



Thursday Thought

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“Anxiety, String, & Dreams”

Thursday February 1, 2018

Verse for the week: Psalm 94:19 (NCV) “I was very worried, but you comforted me and made me happy.”

As a young child I had this recurring bad dream that I still vividly remember. I was being chased through our home which was filled with string from floor to ceiling. I was heading for the back door to escape, and as I ran through the door, exiting the entangling string, I ended up tumbling down the steps and was caught. That’s when I woke up. I had this bad dream over and over again and the outcome never changed. I don’t remember when but eventually I stopped having that dream. It wasn’t until years later that I learned it was most likely a byproduct of anxiety.

Many people don’t like to talk about their own issues of depression and/or anxiety because of the stigma that sometimes is associated with them. Instead we try to handle it ourselves, often withdrawing from others, and not seeking the help that we need. Did you know that 40 million Americans deal with some form of anxiety, according to Anxiety and Depression Association of America (ADAA)? That’s 18% of the population, and according to news sources that number is increasing, and probably low from under reporting. It’s nothing new. The Bible talks about people with anxiety and I’ve heard of great evangelists who suffered from depression. So what are some things we can do if we are experiencing anxiety?

1. **Seek professional help** – Social media is NOT professional help, nor a good way to derive a sense of self-worth. Professional counselors are trained to help.
2. **Exercise** – This can be effective at reducing the symptoms of anxiety and depression.
3. **Pray and spend time reading the Bible** – Over and over again the Bible encourages us to turn our concerns over to God. **Psalm 55:22 (NCV) Give your worries to the Lord, and he will take care of you.**
4. **Medicine** – For some situational anxiety and long term anxiety, medicine can be a big help. I remember going through a time filled with anxiety and my brain was going crazy. I went to a counselor and they suggested I get on some medicine. I resisted until they explained that the medicine was just helping fight all of the extra chemicals that are produced in our brains as a result of depression and anxiety, much like an antibiotic fighting infection. I’m thankful I listened.
5. **Force yourself to get moving** – The worst thing to do when you are dealing with anxiety is to get the ice cream and sit on the couch. I’ve tried it and all it did was cause me to gain weight and feel worse. There is truth to the statement that you have to pull yourself up by your own boot straps.

The above list is not in any particular order. For some individuals, you may have to pursue all of them at the same time to start feeling better. Whatever you may be feeling, you are not alone and God cares immensely about you.

Question to ponder: Is it time to get help?