over the past two years. <p>When everyone is finished, ask for a show of hands by category (as shown on Leader's Stress Inventory).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ As each group raises their hands, read what that represents in their lives.▪ Point out how women in the room represent all levels of stress and that we need to be respectful of one another's place in our journeys.	Stress Inventory handout Pencils/pens



<p>30 minutes</p>	<p>Small Group Process</p> <p>Often when we are in crisis we ask, “Where is God?” “Why me?” “Why is this happening to me?” “Why did you let this happen to me?” “What did I do to deserve this?” We are asking the wrong question. The question we should ask is “where was God when I was in crisis?”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Divide into groups of 6 ▪ Each woman (taking no longer than 3 minutes) shares one of her major life stressors within the past two years ▪ While sharing, relate whether the stressor moved you closer or further away from God. 	
<p>10 minutes</p>	<p>Reconvene in large group.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ask participants to call out ways they have found to cope with stress and move towards a more positive outlook and feeling. ▪ Capture on flipchart 	<p>Flipchart Markers</p>
<p>5 minutes</p>	<p>Skit</p> <p>Introduce skit as “a couple of friends have an idea to share with us about keeping us spiritually fit and ready to weather the storms of life.”</p>	<p>7 Minute Workout skit</p>
<p>20 minutes</p>	<p>Small Group Process – 7 Minute Workout</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Handout the 7 Minute Workout ▪ Review the process ▪ Divide into small groups of 6-8 ▪ Explain that once we start, a bell will ring after 1 minute, after 5 minutes, and after 1 minute. <p>At the end of 7 minutes tell them their small group leader will begin a discussion of the process.</p>	<p>7 Minute Workout handout Bell Watch or timer</p>

Session #3 Leader Notes

- 1) Refer to Session #3 Outline purpose statement to introduce session.
- 2) Transition to first activity by talking about stress in our lives as found on the Session #3 Outline. Lead group through the activity following suggestions on outline.
- 3) Introduce the small group process by identifying our response to crises as noted in the outline. Move into small groups and invite women to share a major stressor in their lives in the last 2 years and relating whether the stressor moved them closer or further away from God. Remind them that they have 30 minutes for this process and to allow each woman an opportunity to share
- 4) Return to large group configuration and lead women through sharing exercise in outline.
- 5) Introduce skit by saying that a couple of friends have an idea to share with us about keeping us spiritually fit and ready to weather the storms of life.”
- 6) Invite participants into the “spiritual” 7-minute workout following the prompts on the outline. Following the 7 minutes, invite them to discuss experience of this 7-minute process. Did it work for them? Were they able to maintain focus? How did the experience feel?

Session #3—Small Group Leader Notes

7 Minute Workout

1. Make sure everyone has a Bible.
2. Make sure everyone understands the handout and knows which verse we are reading.
3. Remind them to WRITE in the blank space the answers to the questions about the verse they read.
4. Reinforce that this first seven minutes is done individually – no talking yet.
5. When asked by Leader if your group is ready to start, make sure your group is all ready.
6. Have people stop when leader rings final bell for end of exercise.



Begin discussion by asking the group to share their feelings around the process.

- Was it too much time? Too little?
- Which part was hardest? Easiest?
- Did the questions help you to think more about the verse?
- Did you see/hear the verse any differently after reflecting and answering the questions?
- Could you do this every day?
- Did you like it? Not like it? Why or why not?

Stress Inventory

Instructions: Circle all the life events have occurred in your life over the last two years.
Add up your points. Total _____



Death of a spouse	100	Divorce	73
Marital separation	65	Jail term	63
Death of close family member	63	Personal injury or illness	53
Marriage	50	Fired at work	47
Marital reconciliation	45	Retirement	45
Change in health of family member	44	Pregnancy	40
Sex difficulties	39	Gain in new family member	39
Business readjustment	39	Change in financial state	38
Death of close friend	37	Change to different line of work	36
Increase in arguments with spouse	35	Mortgage over \$400,000	31
Foreclosure of mortgage or loan	30	Change in responsibilities at work	29
Son or daughter leaving home	29	Trouble with in-laws	29
Outstanding personal achievement	28	Husband begins or stops work	26
Begin or end school	26	Change in living conditions	25
Revision of personal habits	24	Trouble with boss	23
Change in work hours/conditions	20	Change in residence	20
Change in schools	20	Change in recreation	19
Change in church activities	19	Change in social activities	18
Large loan	17	Change in sleeping habits	16
Change in # of family gatherings	15	Change in eating habits	15
Vacation	13	Christmas	12
Minor violations of the law	11		



Stress Inventory [Leader's Notes]

Instructions:

Circle all the life events have occurred in your life over the last two years.

Add up your points. Total: _____

Scoring

Under 150 points: You are less likely to be suffering the effects of cumulative stress.

150-300 points: you may be suffering from chronic stress, depending on how you perceived and coped with the particular life events that occurred.

Over 300 points: It is likely that you are experiencing some detrimental effects of cumulative stress.

Please note that the degree to which any particular event is stressful to you will depend on how *you* perceive it.



Session #3 Skit – Weathering the Storms

SPEAKER #2 enters jogging, huffing and puffing. Speaker stops, then begins calisthenics, counting “One, two, three, four.” SPEAKER #1 enters watches SPEAKER #2 and then speaks.

SPEAKER #1: WHAT are you doing?

SPEAKER #2: *(continues to do calisthenics).* Oh hi _____.
One, two three, four...I’m getting physical. You know, making a NEW me!

SPEAKER #1: *(Follows SPEAKER #2’s movements with her head - back and forth)..* What’s wrong with the “old” you, may I ask?

SPEAKER #2: *(continues to exercise)..*Everything I think---I just took a closer look and I realized I’ve got a lot of work to do on THIS body. And if I don’t do something, I may not even make it ‘over the hill’.

SPEAKER #1: *(Still bobbing her head to look at movements)..*Can you STOP for a minute?! I’m getting dizzy trying to talk to you!

SPEAKER #2: Sure. *(Stops and sighs - wipes brow).* Whew. But I’m only taking a little break....I’ve got tons to do today besides get my body in shape.

SPEAKER #1: Oh you’re not in such bad shape. Why the sudden desire for a NEW body?

SPEAKER #2: Well, you remember the sermon our Pastor made last week about finding balance and taking care of ourselves, etc, etc. After I heard that I decided I was just a wreck.



- SPEAKER #1: Uh, huh.... And do you remember WHY you're supposed to do all this exercise?
- SPEAKER #2: Oh Yeah! Because God lives in my temple and wants me to worship my bodyand yours too!
- SPEAKER #1: Oh brother... What he said was, "A temple is a place of worship....NOT an object of worship." The point was to respect and protect our body, so we feel better, look better and live longer. (*Leaning in and pointing finger at SPEAKER #2*)
- SPEAKER #2: Ouch....I think you're hurting my body!
- SPEAKER #1: Oh sorry...But I hope you got the main point of the sermon – balance! Try this for me. Take a big breath in (pause) Now breathe out. (pause) Breathe in (pause) Breathe out. OK. Which do you prefer?
- SPEAKER #2: Hmm. Very funny.
- SPEAKER #1: Not funny...just balance. Now, you're not just going to exercise all the time are you?
- SPEAKER #2: Well no, I have a hundred other things to do. Like cleaning my house, and planning our next vacation, having our friends over for dinner this weekend, and keeping up with my reading of mysteries and getting a makeover and getting groceries and going shopping and taking an Spanish class at the college and playing on my softball team and working, of course!!! I'm VERY busy AND productive. There's hardly time for exercising! I'm making a special effort to fit this in!!!
- SPEAKER #1: What about your spiritual workout?

- SPEAKER #2: Spiritual workout? I don't think I have time for another workout.
- SPEAKER #1: Well in school it is important to set aside time to do your homework right?
- SPEAKER #2: Yeah....I guess.
- SPEAKER #1: In athletics it's critical to show up and work hard at practice isn't it?
- SPEAKER #2: Well.....our team doesn't really practice, but we'd probably be better if we did.
- SPEAKER #1: And your friends expect you to spend time with them on weekends.
- SPEAKER #2: They probably wouldn't be friends long if we didn't spend time with them!
- SPEAKER #1: Exactly! It's also very important that you spend time alone with God every day to Talk to God through prayer and Listen to God for guidance.
- SPEAKER #2: Alone with God?
- SPEAKER #1: You can think of it as having a 'spiritual workout' which will strengthen every area of your life.
- SPEAKER #2: Even my biceps? Just joking.....but really, I don't have time.
- SPEAKER #1: Do you have seven minutes?
- SPEAKER #2: Seven minutes, huh? What kind of workout is that, anyway? (*laughs*)
- SPEAKER #1: A short one, but effective. Let me tell you how.

- SPEAKER #2: OK, but
- SPEAKER #1: *(Interrupts)* Great. Begin by praying 1 minute.
- SPEAKER #2: One minute? That's all?
- SPEAKER #1: According to 1 John 1:9, if we confess our sins, God is faithful and just and will forgive our sins and purify us...so confess any known sin in your life and then ask God to show you something new as you read His word.
- SPEAKER #2: Is impatience a sin?
- SPEAKER #1: Yes, and for you that's probably a good place to start.
- SPEAKER #2: OK. 1 minute of prayer....what next?
- SPEAKER #1: Read God's word for five minutes. Choose a verse and read it.
- SPEAKER #2: Ahh. I know the shortest verse in the whole Bible! Maybe I could use that one.
- SPEAKER #1: Whatever works for you....AND then ask yourself three questions about the verse. What does this say about God, Jesus Christ or the Holy Spirit? What does this say about me? And finally what can I do to apply to my life what I have learned from this Bible passage?
- SPEAKER #2: Oh, well that might take five minutes. What you're saying is use the verse as 'food for thought' and reflection.
- SPEAKER #1: Yeah, Whoa.....are you actually buying into this?



- SPEAKER #2: Maybe...it's not sounding SO hard. Go on. I'm listening. What's next?
- SPEAKER #1: Pray for one minute. Thank God for what you have learned. Ask God to help you apply what you have learned. Pray for yourself and others!
- SPEAKER #2: Pray one minute, Read and reflect five minutes and pray one minute. And you say this will work?
- SPEAKER #1: Even taking seven minutes alone with God can make a huge difference in your attitude and well-being. If you do it regularly.
- SPEAKER #2: Yes, I see what you're trying to say. OK! I won't ignore a very important part of me - my spiritual fitness! ...*(pause)* Say, how about jogging with me up the hill?
- SPEAKER #1: What? Me? You've got to be kidding!
- SPEAKER #2: A little exercise won't hurt you! Remember, balance. You may have the spiritual workout down, but it looks like you could use a little physical exercise. *(pushes SPEAKER #1 in stomach)* C'mon! It's easy. One, two three, four...that's it. You're doing great! *(They jog off together.)*

A Seven Minute Workout

- **Pray** – 1 minute
 - Confess to God any known sin in your life
 - Ask God to show you something new as you read his work

- **Read** God's Word – 5 minutes
 - Choose a Bible verse. Read it and ask three questions.
 - What does this say about God, Jesus Christ or the Holy Spirit?
 - What does this say about me (humankind)?
 - What can I do to apply to my life what I have learned from this Bible verse?

- **Pray** – 1 minute
 - Thank God for what you have learned.
 - Ask God to help you apply to your life what you have learned.
 - Pray for yourself and others





Personal Workout - Practice

- **Pray** – 1 minute
- **Read** God's Word – 5 minutes
 - Read Mark 12:28-34.
 - What does this say about God, Jesus Christ or the Holy Spirit?

- What does this say about me?

- What can I do to apply to my life what I've learned from the Bible verse?

- **Pray** – 1 minute

Personal Workout - Practice

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- What does this say about me?

- What can I do to apply to my life what I've learned from the Bible verse?
