

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Sacred Stress: A Radically Different Approach to Using Life's Challenges for Positive Change

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Prologue

What is your personal story of stress throughout your life?

What are the ways you learned to handle stress?

Introduction

Had you heard of *eustress* before reading this book? Does it make sense to you? Why or why not?

If you take an inventory of your life, how much time do you spend in eustress versus distress?

1. Reframing Thinking

Look back over your life and come up with an example of when stress felt overwhelming and negative, but that you have now come to understand as a pivotal moment or an opportunity for growth.

What circumstances in your life today could be reframed? How would you reframe them?

2. Creating Connections

How comfortable are you with vulnerability? Is it something you tend to share or hide from? Why?

Which positive emotions do you experience most often? Which of the darker emotions are you more comfortable with?

3. Opening the Door to Transformation

After reading this chapter, how do you see the emotions you are less comfortable with?

How do you think God feels about these dark emotions?

4. Nurturing the Ultimate Connection

In what circumstances in your most intimate relationship do you tend to pursue and your partner tend to withdraw? In what circumstances do you tend to withdraw and your partner pursue? What is your cycle?

How much do you think about the emotional bond when you think about sex? What kind of things contribute to feeling emotionally connected in physical intimacy?

In your understanding, how might your spirituality be connected with your sexuality?

5. Enjoying the Wild Ride

What percentage of the time do you feel like you are tuned in to your child's need? How do you tune in?

Would applying "good enough" parenting to your score offer you some relief? Why or why not?

When there is conflict, do members of your family talk about the vulnerability underneath their defensiveness or is it avoided? If yes, discuss how these conversations have come about. If no, offer a few ways to encourage them.

6. Breaking a Dependency

What is your emotional relationship with money? How do you think this relationship was shaped or developed?

What is your vision of a healthy relationship with money?

7. Claiming Strength and Resiliency

Share events in your life that constricted your view of the world, made you feel mistrust, created a lack of safety, or invoked necessary survival responses like anxiety and withdrawal.

In those times of stress, have people been able to be there for you? What was that like for you? Have you been there for others? What did you do?

Epilogue

How would you describe a healthy and holistic definition of stress? How might you apply this to your current life circumstances and relationships?

How does your sense of knowing God or following your spiritual practice inform the way you experience or understand stress in your life?