

Answering Anxiety

Introduction:

- My Story—February 5, 2017 I began a journey through a personal hell
- Some anxiety is normal: Fight/Flight response; test anxiety, etc.
- Continual Anxiety (Generalized Anxiety Disorder) is a serious problem.
 - Affects 6 million Americans each day
 - 90% of these have a paired disorder: Depression, Suspicious Mind (intuition, speculation), Intolerable Uncertainty

CAUSES:

- Stress
- Medications (Some sleep aids, for example)
- Cell Phone
- Poor Mental Processing—undisciplined thinking*

Answer: You must become the guardian of your mind (thoughts).

Basic Premise: Anxiety originates in your thoughts.

Biblical Principle: Prov. 23:7 "...as he THINKETH in his Heart, so IS HE"

Unpacking the principle:

EMOTIONS

Phil. 4:4 "REJOICE in the Lord"

Isa. 26:3 "Thou wilt keep him in perfect

PEACE

whose mind is stayed on thee"

THOUGHTS

II. Cor. 10:5

"Casting down
IMAGINATIONS, and
every high thing that
exalteth itself against
the knowledge of God"

BEHAVIOR

Heb. 11:7

"Noah...
moved with fear...
prepared an ark..."

Phil. 4:6, 7

“Be careful for nothing;
but in every thing by
PRAYER...And the peace
of God...shall keep your
hearts and minds

How do we eliminate anxiety by controlling our thoughts?

- I. Learn to CAPTURE your thoughts (II Cor. 10:5)
 - A. You must control your thoughts. Only you can do this. The Bible commands disciplined thinking! (Phil. 4:8 “whatsoever things...”)
 - B. You must confront your thinking, determining if it is legitimate and Biblical. Learn to recognize unhealthy, unbiblical thinking.
 - C. Requires discipline—you must learn to think about your thinking!

- II. Learn to REFUSE or REFRAKE unhealthy, unbiblical thinking.
 - A. REFUSE—you must stop your unbiblical thinking in its tracks. Even say to yourself, “No, I don’t think about that” and then DON’T THINK ABOUT IT.
 1. Requires practice and mental discipline.
 2. Not asking you to “forget,” but rather, refuse to ruminate.
 3. As you gain mental muscle, you will find it easier to dismiss (refuse) unbiblical thinking.
 4. Consider the source: (Refuse wrong-source thinking)
 - a. Me—most of my problem
 - b. Satan—Acts 5:3 “Ananias, why hath SATAN filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost...” (NOTE: Many second-person accusatory thoughts originate from Satan.)
 - B. Refuse all thoughts that “exalt against the knowledge of God”—thoughts that eliminate God from the equation.

 - C. REFRAKE—change your unhealthy/unbiblical thought to come in line with Scripture
 1. We can guard our emotions by changing unhealthy thinking to healthy, Biblical thinking. NOTE: this is not just putting a positive spin on things.
 2. Examples:

Unhealthy	Emotion	Reframed	Emotion
No one likes me	Loneliness, isolation	I should make new friends	hope
My husband works too much	Abandonment	My husband is a good provider	thankfulness
I am no good	Inferiority	I am God's child	courage
I can't do this any more	Resignation to failure	I can do all things through Christ	Empowerment
My church doesn't appreciate me	Depression	I need to teach my people to appreciate	Purpose, hope

Tips for Reframing Thoughts:

1. Find the bright side. Think the best of people.
2. Don't use mental absolutes: never, no one, always
3. Make sure GOD is central to your thought equation. Depressed and anxious people often take God out of the equation, even if they won't admit it.
4. Embrace disappointment and reframe it in a positive light. "It's going to be awesome to see how God works through this mess!"
5. Don't base decisions on feelings or "liver quivers." Feeling-based decisions lead to bad choices/behaviors. Bad behaviors foster wrong thinking, which leads to wrong emotions and more bad behaviors.