

## SESSION 1: LIFE IN AN ANXIOUS WORLD

# LOOK AROUND: PARENT GUIDE

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Anxiety and loneliness. Two of the most painful crises affecting our young people.

When the same young person experiences both simultaneously, it can be disastrous.

That's why this week we are helping your teenager, and the rest of our students, understand that ignoring our anxiety, or trying to handle it on our own, can result in depression or other unhealthy coping habits.

The good news is that Mark 4:35–41 and Mark 6:45–51 remind us that God enters into—and remains with us in—our most anxious moments. In these two passages, Jesus actually *gets in the boat* and then *stays in the boat* with the anxious disciples.

And here's more good news: Anxiety can become one of God's greatest growth tools—changing the way we view ourselves and the world around us—as we ask ourselves two questions:

*Where is God at work in the midst of my anxious moments?*

*What might God—or anxiety—be trying to tell me?*

**We can work with anxiety in healthier ways than just ignoring it or trying to numb it.** Over the next few weeks, the *Faith in an Anxious World* series will teach your student (and perhaps you!) to cultivate practices that help us walk through this anxious world and recognize God at our side.

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## HERE'S A CONVERSATION TO HAVE WITH YOUR STUDENT THIS WEEK

In this first session, each student made a list of things they are currently feeling anxious about. Ask your kid if they're up for talking through their list with you. In your conversations with your child, aim to communicate openness and empathy while trying not to judge or solve problems.

## HERE'S SOMETHING YOU CAN DO TO HELP YOUR STUDENT AS THEY GROW

Help your teenager think of an adult they (and you) trust who might be a good person to call on if ever they need someone to talk to. Look over your kid's schedule together to see if they can find an hour to meet with that person this week, and agree on an appropriate location. Encourage your child to contact that person and ask them if they would be willing to meet this week, and to be available if they have questions in the future. The student take-home sheet includes some discussion prompts for this meeting.

## HERE'S SOMETHING YOU CAN DO TOGETHER AS A FAMILY

Students are exploring the Ignatian Prayer of Examen as a tool to help center themselves and seek God when life feels anxious. We're calling it the "Daily Replay."

You can encourage your student to grow in this practice by walking through these prayer steps together, asking how the practice is helpful or challenging, or using the steps to grow in your own practice of prayer. Even if your child isn't consistently doing the Daily Replay on their own or with you, you can develop your own habit of doing so and share what you're learning with them.

## HERE ARE THE FIVE SIMPLE STEPS:

1. **Become aware of God's presence.** *Find a quiet place, away from distractions. Take several moments to breathe, relax, and invite God to be present with you.*
2. **Review the day with gratitude.** *What are the good things that have happened today? What can I give thanks for?*
3. **Pay attention to your emotions.** *What moments throughout my day have been difficult or tense? Where is God at work in the midst of my anxious moments? What might God—or anxiety—be trying to tell me?*
4. **Forgive, and ask for forgiveness.** *Who am I angry or frustrated with? Are there things I can forgive and let go in order to have peace? What would I like to be forgiven for?*
5. **Look toward tomorrow.** *How can tomorrow be different? What would I like to ask God to help me with?*

The Daily Replay is based on the Ignatian Prayer of Examen, and adapted for teenagers. Find out more about this prayer practice at [www.ignatianspirituality.com](http://www.ignatianspirituality.com).

If you find apps helpful in reminding and guiding you through your own practice of the prayer, search your app store for Ignatian Spirituality's "[Reimagining the Examen](#)," or "[Examen](#)" from FULLER studio.

## HERE ARE MORE TOOLS TO HELP YOUR FAMILY DEVELOP FAITH IN AN ANXIOUS WORLD

When it comes to developing faith in an anxious world, the majority of your most important parenting happens behind the scenes as you stay sharp and alert, ready to support your child with what they need:

- Check out the [Faith in an Anxious World Parenting Podcast: Episode 1](#), available wherever you listen to podcasts.
- Visit [fulleryouthinstitute.org/anxiousworld](http://fulleryouthinstitute.org/anxiousworld) for additional practical advice on how young people can best navigate anxiety.
- Seek professional help from a local counselor or therapist (we will cover this in more depth in the coming weeks).
- Reach out with your questions to a crisis hotline ([National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-8255](#) or [suicidepreventionlifeline.org](http://suicidepreventionlifeline.org)).