

# LESSON 11

## ANXIETY HIDES SOMETHING

### *Introduction*

Learn that anxiety is only a curtain to hide another emotion that is overwhelming. I woke up this morning brewing with anxiety. So, I sat with the Lord and asked Him why I was so anxious. Then I went through my feelings word list and when I landed on sadness the tears flowed.

Sadness and grieving were uncovered; now, I can be **aware** of the sadness, **acknowledge** it and choose to **act** on processing sadness and start working through it. This immediately resolved my anxiety.

My dear friend died a few days ago and I miss him terribly and have not processed the loss. This emotion of sadness for him could be overwhelming, but instead, I will sit with it and allow myself to feel it a little every morning, until peace replaces the sadness.

Learn to recognize the feeling of anxiety. Whenever I am stuck in anxiety or any other strong emotion for more than two weeks, it is time to admit it and reach out for help. Obviously, I am not going to figure this out on my own and it will soon become toxic and drive me to dysfunction if not resolved.

### *Lesson*

1) Unresolved anxiety drives us to substance use or some other dysfunctional behavior to try to rebalance ourselves.

2) Resolving anxiety with substance use is only a temporary fix and results in compounded problems.

3) Avoiding responsibilities is not a way to avoid anxiety.

4) Underlying chronic anxiety makes us prone to overreact in defensiveness or panic and flee during any minor confrontation which causes us to lose our employment, recovery progress, and other structures of stability (roof over your head, bed, consistent meals, warmth, loving relationships).

5) Substance Use Disorder or even suicidal thinking is just an attempt to rebalance the inner soul from dysregulated emotions.

**Feelings Word Lists:** *nervous, fearful, worried, fretful, hopeless, helpless, bullied, irritated, frustrated, confused, angry, stubbornness, bitterness, hatred, abandoned, betrayed, neglected, misunderstood, rejected, insecure, unloved, unwanted, judged, condemned, embarrassed, trapped, lonely, self-pity,*

*hurt, sad, grieving, overwhelmed, depressed or suicidal.*

## *Exercise*

When you feel anxious, sit with it quietly for a moment and go through this feeling word list and uncover the emotion that has not been processed and resolved.

## *Application*

Some emotions are so strong when you allow yourself to feel them that they cause intense suffering. I want you to feel these emotions a little at a time and process them with a trusted friend or sponsor. Journaling can help move emotions from inside of you to outside where they won't be so intense. If you are numb and can't feel anything, you have learned to stop all emotions to function in daily life. When these emotions get turned back on, they may be very scary. Be in charge and set a timer and feel the intense emotions for 5-10 minutes and then get up and enjoy your day. If they overwhelm you again, do this:

- 1) Get alone.
- 2) Set the timer 5-10 minutes.
- 3) Feel the emotion intensely.
- 4) Push it outside of you and do not identify with it.
- 5) Get up and enjoy your day.

Emotions are just emotions; they are not YOU! DO NOT IDENTIFY WITH YOUR EMOTIONS OR THEY WILL RULE YOU! Be aware of emotions. Then acknowledge emotions and take action by feeling them and processing them a little at a time.

## *Principle*

**Anxiety is a cover-up and hides root emotions.**

## *Conclusion*

Unprocessed emotions come out some other way. Some of this work only you can do. No one can handle all your unresolved accumulated pain. Choose 3-4 dependable people and build strong relationships with them so you feel like you have many people to share your burdens. Understand some emotions are built into problems. The problem doesn't need to be solved for the emotion to be resolved.

So, you say, "If I start feeling this emotion, my suffering will never stop." I am here to tell you that it

will. You can be in charge of your emotions by finding a quiet place every day and processing them a few minutes at a time. One day you will wake up and find the emotion of peace.

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

**Psalm 18:2**