

Your Prescription for

O V E R C O M I N G

FEAR &
ANXIETY

Resource Guide

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Your prescription for Fear and Anxiety

5 Do's and Don'ts that will Change Your Mental/Emotional Future

What are you so worried about? What are you afraid of?

Anxiety is the [number one mental health issue](#) among adults. It can be expensive, debilitating, and keep you from the Fully Alive life that Jesus came to give each one of us.

If fear and anxiety has been your way of life, you know how hard it can be to break free. It feels as though your thoughts and emotions are controlling you instead of you controlling your thoughts and emotions.

Thank God there is a way out! "For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind." (1 Timothy 1:7)

But how do you get there?

I've walked the journey out of fear and anxiety to a life of true joy and fulfillment. And I want to share with you a prescription that I know will work for you too, a prescription that's backed up by both medical science and God's Word.

In this five-part prescription, you'll discover the relatively simple steps you can take to dramatically improve your mental/emotional wellbeing and find lasting freedom. These steps are not complicated, but they do demand your intentional effort. They may not always be easy. This is not a one-time fix. Like most prescriptions from your doctor, this one reads "Take One Daily."

The doctor is in. So let's get started.

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1 - Don't Neglect Your Physical Health

It's not hard to notice the many ways in which your mind and your body affect each other. Significant anxiety usually comes with a host of physical symptoms, while many medical illnesses may themselves cause anxiety and related psychological distress. It may seem hard to know which came first, or where one ends and the other begins.

[In one study](#), 19 percent of patients seeing a primary care physician for general medical concerns had symptoms enough to be diagnosed with an anxiety disorder as the underlying problem. That's about one in five! And these are very real symptoms; you're not making them up.

Think about your own lifestyle for a moment. Don't you see the world differently after a good night's sleep or an hour of exercise? Have you noticed how the things you eat or drink make a difference in your mood and anxiety level? And are you taking any medications, supplements, or other substances? Those things make a difference!

How you care for your physical body significantly affects your psychological wellbeing.

Instead, Make Your Lifestyle Work FOR You

Make sure you're supplying your brain with the raw materials it needs to function at its best. Your mind and your body [do best with a diet](#) of primarily unprocessed food built largely around lean protein, fruits and vegetables, with some healthy fats and whole grains on the side. And your brain needs water – lots of it.

You know what a good run or adequate sleep can do for your anxiety level. Think you don't have time to get enough rest or physical exercise? You don't have time not to! Your body and your brain need both periods of rest and periods of exercise. Make your goal 30 minutes of aerobic exercise most days and 7-8 hours of sleep most nights.

And if you haven't had a medical evaluation recently, get one. If you're taking any medications, drugs, or supplements, review the ENTIRE list with your doctor or pharmacist for any that might be making your anxiety worse, and any that you might be able to decrease or eliminate.

Optimizing your physical health will help optimize your emotional health.

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2 - Don't Let Your Mind Happen to You

Thoughts and feelings seem so subjective. You feel what you feel. Life is difficult.

Perhaps you grew up in a seriously dysfunctional family. Perhaps you have physical health problems, your finances are a mess, or your marriage is in shambles. You're lonely, overwhelmed, and don't know what to do. Besides all that, there are very dangerous things going on in our nation, our culture, and our world. Who wouldn't feel anxious and afraid as a result?

But regardless of your circumstances, you have much more ability to choose your thoughts and feelings than you realize. You can choose thoughts full of bitterness, negativity, entitlement, powerlessness, and the past. Or you can focus your thoughts on what is true, on gratitude, on what you can do, on helping others, and on God.

This is not "mind over matter." But most of us attribute too little power to our thoughts rather than too much.

Instead, Take your Thoughts Captive

Paul gave us the clearest Biblical prescription for our thinking. We are to focus our thoughts on what is true, honest, just, pure, lovely, and of a good report. (Philippians 4:8) We are to bring "every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ." (2 Corinthians 10:5)

This doesn't mean ignoring real problems. Perhaps the [Stockdale Paradox](#) will help to make this clearer. You must "retain faith that you will prevail in the end regardless of the difficulties, and at the same time confront the most brutal facts of your current reality, whatever they may be."

The way in which you think about your very real problems is what makes the difference.

- If you've lost your job, be grateful you still have your health so you can look for another, nurture your connection with family and friends, and focus on [finding or creating work you love](#).
- If your lifestyle has contributed to your poor health, [focus on some new habits](#) that will improve your health, and cooperate with your doctors while you continue to pray for healing.
- If your marriage is in trouble, find out how to [forgive in a healthy way](#), become [a safe and inviting person](#) for your spouse to be close to, and [fight FOR your marriage](#) in every way you can.

[Choosing your thoughts](#) will help you change your actions, and that – over time – will change your feelings.

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3 - Don't Worry About the Enemy

Can you imagine Peter, John, or Paul wringing their hands or losing one minute of sleep worrying about what the devil might be doing?

Yes, we have an enemy that is more violent, more determined, and smarter than any ISIS terrorist or multi-drug-resistant superbug bacteria. But he is a defeated foe. You and I don't have to go out and fight to defeat the devil; Jesus already did that – and won!

[In my own research](#) I discovered that people who worry most about the enemy's activities have significantly more psychological distress than others. That's actually no surprise at all.

As C.S. Lewis wisely opined, "There are two equal and opposite errors into which our race can fall about the devils. One is to disbelieve in their existence. The other is to believe, and to feel an excessive and unhealthy interest in them. They themselves are equally pleased by both errors." ([The Screwtape Letters](#))

You will never live in victory if you come against Satan from a position of fear and anxiety.

Instead, Resist the Enemy

There's a huge difference between awareness and worry, between resistance and fear.

When Jesus was here on Earth, He faced evil more directly and overwhelmingly than any of us ever will. And yet He never displayed a moment of fear or anxiety. He did not go around looking for "a devil behind every bush," but when evil did show up He faced it with calmness and complete authority.

That's how you and I are to relate to evil as well.

Peter didn't start out unafraid. Imagine how controlled by fear Peter was on the night he denied Jesus. And yet only a few weeks later he was standing before the Sanhedrin completely unfazed by their threats and punishments. (Acts 4:13)

This is the same Peter who later wrote, "Resist him (the devil) firmly in the faith." (1 Peter 5:9)

Peter got to that place of fearlessness by spending time with Jesus, seeing Him alive, and being filled with the Holy Spirit. And that's how you will get there too.

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4 - Don't Fling Around Spiritual Weapons

Some people see spiritual warfare as going out swashbuckling against the devil, whirling around spiritual weapons against anyone and anything that gets in their way.

Please don't do that. It will only wear you out and get you wounded.

Spiritual warfare has very little if anything to do with your success or comfort, or getting rid of problems that show up in your life. Detailed studies of demonology, binding and loosing, and frantic desperate prayers are relatively peripheral.

In the cosmic battle of the universe, spiritual warfare is not about who is stronger – God or Satan. If it were, this war would have been over a long time ago!

The [real issue is this war is your heart](#). In the end, who you will believe? Who will you obey? Who will you respect, listen to, honor, worship, and love? It's your heart both the enemy and God are after.

Instead, Focus On Your Mission

Jesus came to Earth "to seek and to save that which was lost." (Luke 19:10) Nothing – not even Satan himself – could move Jesus from following His mission. In doing so Jesus defeated the devil, but He always remained focused on His purpose of seeking and saving the lost.

You have a mission also. There's something God has been developing in your heart that the world needs. However small you feel, however messed up you may have been, your very brokenness is what God will turn into food by which others are fed.

Remember, it's not your job to defeat the enemy. Jesus already did that.

Your job is to allow God to transform you to become increasingly like His Son Jesus, and along the way to make a difference for others of His children who are still in this world. As long as you're alive, there's something God has for you to do.

Don't make the mistake of thinking your mission is necessarily church work. It may or may not be. But your mission always has something to do with extending the transforming power of God's love to someone – or many someones – in need. Who is God placing in your path for you to be a blessing to?

Focus on your mission, and you'll have much less energy left over for fear and worry.

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5 - Don't Give Up

You might wish that one battle against fear and anxiety would lead to freedom forever. And if it doesn't, you will be tempted to give up.

But like most prescriptions you get from your doctor, remember that this prescription reads "Take One Daily." You can experience lasting joy and freedom, but that will require continuing action on your part.

Our spiritual lives will go through seasons of lesser or greater intensity in warfare, but it's the little things you and I do every day that truly make a lasting difference.

Caring for your physical body and lifestyle, keeping control of your thoughts, [spending time with Jesus](#), and remaining focused on your mission are practices to be continued daily.

Opposition from the enemy and the "stuff" of living in our still-sinful world will always provide plenty of reason to get upset. But your daily prescription will keep you on track – just like Peter, Paul, and the others who learned from Jesus when he was here on Earth.

Instead, Stand Firm

The best picture of spiritual warfare is standing:

"Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. Stand firm then..."
(Ephesians 6:13–14, NIV)

There will be certain things you do along the way, such as guarding your heart and mind, sticking close to other believers, and speaking words of truth out loud. But most important and underlying all your activity is your position of standing firm.

Your very existence as an overcoming believer is proof that the enemy has been defeated. There's no white-knuckling good behavior or flurry of religious activity. You simply take your stand on God's side and refuse to let anything else move you. (Acts 20:24)

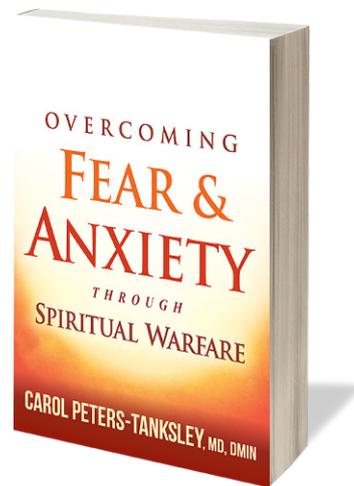
May you take your daily prescription, and stand firm in the sound mind God has made available for you.

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Are you taking your Daily Prescription for a sound mind?

Find out more about Overcoming Fear and Anxiety through Spiritual Warfare, and see how you can dive deeper into this topic.

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Dr Carol's new book ***Overcoming Fear and Anxiety through Spiritual Warfare*** will help you:

More fully understand the roots of your fear and anxiety

Learn how to daily take control of your thoughts

Know what the Bible has to say about fear and anxiety

Discover ***six specific strategies of spiritual warfare*** that will allow you to walk daily in victory over fear and anxiety.

www.defeatyourfear.com

If this has been meaningful to you in any way, or if it has stirred up questions, I'd love to hear from you!

Feel free to send me a [confidential message](#). I read each one personally, and I respond to as many as I can. Let me know how you are doing as you move toward a life free from fear and anxiety.

You can also connect with me on social media:

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