



# FIELD GUIDE



# CHILL

ADDRESSING ANXIETY



students







## INTRODUCTION

### *A Message From Your High School Ministry Team*

We are so glad that you decided to grab our field guide on navigating anxiety in our everyday life. We know that this can be a massive subject and there is no way we could offer a comprehensive guide to tackling such a big issue in these few short pages. However, we hope this will better equip you with practical steps and further resources to begin to find healing and deliverance from your anxiety through Jesus. Scripture affirms us that we are to cast all our burdens on the Lord with confidence that He will sustain us and never let us be shaken (Psalm 55:22). In this guide, we hope to walk you through the practical process of tackling anxiety with the bible focusing on:

- How to properly identify the root cause
- What it looks like to balance healing with medicine and healing with Jesus
- Steps that will help you better tackle anxiety whenever it arises in your life

As you take your time to read through this, we truly pray that the Lord will begin to move in miraculous ways in your life offering the peace that is promised that surpasses all understanding when we make our requests known to God (Philippians 4:6-7).



## IDENTIFICATION

### THE ROOT CAUSE

The first thing we must approach when addressing anxiety, is properly identifying the root cause of the stress. When dealing with such a broad term such as anxiety, we can often find ourselves misidentifying the root cause of the anxiety and rather just seeking to treat the surface level results (stresses) that we see. Just like with medicine, it's one thing to treat the symptoms, but to truly get healthy we must treat the disease itself. The best way to do this is with a proper diagnosis. The same is true with our anxiety. Without a proper diagnosis of where our anxiety is coming from, we cannot truly find peace, instead we will just end up suppressing the symptoms. In this identification process, we must be open and honest about where and when we feel anxious and ask ourselves questions that will help us identify the root cause of the anxiety.

### An Example

Let's say I get super stressed before every test. I take I am so stressed that my hands start shaking and I cannot sleep the night before. I could quickly assume that the test itself is the cause of my anxiety, however, that's not really the whole picture. If I ask myself, "why am I so worried about this test?", the answer is likely not to be focused on how scary the paper or pencil is, but rather something much deeper. The test is what is on the surface, but what makes me fear the test is not the paper and pencil, but rather it is my fear of failing the exam and potentially not doing well in the class. The anxiety I am experiencing is not rooted in the test itself, but rather it is rooted in my fear of failure. And unless I properly identify that root cause, I will find myself going week by week getting visibly anxious before every quiz and test I take assuming the only way I can find peace is getting through the test. However, that will only treat the symptom, and I will never truly find peace.

## **The Questions to Understand the Cause**

When walking through this identification process, there is no perfect way to approach it. The questions you ask yourself may vary depending on the situation, but with everything, the only way for it to be effective is to be honest in this process. Here are three questions that we have found to be effective for us when trying to identify the root cause of our anxiety. This is not an exhaustive list, but rather will be an effective resource/starting point for you to help better identify where your anxiety is rooted and how to find peace that treats the disease not just the symptom.

### ***1. Why am I anxious about this situation?***

When looking at our anxiety, I mentioned earlier that we need to ask ourselves what the root cause of our anxiety/stress in this situation is. We can't properly heal our anxiety unless we properly identify what exactly is making us anxious. The goal of this question is to help you pause and properly identify the root cause of your anxiety in that situation. There is likely a deeper fear that is driving these anxious thoughts that surface in different situations. Once we best identify that deeper fear, we can then begin to best address and tackle the anxiety we are experiencing.

### ***2. What does the Lord say about this?***

After we identify the root cause of our anxiety, we truly believe that there is peace that can only be found in the Lord. We have to remind ourselves that He is a God of peace and healing, and whenever we feel anxious, He calls us to turn to Him and believe He is in control. It helps to pause when experiencing an episode of anxiety, identify the root cause of the anxiety, then search scripture seeing what the Lord says about that issue. Peter tells us to “6 Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you, 7 casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you.” (1 Peter 5:6-7 ESV)

### ***3. Where do we go from here?***

As you and I both know, anxiety and anxiety-inducing situations can come and go with life. It is important to have a game plan for whenever we get anxious so that we can go on the offense and tackle it head on. This can include a list of scriptures to turn to when your anxious, or certain written out prayers to pray. We will go over some more practices later in this guide, but coming up with a plan is key to living a peaceful life in Christ rather than being a slave to our anxious thoughts.



## HEALING ANXIETY

### MEDICINE OR JESUS?

#### **Is anxiety healed by medicine or Jesus?**

When you are feeling anxious what is your first response? Is it to run to Jesus with arms outstretched in a deep desire for His peace and comfort? Or is it to run to your medicine cabinet with a driving hunger for a quick remedy? Really sit and think about what you would think to do first.

Before we get into dependence on medicine, let's get into dependence on Jesus. We don't want you to think that we are saying medicine is bad - it's not. Medicine is good, God created smart people to create helpful medications for all kinds of reasons. So, if you must take medicine for your anxiety that is OK - you are OK! However, the thing we need to keep in mind is the question of who provides true healing? Who provides the strength we need for the day? Who truly brings us to a place of peace? Notice the question isn't "what" but it's "who."

Jesus is the only one who can ever bring true healing, true peace, and true strength. Not medication. Not doctors. Not even therapists. All of these are great tools and resources we have been provided, but they are not the true and everlasting source. So, when you feel anxious and are spiraling, try your best to call on the name of Jesus! Through the tears, heavy breathing and pounding mind call on the name of Jesus. Lift your spirit to heaven. Let the God of all peace and strength show you just how deeply He cares for you.

So, is anxiety healed by medicine or Jesus? Medication can be helpful to manage and contain anxiety. Anxiety is healed by Jesus.

Medicine is not bad, and in some cases, you may truly need it to help contain and manage your anxiety. But medicine will not heal your anxiety. Medicine will not fight against the ruthless spirits of darkness that plague your mind. Medicine will not put a shield around you and comfort you and uphold you with its righteous right hand. Only Jesus can do that. Only Jesus can truly rid you of anxiety, no matter how deep it runs.

Run to Jesus, run to His open arms, rest in His all-consuming love and strength. Know that Jesus is fighting for you and don't give up on Him.



## HELPFUL PRACTICES

How can you practice having a non-anxious spirit? Is that even possible when anxiety seems to be the only thing driving this society? After the “self-help” culture came and went, we were still left with anxiety. Even after all the face masks, runs, healthy eating, and quiet nights in, nothing seems to truly unshackle the bonds of desperation. Yet, we never stop to breathe. Not only that, but we also forget to remind ourselves who gives us the ability to breathe. We never stop to look up or to wonder in amazement at how the God who created the perfect shade of blue also created you!

So, once again we are faced with the question, “how can I practice having a non-anxious spirit?” What if we told you that the answer wasn’t in a social media influencer’s daily routine, or a 5-mile run first thing in the morning. What if we told you that you can practice having a non-anxious spirit by simply practicing the ways of the Holy Spirit...

### *Prayer*

Prayer is the most powerful weapon we have. There is something so groundbreaking and holy that happens when we fall to our knees in utter dependence on God. Anxiety has no power when it is face to face with God. In 1 Peter 5:7, Peter writes that we are to humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God and cast our anxieties on Him because He cares for us. God cares for you and wants you to throw your worries in His direction. He can take it, and He wants to take it. So, pray, my friend. Pray for the peace that surpasses all understanding to wash over you like a gentle and calming wave. Pray for strength to fight anxious thoughts. Pray for comfort to know you are seen and held in the arms of Jesus.



## *Scripture*

It is so important to speak truth over yourself and your situation. Read a Psalm that expresses deep trust in God and remind your soul to have that same trust. Read Ephesians 6:10-18 and put on the armor of God - literally. Read Philippians 4:8-9 and let your mind wander to think of good and pure thoughts. Scripture is alive, just as our savior is. It is a fierce weapon to hold against the attacks of Satan. Write verses all over your room, your car, your bathroom, your lock screen... let the truth of God saturate everywhere you look. Here are a few more great places in scripture to start:

“Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him. By this is love perfected with us, so that we may have confidence for the day of judgment, because as he is so also are we in this world. There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear. For fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not been perfected in love. We love because he first loved us.” (1 John 4: 15-19)

“All things have been handed over to me by my Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him. Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.” (Matthew 11:27-30)

“Open the gates,  
that the righteous nation that keeps faith may enter in.  
You keep him in perfect peace  
whose mind is stayed on you,  
because he trusts in you.  
Trust in the Lord forever,  
for the Lord God is an everlasting rock.” (Isaiah 26:2-4)

## *Journaling*

Writing is a great way to express yourself without using verbal words. One of our favorite things to do is to journal our prayers. Journaling can also be a way to talk to Jesus. To give your anxious thoughts to the one who cares for you. To relinquish the lies of Satan and instead think of the truth of God. We have found that when we write down a lie we have been living, it looks so much less intense and loses the power it once had. It allows us to see what Satan has been trying to make us believe, and then we go to God's word and prove him wrong. This is also a great way to keep track of God's faithfulness. When we write our prayers down, we can see a record of how he has moved and answered through each one.

## *Worship*

Can you imagine the power that worship could have on your anxiety? Just for a moment, imagine how much of a face punch would enter the gates of hell with your worship! In the middle of Satan plotting your downward spiral, and in the middle of your almost freak-out and panic, you get down on your knees and worship. You look Satan in the eye and sing praises to the God who has defeated him. You look at fear, and you laugh. Worship is freeing, uplifting, and gratifying. When we worship, we are in a state of gratitude towards the Lord. Dr. Dan Baker wrote a book *What Happy People Know* focusing on different practices and methods that help drive happiness in the brain. In this book he states, "During active appreciation, the threatening messages from your amygdala [fear center of the brain] and the anxious instincts of your brainstem are cut off, suddenly and surely, from access to your brain's neocortex, where they can fester, replicate themselves, and turn your stream of thoughts into a cold river of dread. It is a fact of neurology that the brain cannot be in a state of appreciation and a state of fear at the same time. The two states may alternate but are mutually exclusive." Worship is so powerful that it can literally block out anxiety in the brain when we are in a mindset of active appreciation. So, let your soul lose the chains that once held it back - sing hallelujah even when you don't feel like you have one to give!

### *Talking it Out*

Talking about anxiety is hard! You may be thinking that no one will understand, or they'll think you're crazy, or you won't hear what you want to. But what are those statements other than lies or other than anxious thoughts? God is a relational and just as He loves us being in fellowship with Him, He loves us being in fellowship with other believers. There's a reason He created people to become counselors & therapists. You are not weak if you need someone to talk to nor are you any less of a Christ follower. Seeking the counsel of others does not make us distant from God. Surround yourself with those who will give you Godly wisdom and don't be scared to share your heart with another person.





## Appendix

We know this subject can be intimidating to evaluate and we hope this has helped start the conversation surrounding anxiety. For such a massive topic, we encourage you to seek out more resources that may help! Scan this code to find some that our team has put together:





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