

Lesson One: Dealing with Anxiety

Introduction

- Our internal voice can be noisy.
- Learning to recognize your internal voice and take dominion over what it is allowed to say is a place of safety.
- Our world isn't always safe or is it kind. However, we can always be kind to ourselves and to others.
- This does not mean we are lazy, passive, or an excuse maker.
- It is quite the opposite; we will develop intentional awareness of our thinking patterns that drive our anxiety.
- If you have anxiety and no internal voice, you probably have stomach issues and other chronic aches and pains. Non-thinkers will need a safe place and safe people to help trace the breadcrumbs back to the lies you believe that cause the intense feelings of anxiety.

Lesson: identify our unsafe behaviors and intentionally developing safe behaviors.

Unsafe Inner Self

An unsafe inner self: Choose 2-3 to discuss.

- 1) Starving for approval and acceptance from others to validate yourself.
 - 2) Gives in to peer pressure or conforms to expectations of others.
 - 3) Self-abuse: alcohol, drugs, cutting, negative self-talk, suicide thinking, etc.
 - 4) Self-destructive (I don't care attitude.)
 - 5) Abused or abusive in relationships.
 - 6) Sulky, broody, pouty, self-pity, whining.
 - 7) Gives in to feelings of hopelessness and helplessness.
 - 8) Feels worthless.
 - 9) Attracts negative energy.
 - 10) Stuck in a trauma cycle. Subconscious patterns of dysfunction.
 - 11) Lives with unresolved grief.
 - 12). Exaggerated emotions: fearful, fretful, angry...
- Result is an unsafe self is isolation, rejection, neglect of self, abandonment of duty, or loneliness. These feelings are caused by cutting your heart off from others. Instead, you must differentiate who is safe or unsafe.

Safe Inner Self

A safe inner self: Choose 2-3 to discuss.

- 1) Let your feelings teach you but do not be ruled by them.
 - 2) Do not speak negatively about yourself or put yourself or others down.
 - 3) Coach yourself and others with positive affirmation.
 - 4) Is gracious and kind to yourself.
 - 5) Give grace and tender loving-kindness to injuries and weakened parts of the body.
 - 6) Strive to find a place of inner peace.
 - 7) Isn't easily provoked or out of balance.
 - 8) Secure in who you are along your journey.
 - 9) Can regulate emotional pain and rebalance quickly.
 - 10) Follow a trusted path.
 - 11) Develop good coping skills.
 - 12) Develop community of trusted friends and acquaintances.
 - 13) Practice humor.
 - 14) Enjoy life.
- Result is a safe inner self is peace and contentment.

Exercise: Choose one thing that is unsafe that burdens you that you want to stop doing and one thing that is safe that you want to work on today.

Application: Today, we will practice being safe for ourselves. This means you need to find things in the present to enjoy: a flower, a kitten, a child, a warm cup of tea, a soft pillow, a nice breeze, a sunny sky, etc.

Principle: You must be humble and lay down your burdens to find rest for your soul (emotions).

Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light. Matthew 11:28-30

Conclusion: As I separate my identity from my unsafe self and loved ones with dysfunctional behaviors, I can develop a new identity of a safe self. I can know who I am and determine how much I will and will not tolerate from myself or others. Sometimes, I take myself by the scruff of the neck and shake myself and say, "you will stop that!". If I am stuck in a toxic environment, I can empower myself by developing a future plan of escape. I always have choices. I may not like them, but I have choices.

**The Lord is my Rock, and my fortress and my deliverer; my God,
my strength, in whom I trust... Psalm18:2**