

DISCUSSION GUIDE

Foreword by Craig Groeschel, founder and lead pastor of Life.Church

ATTACKING *ANXIETY*

From Panicked and Depressed
to **ALIVE** and **FREE**

SHAWN JOHNSON

LEAD PASTOR OF RED ROCKS CHURCH

INTRODUCTION

I NEED A MIRACLE

1. How would you describe anxiety and depression?

2. What is your experience with anxiety or depression?

- 3.** What are some of the lies that go through your head? How do you feel when you hear those lies?

- 4.** Have you ever experienced a panic attack? If so, please describe it.

- 5.** What do you think it means that God's power is at work in us?

CHAPTER 1

LIVE FREE

- 1.** What are some things that might make us feel like a prisoner despite our freedom?

- 2.** When have you felt like a prisoner while wanting to live free?

3. What does it mean to find freedom in Christ?

4. Look at the list of things God wants you to experience on pages 14 and 15. Which of those is easy for you to grasp? Which is the most difficult?

5. What do you think it means to “stand firm”?

CHAPTER 2

YOU ARE NOT CRAZY

1. Who in your life helps you during your most difficult times?

What do they do that is helpful?

2. What emotions and thoughts do you experience when you think of counseling?

Why do you think you have those emotions and thoughts?

3. What do you think it means that we are "imperfect people pursuing a perfect God"?

4. Why do you think people might be afraid to ask for help for their anxiety?

5. If you experience anxiety, which area in this chapter do you think describes the root of your anxiety?

6. What helps you to feel calm or centered?

7. Why is it important to understand that we are all a work in progress?

8. What does it mean to be a child of God?

CHAPTER 3

YOU ARE NOT ALONE

- 1.** What do you think it means that we were created for community?

- 2.** In what ways can a community be beneficial?

3. What are some of the risks of isolating ourselves from others?

4. Why is it important to know that some of the heroes of the faith wrestled with anxiety or depression?

5. Why do you think Satan wants us to be isolated?

6. Who in your life needs to know what you've been experiencing?

7. In what ways do you find hope in God?

CHAPTER 4

THIS WILL END

1. What is your favorite comeback story?

2. What do you think is so compelling about comeback stories?

- 3.** How does it make you feel to know that God can turn your difficult situation into your testimony? If you have an example of this from your own life, please share it.

- 4.** Which biblical example in this chapter resonates most with you, and why?

- 5.** What helps you stay strong when you want to give up?

CHAPTER 5

FIGHTING

- 1.** Why is it important to have people who will fight with you when you are struggling with anxiety and depression?

- 2.** Is it important to be cautious about with whom we share our struggles? Why or why not?

- 3.** What is the difference between having time for someone and making time for that person?

- 4.** Have you considered that the Enemy is behind anxiety and depression? If so, when did you have that realization? If not, how does it make you feel to know that?

- 5.** What are some things that God created that Satan has twisted into something negative?

CHAPTER 6

USING WORSHIP AS A WEAPON

- 1.** Why are prayer and worship necessary for fighting the Enemy?

- 2.** Why does Satan hate it when we pray boldly?

3. What can we learn about worship from the story of Joshua and Jericho?

4. In what ways does it take courage to pray before you've achieved a victory?

5. Which of God's promises can you stand on the next time you feel afraid?

- 6.** What are some worship songs that might be helpful to listen to when battling anxiety and depression?

- 7.** What are some of the “byproducts” of worship? Which have you felt personally?

CHAPTER 7

PRAYING LIKE A WARRIOR

- 1.** What does it look like to talk to God with rawness and honesty?

- 2.** Why is it important to be raw and honest with God?

3. Why do you think prayer can sometimes cause feelings of insecurity?

4. Do you believe you are a prayer warrior? Why or why not?

5. What can we learn about prayer from Paul?

6. What does it mean to petition God?

7. Why is it important to give thanks?

CHAPTER 8

REMEMBERING TO ATTACK BACK

- 1.** Why do you think we sometimes have to reach the point of desperation before we're ready to make a change? When have you felt that way?

- 2.** What do you think it means to "take every thought captive"? Why is it important?

- 3.** What are some of the struggles we face when we try to take every thought captive?

- 4.** In what ways can remembering what God has done for us help us battle anxiety and depression?

- 5.** If you feel comfortable sharing, what are some of the events that are on your list of what God has brought you through? How do you feel when you review that list?

6. What verses about God's promises are on your list?

7. What items are on your list of things weighing you down?

If you feel comfortable sharing, please do so.

CHAPTER 9

ASSEMBLING AN ARMY

- 1.** Why is it important to be honest with the people who will be fighting with you?

- 2.** Why do you think we often withhold some of our biggest struggles from our loved ones?

3. Have you or a loved one suffered silently in the past?

What were some outward signs of that suffering?

4. In what ways does silent suffering build walls between the one suffering and his or her loved ones?

5. Which people in your circle can you share your full struggles with?

6. What are some ways we can help others who are struggling with anxiety?

CHAPTER 10

PRETENDING YOU'RE OKAY

1. In what ways can “rock bottom” be helpful?

2. Why do you think God allows us to hit rock bottom?

3. Why does hitting rock bottom force us to rely on God?

4. What is a "necessary ending"?

5. Why do you think we often pretend that issues don't exist?

Why is this harmful rather than beneficial?

6. Why must we trust God in order to stop pretending?

CHAPTER 11

HOLDING ON TO UNFORGIVENESS

1. Why do you think we need to look at our past when addressing anxiety?

2. In what ways is unforgiveness harmful?

3. In what ways are pride and unforgiveness related?

4. Why do you think it can be difficult to forgive?

5. What are the differences between forgiveness and fellowship?

CHAPTER 12

PERFORMING FOR THE CRITICS

1. How do you respond to negative opinions or criticisms?

2. What can we learn from Paul about dealing with critics?

3. What does it look like to listen to the Creator instead of critics?

4. Please share some verses that help you focus on God rather than critics.

5. In what ways can listening to critics distract us from God's calling and purpose for us?

CHAPTER 13

COMPARING YOUR CALLING

- 1.** What is “comparison,” and why is it harmful?

- 2.** What are some common areas of insecurities that are the result of comparison?

3. In what ways does social media encourage comparison?

4. How can remembering our calling help us battle anxiety and depression?

5. What does it look like in practice to guard your heart? Why is it important?

6. What are some things that might affect our view of God's purpose for us?

CHAPTER 14

GOD IS WITH YOU

- 1.** What does it mean that God has “already won the war”?

- 2.** How can knowing that God is with us change how we approach life?

3. What can we learn about God's presence in our lives through the story of Joshua?

4. Why is it important to understand that God knows how overwhelmed and afraid we can feel?

5. Why do you think support from other people helps us feel stronger and more confident?

CHAPTER 15

GOD IS WORKING

- 1.** What are some circumstances in which we might feel that God has stopped working in our lives?

- 2.** In what ways is it encouraging to know that God continues to work during our darkest moments?

3. Why does it require faith in order to believe that God is working for us?

4. What can we learn about God through the story of Joshua and the Israelites at the Jordan?

5. Have you ever seen God work in your life during a difficult time?

CHAPTER 16

GOD HAS A PLAN

1. What is perseverance? Why is it important?

2. What does it mean that God has a plan for each of us?
How should that knowledge affect how we view our struggles?

3. Why is it important to know that we won't always understand God's plan?

4. Who in your life has been an example of how to stand firm on God's truths?
Please share how you were inspired by them.

5. How do you feel when you think back to the darkest times of your life?
How do those feelings change when you see how God has brought you
through those times? How might your story be helpful for others to hear?

CONCLUSION
***YOUR TIME
TO LIVE IS NOW!***

1. Why do you think we all have weaknesses?

2. How can our weaknesses glorify God?

3. What do you think it means that “brokenness is the place where God meets us”?

4. What is the difference between getting “healthy” and “healthier”? Why is it important to say that someone who is getting help for anxiety is getting “healthier”?

5. Why is it important to be willing to share our testimonies with others?
