



Navigators Discipleship Tool



How To Recognize God's Voice When You're Overwhelmed

A Guide to Recognizing Unhealthy Thought Patterns and Hearing the Voice of Jesus

Knowing how to deal with your thoughts will change your life. Period.

This is one of the most helpful tools for sharpening your ability to recognize unhealthy thought patterns (like worry, regret, and despair) and to learn to listen for and know the voice of Jesus.

1 Gather the tools for this practice: a journal/paper, an orange pen, and a purple pen.

The orange pen is for writing down your worry, regret, and/or despair. The color of the iconic jumpsuits that prisoners wear, this pen reflects our own imprisonment to unhelpful thoughts.

The color purple represents the royalty of our ultimate king, Jesus.

2 Set a timer for 10 minutes. With the orange pen, write down all the worry, regret, and/or despair that is present for you right now.

Don't hold back—just let it swirl and roll, no matter how insane it gets. The goal is that by seeing it all on paper in orange, you grow more sensitive to these kinds of thoughts throughout the day.

You learn to call them what they are—unhelpful, even down-right harmful. When the timer goes off, stop.

3 Set a timer for 10 minutes. With the purple pen, write down what you sense Jesus is saying to you right now.

This might be hard, but be patient. Purple text may come to you in the form of Scripture verses, song lyrics, memories of affirmations, or just impressions that you sense are from God. It can take practice to grow this ability. Stick with it!

This time is not meant to be spent rebutting point by point the worry, regret, and/or despair you wrote earlier in the exercise. The things that come up during this time may or may not directly correlate with your orange text. The point is to let God speak to you and to grow in knowing His voice.

John 10:1-18 gives us the image of Jesus as our Good Shepherd. He says repeatedly that the sheep know His voice. In fact, the sheep/shepherd relationship is found throughout Scripture, and the sheep's recognition of the shepherd is the way that they have a meaningful and functioning relationship with him.

All of us benefit from knowing which thoughts that emerge are worth our time and attention.