

UNIT II

ANXIETY



- What is Anxiety?
 - Anxious: experiencing worry, unease or nervousness typically about an imminent event or something.
 - It is a negative interpretation of a lot of arousal.

When do you feel anxious?

Suggestions:

1. *When you are facing uncertainty.*
2. *Isolation and exposure, especially in individual sports.*
3. *Expectation of success*

These three situations, and others like it, can often lead us to over-think.

What do we mean by “over-think”? Over-thinking does what for our performance?

The three situations described above more than likely have the same root: insecurity. Whenever we face uncertainty or an exposure of our talent, it can heighten or develop a sense of insecurity – about our ability, and, even more deeply, our identity. We begin to wonder, “can I even do this?”, “am I good enough?”, “what if I fail?”, etc. As insecurity increases, so does our anxiety.

What is at the root of most insecurity?

A lack of trust. As athletes, we need to be able to trust our stuff when it comes to game time. If we put in the proper amount of time for preparation, what we need to do when we step on the field is trust.

Practical advice (*break these down in discussion as you see fit*):

1. Accept/embrace the tension and nerves as they increase. Turn this into a positive excitement.
 - a. Being nervous and excited have the same body reaction. Both just have a lot of arousal. The name that we give to our feelings is what turns it into nervousness or excitement. We determine this. It is either “Oh man, I don’t want to screw this up.” Or “My body just knows I’m about to do something amazing!”
2. Trust your ability
3. Visualize success rather than doubt
4. 5, 3, 5 breathing (in through nose for 5 seconds, hold for 3, out mouth for 5 seconds)
 - a. Power Breathing
 - i. IF you want to energize, decrease the exhale (3, 1, 2)
 - ii. If you want to relax, increase the exhale (5, 3, 5)
5. When you recognize negative thoughts, picture a stop sign. Then, as that fades out of your mind, also let the negative thought fade.
6. Breakdown your winning feeling – what are the top 8 important aspects of that positive feeling. Before/during your competition, you want these aspects to run through your mind, similar to finding your happy place.

Anxiety is something that creeps into many places of our life. We can get anxious when we think about what happens after graduation, what happens if I don’t have enough money to make my car payment, what if I lose a loved one, on and on and on and on it can go. Just like in competition, our anxiety is intimately connected to insecurity and fear, which can usually boil down to a lack of trust.

What are some of the reasons that make it difficult for us to trust God?

Jer 29:11 – “For I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope.”

Mt 6:25-34 – “Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you shall eat or what you shall drink, nor about your body, what you shall put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? And which of you by being anxious can add one cubit to his span of life? And why are you anxious about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin; yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you, O men of little faith? Therefore do not be anxious, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ For the Gentiles seek all these things; and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things shall be yours as well. Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Let the day’s own trouble be sufficient for the day.”

When we lack trust, we often try to control things ourselves. **How does our Lord address that in the above verses? In what ways does pride add to anxiety?**

Luke 1:28-31, 34-35, 38 – “And he came to her and said, “Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with you!” But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and considered in her mind what sort of greeting this might be. And the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus.” And Mary said to the angel, “How can this be, since I have no husband?” And the angel said to her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God.” And Mary, said, “Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word.”

Mary is our model for surrendering our control to God. **How can we better imitate her example of giving up control? What do you need to give up control of?**

Another doubt that we have in our mind is whether or not we are truly loved. When we are insecure in this, again we develop anxiety.

What are ways to deepen our knowledge of God's love for us?

Challenge: try to sit in front of Jesus in the Eucharist once in the next week