

The Supernatural Secret to Getting out of Your Destructive Mental Loop

What was I doing a few days ago, you ask? Oh, you know: sharpening pencils, tweaking lesson plans, dusting my classroom, and taking a course in how to stop an active shooter. Normal teacher stuff.

In college I took a class on how to use a copy machine and a laminator, but I wonder if I had continued with my education degree, if the syllabus had also included “how to wrestle a rifle away from a shooter” or “how to drop a shooter with a knee kick to the groin.” Hmm. (Do you want to take a minute to picture me practicing these things? Permission to laugh out loud.)

I had an interesting moment of worship in the middle of our active-shooter training, and that’s really what I want to tell you about.

These police officers were encouraging us over and over again to do anything to try to stop the shooter’s mental loop. Even just coming at the guy and pushing his gun up will break the train of thought he’s in. I had this kind of bizarre thought of, *That’s what Jesus does for me!* Jesus moves toward me when I’m a hot mess and disrupts my thinking. So I took my own personal brain break in the middle of this training and thanked the Lord for the way He steps in, gets my attention, breaks my destructive mental cycle and helps me refocus in a constructive, life-giving direction.

The active shooter training was traumatic, I have to say, although extremely valuable. That night I woke up in the middle of the night and kept picturing the scenario we walked through and how I could have reacted differently. Fear comes

like a monster from under the bed in the night, you know, and in the dark I started a mental loop of terror. *What if this really happens to me? What if I'm trapped in a room and have to rush a shooter?*

So I got out of bed and decided to listen to some worship music. The Lord was already awake waiting for me, and out of all of my worship songs on shuffle, he brought up *Leaning on The Everlasting Arms*, by David Crowder.

What have I to dread? What have I to fear?/ Leaning on the everlasting arms./ I have blessed peace/ With my Lord so near/ Leaning on the everlasting arms.

Why should I fear a shooter when I know Jesus will be with me in that situation if it ever arises? I thought. *Jesus will be my help.*

Four times I listened to that song in the night, until my breathing calmed and the inexplicable peace of God brought my heart rate to normal.

If we come to the Lord with our fears and anxieties, worshiping him, soaking in the truth of who he is and all that we have in him, He will break our mental loops and set us on a new mental track that leads to joy and peace and hope. I think the trick is just to get into the *habit* of recognizing a bad mental loop and practicing going to the Bible and to Scripture-based worship music to get the mental jolt of truth we need.

Because really, except for Jesus' intervention in our lives, aren't we all on the same path as the shooter? Destructive thoughts that lead to bad actions that lead to brokenness in our own lives and the lives of others? It's not the gun that brings chaos and death but the sick heart behind it. Only Jesus' redemptive work moves us away from that kind of darkness of soul.

What destructive mental loop do you find yourself in lately?
Can you find a Scripture verse or a worship song that will
open the way for Jesus to break that bad thought cycle? {eoa}

This article originally appeared at .