



The struggle is real.

*Week 1: Relationships*



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Friendships, marriages, and family ties are important parts of our lives, but stressful times can put a strain on our relationships. The good news is that our faith can help us find a way forward to better connect with our friends, family, and community.

## **THINK**

Think about your relationships with your friends, your spouse, your family, your co-workers or classmates. Where are you struggling? What do you think is causing the tension in that relationship? What might help? What needs to change?

## **DISCUSS**

Discuss what you need to feel supported right now and in difficult times. On the other hand, how can you be more supportive to the people in your life? How is God calling you to help?

## **ACT**

Think of ways you can strengthen your relationships. Write a note to a friend. Ask your mom to go for a walk. Plan a date night with your spouse.

## **PRAY**

Read Proverbs 15:1. Spend some time talking to God about your relationships and pray for the person you're struggling with the most right now.

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*Week 2: Work and School*



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The pressures of school and work (whether you work inside or outside of the home) can be overwhelming. This week God is inviting us to consider how we spend our time and where we can make small changes to restore or maintain some balance in our lives.

## **THINK**

Consider how the pandemic has impacted your school or work life. Where are you finding balance between your responsibilities to work, home or school and where might you need to restore balance?

## **DISCUSS**

Share where you are struggling with work/school - home balance. How can your family and friends best support you? Be vulnerable in discussing what you need to do to change.

## **ACT**

Map out the hours of your typical day on a piece of paper. Notice how you're spending your time. Build something in that might help to restore balance and commit to it.

## **PRAY**

Pray with the page you used to map out your day. Ask God for whatever it is you need to feel more at peace about your work / school life.

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A silhouette of a person's head and shoulders is centered against a dramatic sky at sunset or sunrise. The sky is filled with clouds, some of which are illuminated with a warm orange and yellow light, while others are in deep shadow. The overall mood is contemplative and somber.

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*Week 3: Loneliness*

This image is identical to the one above, featuring a silhouette of a person against a sunset sky with scattered, orange-lit clouds. The composition and color palette are consistent, emphasizing themes of solitude and emotional struggle.

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*Week 3: Loneliness*

Among all the ways the pandemic has changed our lives this year, perhaps the biggest loss is not being able to spend time with people in the same way we always have. Reflect this week on how you may have experienced loneliness and how God is with you even when you feel alone.

## **THINK**

Reflect on the isolation we've experienced in the last few months and how much we've taken for granted. Think about your own loneliness and how God might be present with you even in those times.

## **DISCUSS**

Talk about a time when you felt lonely, whether during the pandemic or another time in your life. What made you feel less alone? How can you be a lifeline for others facing loneliness?

## **ACT**

Do something to spark your connections with others. Call a friend. Do a socially distanced coffee date. Plan a family movie night and spend time connecting.

## **PRAY**

Read Psalm 25:16-22. Talk to God about how God might relieve the troubles of your heart and how God might be calling you to be there for others in their loneliness.

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*Week 4: Anxiety*



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Anxiety and stress affect everyone even though we don't like to talk about it. Our faith helps us see that we don't have to go through hard things alone. This week lean on your small group or family for support and reach out to God who is always with you.

## **THINK**

Think about what's causing you to be anxious right now. What can you control? What is out of your control? What can you ask God to help you with to be more at peace?

## **DISCUSS**

Anxiety or stress can be difficult to talk about with other people but it helps to talk about it. Allow space to discuss as a group. Be vulnerable in sharing a little with your family or friends about what's making you anxious right now.

## **ACT**

Creative or active habits can be a healthy outlet for anxiety. Try a new workout. Take a nature walk someplace beautiful. Get creative with art or writing. Make a plan to build in a new activity and commit to it this week.

## **PRAY**

Read Phillippians 4:1-9. Present your needs to God in an honest conversation about what's causing you to feel anxious or stressed right now. Allow space to listen and find peace in God.

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*Week 5: Forgiveness*



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Forgiveness is a core value in our Christian faith. We are forgiven because God forgives us, and we are called to forgive others. Reflect on what this means in our daily lives. Try to imagine a world where we forgive because we are forgiven.

## THINK

Reflect on how you've seen forgiveness play out in your life, both in your relationships and in your faith life. What does it mean to be forgiven? Is there someone or something that God is calling you to forgive?

## DISCUSS

What does it mean to be people of forgiveness? Discuss with your group or family a time when you had to forgive somebody. Discuss a time when someone forgave you. Have you ever needed to forgive yourself? How did it feel? What did it mean for you?

## ACT

Think about what you need to forgive, whether that be another person, something that happened, or yourself. What do you need to say or do to show forgiveness? Consider actually making a plan to forgive that person, the thing that happened, or yourself.

## PRAY

Read Luke 11:1-4. Consider these words that Jesus taught us to pray. We pray them every week. Pray these words and mean it. Pray for those that you need to forgive and thank God for your forgiveness.

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