

LIFEGROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

NOT OKAY WEEK 4



Take a deep breath. Count to ten. Unclench your jaw. Close your eyes. (Okay, now maybe open them again so you can keep reading). You've probably learned a trick or two like this to help you feel with feelings of stress, worry, or overwhelm. Unfortunately, there are a *lot* of reasons to feel stressed on most days. Between school, family, relationships, and questions about our future, what can we do about everything that's causing us stress? During Jesus' ministry, he spent a lot of time with people during some stressful moments. In this four-week series from the Gospels, we'll see how, **when we're not okay, Jesus offers hope**. We'll discover that **when people reject us, Jesus never will**. We'll see that **when it's not easy to do what's right, it's still worth it**. And we'll be reminded that **when you feel worried, Jesus can be trusted**.

THIS WEEK

BIG IDEA

When you feel worried, Jesus can be trusted.

BIBLE

Psalm 23; Matthew 6:28–35;
Philippians 4:6–7

PREDISCUSSION

- Which seems scarier, a world where wild dinosaurs roamed the earth or where zombies were a constant threat?
- Have you ever had stress that has lasted for a long time? What was that like, and how did you make it through to the other side of that stress?

DISCUSSION

- Read Psalm 23 again in your lifegroup. When it comes to worry, what are some helpful things you can remember from this passage that can help you trust Jesus more? *(see message outline on leader login page)*
- What questions do you have about the idea that God sets the table for us in the presence of our enemies?
- Is it helpful to have others know why you are feeling stressed? Why or why not?
 - If so, what are some of the benefits of being in community when you have worries?
 - What can be negatives of being in community when you have worries? *(i.e. an unhealthy community can cause the worries and stress instead of being helpful.)*
- Read or have someone read Jesus' teaching on worry in Matthew 6:28-35. What stood out to you about his teaching on anxiety and worry?
 - **NOTE:** *Be careful leading your lifegroup during this discussion time. You want this to be a helpful time discussing ways students can deal with stress and worry and not allow this to become a group therapy session. Guard your discussion time and watch for clues or red flags if students "overshare." Direct those students to one-on-one conversations after lifegroup time. Remember, some of your students may not be emotionally equipped to handle other student's issues and worries if they seem overwhelming.*
- What keeps you from trusting Jesus when you feel worried?
- Why might God choose to allow us to experience anxiety and worry?

CLOSING

- Read Philippians 4:6–7. What do you read in this passage that you could start doing when you feel worried?
- Is it easier to ask for help when you feel stressed, or actively invite God into your stress?
- What is something you could do to address mistrust of Jesus when you feel worried this week?
- What one change in your life would help you trust Jesus when you feel worried?

MONTHLY GOAL

FAITH CONVERSATION: Not every conversation needs to be about faith, but we miss the point if none of our discussions are. For each week of the month of April, 15 minutes before each LifeGroup, try to incorporate a severe faith question. This can be done in your whole group, or it can be done with a different student each week (i.e., Can you share your testimony with me? Can you tell me about a time you felt super close to God?).

LIFEGROUP TIPS AND REMINDERS

- Dive into the discussion guide as soon as possible while the message from student worship is fresh on the students' minds. **Save prayer requests, highs/lows, weekend stories, for the END of group time.**
- Re-read the scripture, or even add supportive scripture verses to help with discussion. Spend a moment re-reading the message outline to give more context to your discussion guide questions.
- **Mine for answers.** Don't be satisfied with just one student giving an answer or they "typical churchy response." Be comfortable asking why or having a student explain their answer for more clarity.
- Be comfortable with silence after asking a question. **DON'T ANSWER THE QUESTIONS FOR THEM.** Allow time for students to give their answers as this usually opens the door for others to participate.
- **Don't dismiss students into the main atrium!** Dismiss them to the student commons and hang out with them there. Remember the 15 min rule – the 15 minutes before and after group time are some of the best times to have meaningful conversations with your students.
- **Don't forget the Four Fs of Leadership!** FOLLOW UP, FAMILY CONNECTION, FELLOWSHIP+, & FAITH CONVERSATIONS
- Try to keep your students in LG the whole time. They will have plenty of time to go to the bathroom before LGs. If a bathroom break is absolutely necessary, **dismiss them to the bathrooms in the student commons downstairs – NOT THE ADULT LIFEGROUP BATHROOMS ON THE 2ND FLOOR.**

DISMISS TO STUDENT COMMONS **(DO NOT LET STUDENTS GO TO THE SECOND FLOOR LANDING BEHIND THE MAIN WORSHIP CENTER BALCONY).**