

Give Your Sneaky Self-Doubt the Slip

Recently, I got a text from a sweet friend who is just days away from graduating to become a physician's assistant and is about to take her board exam to get her license. She was asking about anxiety and how to overcome it.

She texted, "Have you ever noticed or experienced anxiety when you're doing exactly what you should be doing?"

Now, this woman is good. She knows her stuff. She's the friend I text when I get strange bumps on my body. She is also the friend who, through every oncologist appointment my mother-in-law has gone to, tells me what the results mean and how the medications work. She is incredibly educated and thorough and gifted. And here she is, anxious. Why?

I responded to her text, "Absolutely. I think anxiety is also associated with self-doubt. Are you doubting your abilities or lacking confidence?"

And it was as if a light bulb when off in her mind:

No one cares what I think.

There's someone better at it.

I'm really not that good.

There are so many other people doing the same thing. I'm just a little fish.

No one appreciates my efforts.

My voice doesn't have value.

I'm not capable.

Self-doubt's greatest goal is to make you give up.

Self-doubt prevents you from being obedient to the calling God has placed on your life.

4 Questions to Ask Yourself to Identify Self-Doubt

1. Do you often struggle to believe your opinion has value?
2. When someone asks for your advice, do you pass the buck and redirect them to someone else because they're "better at it" than you?
3. Do you feel too uneducated, ill-equipped or inexperienced in the area in which you're trying to move forward?
4. Do you often want to give up on the thing you believe God has asked you to do?

If you answered yes to all of these questions, you can be sure that self-doubt is trying to make you useless in the one life you've been given.

Now that we've successfully identified the struggle, what do we do next?

Apply truth.

Three Tools to Help You Overcome Self-Doubt

1. **Authoritative Mentorship:** This is a person who has the credibility to tell you you're qualified. This person cheers you on and gives you resources to go to the next level. They've already been in your shoes, so they know how to propel you forward.

2. **Education:** Sometimes doubt creeps in because we're uneducated. This feeling is easy to overcome; read a book or do other research.

A good leader is a good reader. So, if you're trying to be the

lead in your niche, you better be reading more than everyone else.

3. Community: These are the peers who believe in your dreams. These are the friends who say, "You can do it!" These are the people who watch your kids for you so you can study and press forward. It takes a village. The sheep that wanders from the flock never make it out alive; there is too much in the wilderness that wants to kill it. Don't be the sheep that strays. Learn to stay.

I believe Timothy in the New Testament struggled with self-doubt. Notice the words Paul wrote to him: "Therefore I remind you to stir up the gift of God, which is in you by the laying on of my hands. For God has not given us the spirit of fear, but of power, and love, and self-control" (2 Tim. 1:6-7).

Timothy received a gifting through the laying on of hands through the apostle Paul. That gifting was already in Timothy, but Paul was able to see it and call it forth. Although Timothy had Paul in his corner cheering and encouraging him on, he still felt timid. He was young, and I can only imagine the self-doubt he felt when trying to lead an entire church.

So, here comes Paul, reminding him that God has placed this gift within him and he needs to be bold and go for it! God has not given him a spirit of fear, but of power, love and self-control.

Paul is coming in Timothy's corner and reminding him to press forward, to not allow self-doubt, fear or anxiety to rob him of his calling.

And I say the same thing to you, friend. Whereever you are, do not allow self-doubt and fear to make you useless for the kingdom of God. Be faithful with the talents and abilities God has given you, and press forward. Find a mentor to cheer you on. Place yourself in a community that believes in you.

You are capable, because the one true living God is within you and will empower you to do it.

So, do it. Be bold and determined for the Savior who has rescued you! {eoa}

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