

Study Guide
CREATIVE STRESS by
James O’Dea



First Week: Getting Acquainted
August 8, 2010 (or your group’s start date)

No reading assignments before the first meeting of this 6-week book study, but please purchase:

Creative Stress by James O’Dea

Opening – Someone say an opening prayer or read this one.

We open to the powerful Life of God which is present everywhere in Its peace, love and abundance.

We know that this One Life lives within each of us right now and always.

We know that our Word is creative and so we call forth the experience of connection, wisdom, and joy for this book study (The one praying invites other qualities to be named that the participants want to experience. These are spoken into the room.)

We give thanks that this and greater is and will be our experience together.

We let this be and release our prayer to the Creative Law of God. Amen.

The host gives any important information about their home, such as parking suggestions, whether tea is available, where the bathrooms are, and so forth.

Introductions – Have all participants pair up. Each person tells their partner their name, where they live, and one thought about how stress operates in their life right now. When all people have finished this process, each person introduces their partner to the group with the information that has been shared.

Building Trust – Each person makes a statement from their heart about the way they can be trusted and hold confidentiality in this group. Even though you may know some of these people well already, come fresh to this group with a sense of discovery and safety.

Establishing Intentions – Each person share with the group the reason you decided to participate in this book study. Conclude your sharing with the completion of this statement, “During this book study it is my intention to_____.” Write down your intention in a notebook or in the front of the *Creative Stress* book with today’s date. This intention can be about anything in your life.

Getting Acquainted with the Wisdom of *Creative Stress* – Turn to the first page of the Introduction. Right there in bold type is the statement, “Stress either opens us up or closes us off.” The second sentence in the following paragraph states, “Overcoming our tendency to close is our most essential work.” Think about the challenges you have gone through in work, in relationships, in financial and health matters, in family situations, and creative endeavors. Remember how it feels to close up because of some pain or difficulty. Remember how it feels to be opened and inspired by a new challenge. Speak your memories and thoughts to your group about both quoted statements from James O’Dea.

Closing – Each person complete this statement, “I am glad I came to this book study today because_____.”

Someone close with a prayer or all people read the following together: “May the flow of Divine Love move through each heart until we meet again. May this Love expand to encompass all the people and processes in each person’s life so that all are blessed. So be it now.”

Homework – Read the Introduction and first two chapters in *Creative Stress* for next week.