

LIFE Meeting

Embrace Your Individuality

January 16, 2019

1. Opening Prayer

Faith

2. Icebreaker: 5 Seconds

3. Transition to Small Groups

4. 1st Small Group: What is your Stress

5. Large Group: Skit and Activity

6. 2nd Small Group: Relieving Stress

7. Closing Prayer

Kyle

- **Next Meeting: January 16th — Under Pressure**
- **Planning Meeting: Tuesday December 18th**
 - **Food: Jamie, Kyle, Allison, Maggie B.**
- **Retreat December 21-22**

Ice Breaker

Get into a circle (4 groups like a bracket) and choose the category (tv shows, restaurants, colors, movies, animals, drinks, cereals, celebrities, names that start with a B, candy, items found in a purse, cities, fried foods, things you carry, things worn from the waist up). go around in the circle until someone messes up; that person is eliminated. Keep going until we have four finalists, then two, then a winner.

Transition to Small Group:

Thanks everyone for playing our fun but stressful game of categories! When it was your turn to respond to the categories, did you feel the pressure to answer correctly? Did you feel stressed even though you were in a friendly environment surrounded by familiar faces? Stress is everywhere, and it is different for everyone. Maybe you didn't feel stressed or maybe you did, but either way we will find out in small groups just what stresses you the most and what levels of stress you have.

Small Group

Matthew 11:28-30

28 "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. **29** Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. **30** For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

Many times, we like to go it alone and pretend that things don't affect us. However, it is important to remember that it doesn't have to be that way. Not only are our friends there for us, but God will always be there as well. Sometimes all we need is to just take a break and have a conversation with God in order to feel better.

Small Group Questions

1. From 1-10 how stressed are you right now?
2. Do you find it hard to identify stress and its sources?
3. What is the most stressful thing in your life right now? Why?
4. How do you personally manage stress?
5. Do you think there is any stress you could cut out of your life right now? How could you cut it out?
6. Do you ever let stress get the better of you? Why?
7. What do you think is the root of most of your stress right now?
8. Are there things you get stressed about that others would find weird? Why does that stress you out?
9. Are there things you don't get stress about that you feel most people do? Why don't you get stressed out?
10. Do you feel that you can handle your stress on your own or not? Why?
11. Do you have anyone you can talk to about your stress and what you can do about it? Who?
12. When was a time you found it difficult to manage your stress?
13. Are there any constant sources of stress in your life? What are those sources?

14. Would you describe yourself as a stressful person or no? Why?
15. Do you feel that stress has ever or can ever have a positive impact on your life?
16. Do you ever turn to God to help you deal with your stress? Do you think it would help you to seek God for help with your stress?

Opening Prayer

Stressed Out by twenty one pilots

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tpQ74K3-yC8>

I wish I found some better sounds no one's ever heard
I wish I had a better voice that sang some better words
I wish I found some chords in an order that is new
I wish I didn't have to rhyme every time I sang
I was told when I get older all my fears would shrink
But now I'm insecure and I care what people think

My name's Blurryface and I care what you think
My name's Blurryface and I care what you think
Wish we could turn back time, to the good old days
When our momma sang us to sleep but now we're stressed out
Wish we could turn back time, to the good old days
When our momma sang us to sleep but now we're stressed out
We're stressed out

Sometimes a certain smell will take me back to when I was young
How come I'm never able to identify where it's coming from
I'd make a candle out of it if I ever found it
Try to sell it, never sell out of it, I'd probably only sell one
It'd be to my brother, 'cause we have the same nose
Same clothes homegrown a stone's throw from a creek we used to roam
But it would remind us of when nothing really mattered
Out of student loans and tree-house homes we all would take the latter

My name's Blurryface and I care what you think
My name's Blurryface and I care what you think
Wish we could turn back time, to the good old days
When our momma sang us to sleep but now we're stressed out
Wish we could turn back time, to the good old days
When our momma sang us to sleep but now we're stressed out

We used to play pretend, give each other different names
We would build a rocket ship and then we'd fly it far away
Used to dream of outer space but now they're laughing at our face
Saying, "Wake up, you need to make money" Yeah

We used to play pretend, give each other different names
We would build a rocket ship and then we'd fly it far away
Used to dream of outer space but now they're laughing at our face
Saying, "Wake up, you need to make money" Yeah

Wish we could turn back time, to the good old days
When our momma sang us to sleep but now we're stressed out
Wish we could turn back time, to the good old days
When our momma sang us to sleep but now we're stressed out
Used to play pretend, used to play pretend, bunny
We used to play pretend, wake up, you need the money
Used to play pretend, used to play pretend, bunny
We used to play pretend, wake up, you need the money
We used to play pretend, give each other different names
We would build a rocket ship and then we'd fly it far away
Used to dream of outer space but now they're laughing at our face
Saying, "Wake up, you need to make money" Yeah

We all have stressors in our lives. Whether your stress comes from work, school, or extracurricular activities. We cannot tell what is going on in someone's life just by looking at them. There are many of us in here that feel overwhelmed, and the best thing we can do to simplify other people's lives is to be kind and offer our help when they appear to be struggling. Talk to a friend about what's causing you to feel stressed, you can reduce tension by opening up to a good friend or family member. And most importantly, refer to God. Whenever you feel like your head is underwater, reach up to the Lord, and he will pull you back to the shore. My favorite verse, Matthew 11:28 states, "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest". This scripture encourages me to keep pushing through the hard parts of life, because with God there is always a light at the end of the tunnel. As a Marianist Family let us joyfully

proclaim, "May the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit be glorified in all places through the Immaculate Virgin Mary, Amen".

How stressed are you really?

The Health and Wellbeing Stress Test

In this fast paced, constantly changing world, stress is an ever-increasing problem. Undue stress wears down our immune system and leaves us susceptible to all types of physical ailments. The following simple test is designed to see how stressed you are and to give you some ideas as to how to 'take control' if necessary.

Read the following statements and tick the ones you feel often or always apply to you:

A. Your mood and feelings:

I am often angry or irritable

I have big mood swings

I often fail to see the funny side of things

I spend a lot of time complaining about the past

I get angry when I'm kept waiting

I often feel guilty

I find it hard to make decisions and get frustrated by this

I often keep everything bottled up inside

I blow up easily or pick fights

I am constantly tired

I feel unable to cope with all I have to do

Total: /11

B. Your lifestyle

I find it hard to eat healthily or I regularly over- or under-eat

I do not exercise regularly

I consume large quantities of caffeine

I have trouble sleeping or wake up still feeling tired

I get too little rest

I don't fit relaxation into every day

I tend to race through the day

I often ignore symptoms of stress

Total: /8

C. At school

I am unable to take sufficient breaks

I feel unsupported by my teachers and friends

I have to work very intensively

I have to neglect some tasks because I have too much to do

There is friction or anger between students

I have to work very fast

I don't have a choice deciding what I do at school

Different groups at school demands things from me that are hard to combine

I am subject to bullying at school

I have unrealistic time pressures

I cannot rely on adults to help me with a school problem

Staff are not consulted about change at school

Relationships at school are strained

Tot

al: /13

D. In general

I have few supportive relationships

I always say yes when I am asked to do more by friends, family or at work

I tend to put things off

I complain that I am disorganized

I try to do everything myself

I set unrealistic deadlines

I am working longer and longer to achieve the same or less I find it hard to concentrate

Total: /8

Overall total: /40

Your score:

Total up the number of statements you have ticked in each section and your overall total score. This will give you an indicator of how stressed you are and which aspects of your life are causing the most stress.

How stressed are you?

If you scored less than 10 – you have few hassles

Congratulations! There are few hassles in your life right now. Make sure, though, that you are not trying so hard to avoid problems that you don't challenge yourself – some stress is actually good for you.

If you scored 11 – 20 – you are in pretty good control

Well done! You have your life well balanced. Make sure you keep an eye on your choices and lifestyle to avoid unnecessary stress and keep yourself both physical and mentally fit and healthy.

If you scored 21-30 – you are approaching the danger zone

You may well be suffering some stress-related symptoms and your relationships could be strained. You need to think carefully about the choices you've made and your lifestyle and find ways to reduce your stressors and/or improve your coping mechanisms and find time to relax.

If you scored 31 or more – Emergency!

You must stop now, rethink how you are living, change your attitude and pay careful attention to your diet, exercise and relaxation. This may seem selfish but you need to look after number one at the moment or your health will suffer.

What is stressing you?

If you scored high in section A: You're letting it all build up

You must be exhausted carrying around all that tension. You hate letting people down and often ask too much of yourself. You may find yourself having a lot of arguments, even picking fights. Try to smile more and don't take things as seriously – more fun is needed right now! Talk to your friends and family about what's on your mind instead of bottling things up. Make time to relax but also find a way to vent your frustrations – try a martial art, writing a journal or a long walk.

If you scored high in section B: You need to look after yourself more

Our lifestyle choices drastically affect the way we cope with stress. Your body is fighting a battle both from the inside and out. Whilst you rely on sugar and caffeine to keep you going, your body is not getting the nutrients it needs to repair the damage these toxins are causing. We're not asking you to become a health freak but make sure you get your five portions of fruit and veg a day, drink plenty of water, take a five minute relaxation break as often as you can and take some form of exercise every day – try walking or cycling to work, or from the park and ride, taking the stairs or come to a Q-active class – your body and mind will thank you for it!

If you scored high in section C: School is getting you down

You are struggling at school and don't feel that you have the support necessary to cope with the high demands put on you. Look at your workload – can you delegate any? Are you saying yes to more work because you daren't say no? Try saying 'I'm swamped right now – can anyone else help or do you mind waiting a while?' Look at your time management strategies – prioritize your work into "urgent and important, important, less important and can wait" then block out slots in your diary to deal with the most urgent ones first. Don't let anyone fill these slots in – imagine they are an important meeting that you can't avoid. Make sure your line manager knows the pressure you are under.

If you scored high in section D: You're taking on too much

I know it's hard but you need to trust others to take the strain and ask for help. You feel unsupported and take more and more on but you're not a superhero and need to look after yourself too. Support is out there but you must take the time to find it. Be realistic about what you can achieve and use time management strategies to schedule time for your commitments and responsibilities but also for your health and wellbeing. Learn to prioritize effectively and don't be too hard on yourself.

Skit for Under Pressure Meeting

Starts with Faith standing at the front of the room.

Kyle: This is Stacy. Stacy is stressed.

Faith sighs.

Kyle: Stacy has so much going on in her life that she feels like she has no time to do it all. Stacy is in advanced classes and has hours of homework and studying every night...

Graham walks by and hands her heavy school books.

Kyle: Stacy is captain of the soccer team and has practice 5 nights a week...

Jamie tosses her a soccer ball. (It's okay if Faith struggles to catch it)

Kyle: Stacy is the lead in the spring musical and has rehearsals 3 times a week, and still has to learn her lines...

Allison dances her way to Faith & hands her a big musical book.

Kyle: She also has a job at the local Krispy Kreme and is required to work 3 shifts a week...

Kaden piles on a donut box and puts a Krispy Kreme cap on her head.

Kyle: Stacy is finding it harder and harder to find happiness in all of the things she is committed to. The weight of it all is becoming too much for her to carry.

Faith drops all of the items in her hands and shows distress on her face (cry if you want).

Kyle: Stacy doesn't know where to turn to declutter her life. She decides to finally confide in her friends and family.

Nyarok and Meg stand on either side of Faith and hold her hands.

Kyle: One of her friends suggests she time manages better and creates a schedule for herself.

Meg holds up a planner/calendar.

Kyle: Stacy's other friend helps her study and learn her lines.

Nyarok hands her all of the books. She points something out in a book and Faith has an inaudible "ohhh" moment and smiles.

Kyle: Someone else suggests that Stacy takes some time to talk to God. Perhaps even praying for guidance and peace.

Maggie comes in and points to the cross and does the sign of the cross.

Kyle: Stacy's family encourages her to make her mental health a priority. She uses her new planner to schedule out time for all of her activities and for herself. She even decides to schedule prayer time in there to!

As Kyle is saying this everyone else comes in and picks everything else up for her.

Kyle: With her renewed sense of self and a better relationship with God, and some time management, Stacy can worry less and enjoy what she's involved in more. She is also reminded to take time to be still and pay attention to God's plan for her life.

All: Yay God!

The End.

2nd Small Group

First, everyone will take their small groups into one of the teachers' classrooms and use the projection screen to present a powerpoint on 14 different types of stress relievers.

Link to powerpoint:

https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1LhV5VHuc2k7DW_VhubNcMm1HSH7iOjBnCIK1DoNEzX8/edit#slide=id.p

During the powerpoint, we will be asking people in small groups to do a couple activities that help relieve stress. They are listed in the powerpoint.

After the powerpoint, remain sitting in the classrooms. Then ask these series of questions and discuss them with your group:

- Which of the following stress relievers in the powerpoint helps you the most?
- Were there any stress relievers that surprised you? If so, why?
- Are there any stress relievers that work for you that weren't mentioned in the powerpoint?
- Is there anyone in particular that you go to in order to help you deal with stress? Any activities/events?
- How do you wish you could deal with your stress (keep it the same, better)?
- Do you think stress is good or bad?
 - Be sure to point out that being under pressure is not necessarily a bad thing.

Transition to Closing Prayer: If there is still remaining time (the powerpoint is pretty long), small group leaders can relate back to one of the stress relievers: spending time with friends and family. Then, everyone in small group can get in a circle and give a positive affirmation or compliment about the person to their left.

"A diamond is just a chunk of
coal that did well under
pressure."

Closing Prayer

Don't You Worry Child by Swedish House Mafia
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DB8v0nYvGrE>

There was a time, I used to look into my
father's eyes
In a happy home, I was a king I had a
golden throne
Those days are gone, now the memories
are on the wall
I hear the sounds from the places where
I was born

Up on the hill across the blue lake
That's where I had my first heartbreak
I still remember how it all changed
My father said
Don't you worry, don't you worry child
See heaven's got a plan for you
Don't you worry, don't you worry now,
yeah
Don't you worry, don't you worry child
See heaven's got a plan for you
Don't you worry, don't you worry now,
yeah

There was a time, I met a girl of a
different kind
We ruled the world,
Thought I'll never lose her out of sight

We were so young
I think of her now and then
I still hear the songs, reminding me of a
friend

Up on the hill across the blue lake
That's where I had my first heartbreak
I still remember how it all changed
My father said
Don't you worry, don't you worry child
See heaven's got a plan for you
Don't you worry, don't you worry now,
yeah

Ooh, ooh, ooh, ooh
Ooh, ooh, ooh, ooh
Ooh, ooh, ooh, ooh
See heaven's got a plan for you
Don't you worry, don't you worry child
See heaven's got a plan for you
Don't you worry, don't you worry now,
yeah
Ooh, ooh, ooh, ooh
Ooh, ooh, ooh, ooh
Ooh, ooh, ooh, ooh, yeah

Reflection:

Over time, stress and worry can make the things that we love and value so much disappear. If we are so caught up in worry, there is no longer time to focus on the good things in our lives. Even when there doesn't seem to be anything good going on right now, just remember that God has a plan for you and you shouldn't have to worry because he is always there for you. Family struggles, heartbreak, struggles in school and in activities are all common stressors for teenagers. I am sure everyone in this room can relate to one of these stresses. So, just remember not to dwell too much on the pressure. If you work your hardest and confide in others, you are bound to overcome your stress. Just remember that there is a reason for the pressure in your life: it is to drive you to be a better person and give your all. As your people let us joyfully proclaim: May the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit be glorified in all places through the Immaculate Virgin Mary, Amen.