



STRESS POINT SURVIVAL GROUP HELPFUL HINTS

I'm excited that you've taken the step toward leading a small group of women to live out the Kingship of Christ together and learn from one another. If you are a 20-something with a desire to lead your peers and grow together, I want to say thank you. It's not easy to make time in your life to prepare and lead. It's also a bit scary to think that you will lead your friends through this book and discuss the Bible. I want to hug you this very moment in gratitude that you've stepped forward to journey with your friends in a Stress Point Survival Group. If you are a mentor to 20-somethings and desire to do life with your younger girlfriends by working through this book, I also want to say thank you. These young adult women need your wisdom and coaching and I know it means the world that you set time aside in your schedule to hang out.

My main goal for you, in addition to the obvious goal that you, too, would learn and grow, is that you do not burn out as a leader. I hope that this book will be a springboard for groups of young adult women to meet regularly and dig through the Bible to find truth applicable to everyday life. Because I want you to be encouraged to continue to lead, please hear me say that leading Stress Point should be impactful as well as low-key for you and your group. Let's all say this together: ***I will not stress out over leading Stress Point!*** (Did you really say that aloud? I sure hope so!) Because this is a low-key and low-maintenance Survival Group, I want to take some time to lay out a few helpful hints for gathering a group. These are some tips I've learned over my years of ministry with 20-somethings. This is in no way a "must do" list, but a few things to think about if you've never lead a small group before. In addition, I will break down each chapter into a main theme and give you a few more discussion questions to talk through with your group.

It is my hope that your group members will learn to trust each other and cultivate an atmosphere of authenticity. This starts with the leader, so prayerfully consider how you personally add to the

culture of authenticity with your group. Please don't feel like you need to know all of the answers. It is okay to say, "I don't know, but I will look into it." If one of your girls brings up a difficult topic that you don't know how to respond to, continue the conversation to garner the opinions of others in the group. Then, I suggest talking to your pastor or women's ministry leader to get their thoughts. No one looks down on someone who admits she doesn't know. In fact, your group will see you as one who cares about getting to the truth if you commit to finding out an answer and reporting back at the next group meeting. The important thing is that you all prayerfully come before your King, get to a deep discussion based on Scripture, and listen to each others' thoughts and feelings.

Helpful Hints:

~Wherever you decide to hold your Survival Group, set it up with comfortable couches, chairs, and pillows. This is easy to do at a house, but takes a bit more intention if you are meeting at a church or other building.

~Keep the group to no more than ten women. It helps the flow of conversation when everyone feels like they have a voice and are not lost in a big group.

~Don't feel like you need to have a fancy food setup. I've spent hours preparing snacks for my girls and they end up in Tupperware and in my fridge—not eaten. Simple coffee, sodas, and water are really the maximum you need to set out.

~Though you want to keep the group free-flowing and structured lightly, set a specific start and finish time for each meeting in order to be respectful of everyone's time.

~Collect the e-mail addresses and phone numbers of everyone that signs up. Then, the day of your group, send out an e-mail and text message to your members as a friendly reminder. You might feel like this is overdoing it, but everyone likes to be reminded during their busy days.

~A great way to handle prayer requests and allow the women to engage with each other is to hand out index cards and have everyone write down one prayer request, their name, e-mail address, and phone number. Then put the cards in a pile and ask everyone to pick one random card. Then, throughout the week, ask everyone to touch base with the person on their card to offer encouragement and prayer.

~Encourage your group to do the journal questions for each chapter. I purposefully didn't call these sections "homework," but these journals solidify the concepts in each chapter and are crucial to growth and engagement with the Lord. In addition to the Real, Raw, and Relevant questions that will follow in this Leader Guide, these journal questions can offer starting points for in-depth discussions. Be sure not to discourage those who do not complete their journals, though.

I want you to know that I'm so honored that you chose to use Stress Point for your small group. This is not a task to be taken lightly, but know that the Lord will bless you greatly for taking on this responsibility. Here is what I am praying specifically for you as a leader:

Father God, I thank You for calling this leader to guide her group of friends through Stress Point. Oh how I pray that they will see You as their King of Kings in a very real way as they work through all of these life issues. Cover this sweet leader with Your guidance and grace. Show her that You are glorified because she stepped up to led her friends toward Your majestic throne. Give her holy confidence and protect her from anything that will discourage or block her during this journey. I'm so very excited to see how You, our King, will move in the lives of these women. In Jesus' name, Amen!