

Out with the Old; In with the New

ACTIVITY SHEET



Your thoughts either empower or disempower you. If you want to change what you do, you have to start by changing how you think. Because thoughts play a large role in shaping decisions (as to whether you give in, give up or give it another go), to sustain a healthy new way of living you have to learn to master your mind. In other words, a shift in perspective is required. The mind-bending realisation each of us needs to have is that unwanted and unhealthy habits are not overcome, and new habits are not won, by using our own strength. Rather, the closer we draw to God in relationship, the less compelling temptations, cravings and carnal desires become.



PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

This session is designed to help you:

- (a)** understand the role God's Holy spirit plays in influencing choices and shaping behaviours
- (b)** develop a new perspective on overcoming temptation
- (c)** renew your mind so as to bring about transformation in your life

Check-up from the Neck Up

It's often said, "if you think you can, you're right. And if you think you can't, your right". The determining factor between success and failure, is largely based on what you think. It's your mind that makes the difference. Because your brain is like a muscle, to both develop and maintain new healthy habits, you need to take it to the mind gym and give it work out.



When it comes to achieving your goals, what do you believe? ✓



"IF YOU CAN?" SAID JESUS. "EVERYTHING IS POSSIBLE FOR ONE WHO BELIEVES."
(Mark 9:23 NIV)



New Playing Field of Freedom

If true authentic transformation is what you seek, then don't settle for just kicking old habits or building new healthy ones. Rather, learn to operate on a whole new playing field of freedom. You do this by drawing near to God and watching how His Spirit makes all things new. In other words, whatever you do, don't pursue change by using your own strength. Rather, recognise that it's by God's strength that you can endure, overcome and achieve all things.

THE MORE YOU PURSUE THINGS OF GOD, THE LESS APPETITE YOU HAVE FOR THINGS THAT ARE UNGODLY. SIMPLY PUT, THE CLOSER YOU DRAW IN RELATIONSHIP TO HIM, THE LESS COMPELLING TEMPTATIONS, CRAVINGS AND CARNAL DESIRES BECOME.

“So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh”.

(Galatians 5:16, NIV)



Do your thoughts line up with the mind of Christ?
In what areas might you need to renew your mind?

OLD WAY —————→ **NEW WAY**

MORTAL MINDSET		MIND OF CHRIST
"I hate facing trials... one after the other, seems like it's never ending!"		"I consider it a joy to face trials because I know it produces perseverance in me." <i>(James 1:2-3)</i>
"Just my luck... God's walked off and left me - abandoned me to my own devises."		"God's got a firm grip on me, holding me steady. He won't leave or forsake me." <i>(Deuteronomy 31:6; Isaiah 41:1)</i>
It's so unfair. God's always tempting me to see if I give in. It's like He wants me to fail."		"My own immoral desires often tempt me. I'm going to take responsibility." <i>(James 1:13)</i>
"If God really wanted me to change, surely He would have made it easier."		"No temptation is too much for me to bare. God always provides a way out." <i>(1 Corinthians 10:13)</i>
"I'm cursed. I've slipped up, tripped up and messed up so many times, it's hopeless."		"I'm blessed. The crown of life is promised to those who persevere." <i>(James 1:12)</i>
"If God wanted me to be different, why did he make me like this? I'm set up to fail."		"Nothing is impossible. If God is for me, who or what can be against me?" <i>(Romans 8:31)</i>
"If only I had someone I could turn to. No one supports me when I'm in trouble."		"God's my refuge and strength. He gets me out of the worst kinds of trouble" <i>(Psalm 46:1)</i>
"I failed again. If not angry, God must be so upset or disappointed with me."		"God's mercy and grace is freshly renewed for me every morning." <i>(Lamentations 3:22-23)</i>
"God started this 'renewal' project in me, but He's likely given up on me by now."		"God started this 'renewal' project in me and He'll be faithful to complete it." <i>(Philippians 1:6)</i>
"I'm so tired. I've been struggling for so long. My resolve and hope have left me."		"Because my hope is in God, not in myself, my strength will be renewed." <i>(Isaiah 40:31)</i>
"Each time I promise this will be the last time. But, I'm afraid I'll fail again."		"Rather than be anxious I'm going to ask and thank God for help, and be at peace." <i>(Philippians 4:6-7)</i>
"It's spiritual warfare I'm telling you. I'm under attack. The devil tricked me into it."		"The one who is in me is greater than the one who is in the world. I will overcome." <i>(1 John 4:4)</i>
"I'm so weak. I let myself down. I let my family down. I even let God down."		"When I am weak, that's when God goes to work in me - in the strongest of ways." <i>(2 Corinthians 12:10)</i>

Your Contingency Plan

To effectively deal with the kind of temptation that leads you into moral meltdown, you need a pre-established contingency plan that helps you draw close to God. Each time you're confronted with cravings and urges, implement your action plan for a minimum of 15 minutes. Your plan can be comprised of one strategy that extends for the entire period, or a number of shorter strategies that are combined or engaged consecutively.



How can you **BEST** respond when facing high-risk situations?

01

HIGH RISK SITUATION

Example: You receive a push notification advertising a film which will likely contain sexually explicit content. You're intrigued to open the link anyway...

CONTINGENCY

Example: Before deciding whether to watch the trailer, I will first commit to watching a couple of my favourite worship-music videos.

02

HIGH RISK SITUATION

CONTINGENCY

03

HIGH RISK SITUATION

CONTINGENCY

04

HIGH RISK SITUATION

CONTINGENCY

05

HIGH RISK SITUATION

CONTINGENCY



NOTE: CIRCUMSTANCES VARY

It's important to note that contingency plans may need to vary depending on the circumstance or type of temptation you're facing. Therefore, be sure to include multiple options in your plan. Ideas include listening to or playing worship music, praying, keeping a gratitude journal, reading God's word, confiding in a trusted friend, taking a walk in nature or listening to a bible teaching (video or podcast).

The BEST Way

Cravings and urges can be hard to contend with. However, God is faithful. Scripture says He will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. Even when you are tempted, God will provide a way out for you. But it's your responsibility to take that way.



Q: Identify one temptation you are likely to face:



Given that most cravings typically only last for between 2-7 minutes, rather than suppressing or resisting temptation, simply acknowledge the urge and allow it to pass. This is commonly referred to as 'Urge Surfing'. Professor Jeffrey Schwarz has identified and clinically validated four simple steps to effectively help you do this.

U R G E

01

RELABEL

Name and claim what's going on



02

REFRAME

Challenge your internal narrative



03

REFOCUS

Pay attention to where you want to go



04

REVALUE

Lock in gratitude for gains made



S U R F



EXAMPLE: "I'm feeling tempted. I'm craving something that's not best for me (RELABEL). Although enticing, this is not for me. This is just my brain playing tricks on me... luring me into doing what I know I ought not to (REFRAME). So, I'm not going to focus on what the temptation wants me to do. Instead, I'm going to refocus my thoughts and actions on the bigger picture - God's goodness in my life and the person whom I ultimately want to become (REFOCUS). Now that my thoughts and actions are more in line with who God wants me to be... I know this urge (just like a wave) will pass on by. As I 'surf the urge', all I have to do is stay standing. I'm so grateful that God always provides a way out for me. (REVALUE).

“I can either be successful, or I can make excuses, but I cannot do both.”



Identify a scenario where you are likely to face temptation:

01



RELEABLE what's really going on?

02



REFRAME what you're actually craving (or the real reason why you're craving it)?

03



REFOCUS on things that'll help you draw close to God and align with who you want to be.

04



REVALUE what just transpired. What are you grateful for in this circumstance?

05