



## The Art of Living, Week #3 Enduring Under Pressure

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### **GROUP PREP**

In preparation for group, [watch Emmanuel's weekend service message](#), then answer the following discussion questions.

### **SOCIAL TIME (10-15 minutes)**

Use the [Personal Best](#) icebreaker, choose from one of the other ice breakers on Emmanuel's [leader tools](#), or create your own.

### **CHECK-IN (15-20 minutes)**

Ask your group members to share how they completed their action steps and what it has taught them. Last week's question was, "In what areas of your life does pride have the tendency to show itself?"

### **GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

Everyone wants a successful life, but we often face hardships that lead to feelings associated with defeat. Statistics about depression, anxiety, and incarceration show that living a successful life is not automatic. Still, when we spend time in scripture, we discover that a successful life is rooted in endurance.

1. Describe a time when you didn't give up and completed something challenging.

Describe a moment when you gave up under pressure and were left wondering what might have happened if you had endured?

2. Marcus Aurelius said, "The art of living is more like wrestling than dancing, because an artful life requires being prepared to meet and withstand sudden and unexpected attacks." We can prepare for life's challenges by strengthening our endurance, but our mindset must shift.

**Expect life to be hard.** King Solomon spoke directly to this idea of enduring under pressure. Read [Proverbs 24:10 \(NLT\)](#). People quit on marriages, jobs, degrees, writing projects, dreams, friendships, and sadly sometimes even on life. What demanding challenges have you been tempted to give up on recently?

Read [John 16:33 \(NIV\)](#). Jesus warns us we will experience challenges. Many of us tend to navigate life as if things are supposed to go our way. What signs would tell us if this is how we are navigating life's challenges?

**Pressure creates endurance.** Read [James 1:2-4 \(MSG\)](#). The pressures of life reveal our inner strength. Rate your mental toughness on a scale of 1-10, and describe why you gave yourself that rating.

Why do we find it easier to blame our external circumstances rather than reflect internally on why our mental strength isn't where it should be?



3. To endure under pressure, we must **stay focused on our reasons**. Take a few minutes to write down any challenges you are tempted to give up on. Under each challenge, write down at least one reason you must endure the pressure this challenge creates. Share your challenges and reasons with the group.

4. Dream a little. What could happen if you didn't quit? What could happen if you endure under pressure and keep the reasons you must endure in front of you?

What specific actions will you take this week to endure under pressure?

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**ACTION STEP (10-15 minutes)**

Choose one of the following or create your own.

- **Journal** daily about where you feel pressure, the reasons why you must endure, and the potential outcomes in store because you didn't fall to the temptation of giving up.
- **Read** one chapter from the book of Proverbs each day over the next 30 days. This could be a great challenge to focus on as a group.
- **Daily time with God.** Determine the type of routine you'd like to have to spend time learning about what pleases God. Here are some ways to do this:
  - o [Download the Emmanuel app](#) and read the One Year New Testament daily.
  - o [Download the YouVersion app](#) and find a devotion you can do daily.
  - o Purchase a [Jesus Calling](#) devotional and read it daily.
  - o Devote time daily to using the [Bible Project](#) and the video teaching offered.
- **Pray.** Seek discernment by devoting time every morning and night to praying on your knees. A penitent position can change our mental posture.

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**FILL IN THE BLANKS BELOW FOR THIS UPCOMING WEEK'S ACTION STEPS.**

My action step is \_\_\_\_\_.

This coming week, I will encourage \_\_\_\_\_ to complete their action step.

Their action step is \_\_\_\_\_.

My memory verse is \_\_\_\_\_.

This coming week, I will pray for the group's following prayer requests:


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**PRAYER (5-10 minutes)**

Give everyone in your group an index card. Ask them to write their name and action steps on one side and a prayer request on the other. When finished, have everyone pass their cards to the left. Everyone in the group now has someone to connect with throughout the coming week for three reasons:

- 1) To build the relationship
- 2) To encourage to accomplish their action step
- 3) To pray for in a specific way

Ask them to place the index card on their nightstand or another place that would allow them to see it and use it every day.

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**GROUP SERVING OPPORTUNITIES**

To determine how your group can serve together in the surrounding community, email Breanne Schafer, Emmanuel's Outreach Coordinator, at [bschafer@eclife.org](mailto:bschafer@eclife.org).

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**UPCOMING EVENTS**

October 4 | [VERB](#)

October 7 | [Night of Worship](#)

October 12 | [Impact Night and Impact 101](#)

If you have never served before, join us for Impact 101. Just text 101 to 65248 to reserve your spot. If you are already a part of our Impact Team, text TEAM to 65248 to let us know you will be there!)

October 15 | [1824](#)

November 6 | [Middle School Retreat](#)

*More information on all of these events can be found at [eclife.org](http://eclife.org).*