



HANDOUTS FOR OVERCOMING ANXIETY

Finding Peace, Discovering God

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Coping with Worries - Handout #5

A Christian need not worry. How?

By faith. The faith, trust, and belief in God restored to us by Christ Jesus is also designed to shape all of our life thoughts and decisions. Try matching the symbols with the chapter!



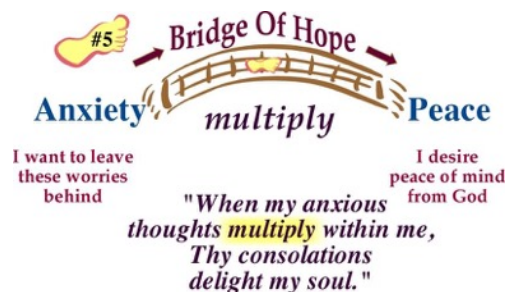
Session #1	Developing Hope
Session #2	Deepening Understanding
Session #3	Deciding Choices
Session #4	Discerning Patterns



Multiplying

The fifth step takes us half way over the bridge! We will examine what happens when those anxious thoughts start multiplying within us.

Is there a way to reject these anxious thoughts? Yes!



Multiplication hurts

The key word from Psalm 94:19 is '_____.' We are able to handle a few worrisome thoughts, but once they increase in number we often find ourselves unable to properly deal with them. These worries linger in our minds until they are accepted.

Multiply is different than addition. In addition one can keep careful control over his thoughts by noticing them and evaluating them one by one.

When worrisome thoughts multiply, the ability to carefully analyze them one by one is lost.

Anxious thoughts demand an _____ response.

"When my anxious thoughts multiply within me, Thy consolations delight my soul" (Psalm 94:19).



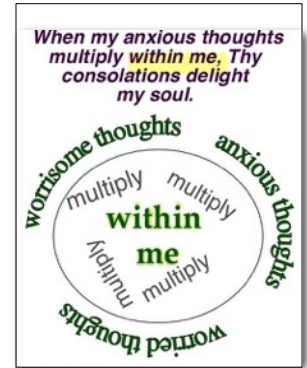
Peril Within

Dangers increase when a person with an increasing number of worries keeps his thoughts to himself. As long as our anxious thoughts are subjectively wandering in our minds, we have a difficult time gaining an objective perspective.

The more we _____ the anxious thoughts, the more they will bother us and inflict problems. Our pride makes things worse by assuring ourselves that we can deal with our problems on our own.

Two helpful outside resources are our friends and spiritual journal.

Anxiety occurs when we perceive that we are not able to cope with our surrounding circumstances.



Under Pressure

Let's observe three difficulties the psalmist himself faced.

16 Who will stand up for me against evildoers? Who will take his stand for me against those who do wickedness? 17 If the LORD had not been my help, My soul would soon have dwelt in the abode of silence. 18 If I should say, "My foot has slipped," Thy lovingkindness, O LORD, will hold me up.

- Evil people were openly seeking his harm.
- No one seemed willing to _____ for him. He was alone in a dark world.
- These same evildoers were seeking _____.

He had _____ over these situations. There seemed to be no solutions.

Coping with Anxious Thoughts

How can we cope with these thoughts which are tempting us to worry?



The transformation of our lives comes from the renewing of our minds. Our minds are the place that we evaluate those thoughts entering our systems.

"And do not be conformed to this world, but **be transformed by the renewing of your mind**, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is **good** and **acceptable** and **perfect**" (Romans 12:2).

We should reject any _____ that tells us to 'stop' thinking, whether it be some TM hum, yoga meditation or medication. They dull the mind. Remember God's gift to us is our ability to objectively think.



I worry a lot. How can I stop? I don't want to worry anymore.

Penetrating My Heart

The enemy shoots numerous missiles at once trying to _____ our defense system. Only one missile contact is necessary to cause severe damage.



The more we allow anxious thoughts to occupy our thinking, the more likelihood of having those anxious thoughts to penetrate our minds.

When the number of anxious thoughts increase, then we begin to lose our ability to evaluate the truthfulness of each incoming statement.

The Christian's basic defense system is his _____.

Observing the Pattern

Let's note these three stages.

- Outside our mind - _____

No concern to your life.

- Inside our mind - _____

Anxious thoughts in our minds.

Evaluating their reliability

(1) **Accept worries** (Move to heart)

(2) **Reject them** (destroy them)

- Inside our heart - _____

Once worries are accepted in our heart, they become part of our heart which shapes our decisions even though they are irrational. With the entrance of every worry, we slowly lose our

confidence in our ability to rightly _____.



Overwhelmed

Sometimes we get so burdened down with anxious thoughts that we can't do anything. We feel powerless. How do we reject anxious thoughts?

- 1) Declare the truth of God
- 2) Admit the truth of our weaknesses
- 3) Detect the truth of our situation. Three possibilities:

- a) God initiated plan

God started it, He will help me through it by providing all I need.

- b) Self-initiated plan



I started it. I need to repent before proper help will come.

c) Combination of God and self

Mind and Emotions

Often when anxious thoughts start swirling around our minds, we are confused. Our confused feelings start to further complicate matters.



What are feelings and emotions?

Feelings are a companion to our souls designed to magnify the state of our inner lives. "I feel great!" "I feel alone."

How can feelings be rightly used?

Feelings are a good tool to explore our inner beings but dangerous when used to make decisions.

How is the mind different from feelings?

The mind was designed to lead while the feelings to follow. The mind can objectively examine things such as ones own life by accepting outside

data. Feelings can only express inward reflections.

How is the mind viewed today?

Many people think of the mind as a means to make money to serve ones own pleasures. Truth and logic have been stripped from reason so that we lose the mind's objectivity. Man at times live more like an animal than a man in God's image.

Trusting God's Plans (Psalm 131)

We are often overwhelmed with a certain situation because we have taken on a task that God has not called us to. Jesus could have done many other things, but He chose His Father's way.

"O LORD, my heart is not proud, nor my eyes haughty; Nor do I involve myself in great matters, Or in things too difficult for me. 2 Surely I have composed and quieted my soul; Like a weaned child rests against his mother, My soul is like a weaned child within me. 3 O Israel, hope in the LORD From this time forth and forever" (Psalms 131:1-3).

1) Declare the truth of God

God is Lord and to be obeyed (1). He is worthy to be trusted (2) and hoped in for help (3).

2) Admit the truth of our _____

Even in our best situation we are still vulnerable and need His care. When experiencing His peace, we are like a fed baby sleeping in his mother's arms (2).

3) Detect the truth of our situation

a) God initiated plan

- God has involved him. He did not involve himself in his own great plans (1). God will care for plans He has started so we can trust Him.

b) Self-initiated plan

- God has not been involved in forming your big plans. You are following your own ideas and must rely on your own resources! When things get tough, you begin to worry.

Big Plans!

David was both king and general and was certainly involved in big plans. The difference was that God asked him to join Him in His works. What are some of David's big projects?

Financial Burden

- Am I in this situation because I made a decision that counters God's principles?
- Am I in this situation so that God may be glorified through my trust in Him?

Personal bankruptcies have increased to their recent high levels. Average unpaid credit card amount is around \$3,400. Most people have 3-4 such cards. Not all the financial difficulties are like this but many are. Let's go through the principles above and apply them to our finances.

1) Declare the truth of God

God is Sovereign over his needs (11-12). God is totally reliable. God is His strength (13).

2) Admit the truth of our weaknesses

No matter what our circumstances, there are dangers. God's wisdom (secret) enabled him to live trusting God rather than his circumstances.

3) Detect the truth of our situation

a) God initiated plan

- Gain and spend money by biblical principles.

b) Self-initiated plan

- Gain and spend according to his own desires (against God's principles).

Paul's personal financial plan

"Not that I speak from want; for I have **learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am**. I know how to get along with humble means, and I also know how to live in prosperity; in any and every circumstance I have learned the **secret of being filled and going hungry**, both of having abundance and suffering need. **I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.**" (Philippians 4:11-13)



Touching Our Lives

- **Principles:** What principles were strongly impressed on me today?
- **Applications:** What clear decisions, plans, confessions, etc. do I need to make because of what God spoke to me during this session?
- **Testimony:** What one or two special lessons, stories, illustrations, warnings, etc. can I share with others that might encourage their faith?



OA Handout Answers #05

from Psalm 94:19 is multiply
 demand an immediate
 response

more we internalize the anxious
 seemed willing to stand up for
 him
 were seeking his death
 He had no control over

Renewing of mind >
 transformed lives
 reject any meditative therapy

trying to overwhelm
 system is his renewed mind

Outside our mind - irrelevant
 Inside our mind - relevant
 Ability to rightly handle life
 truth of our weaknesses