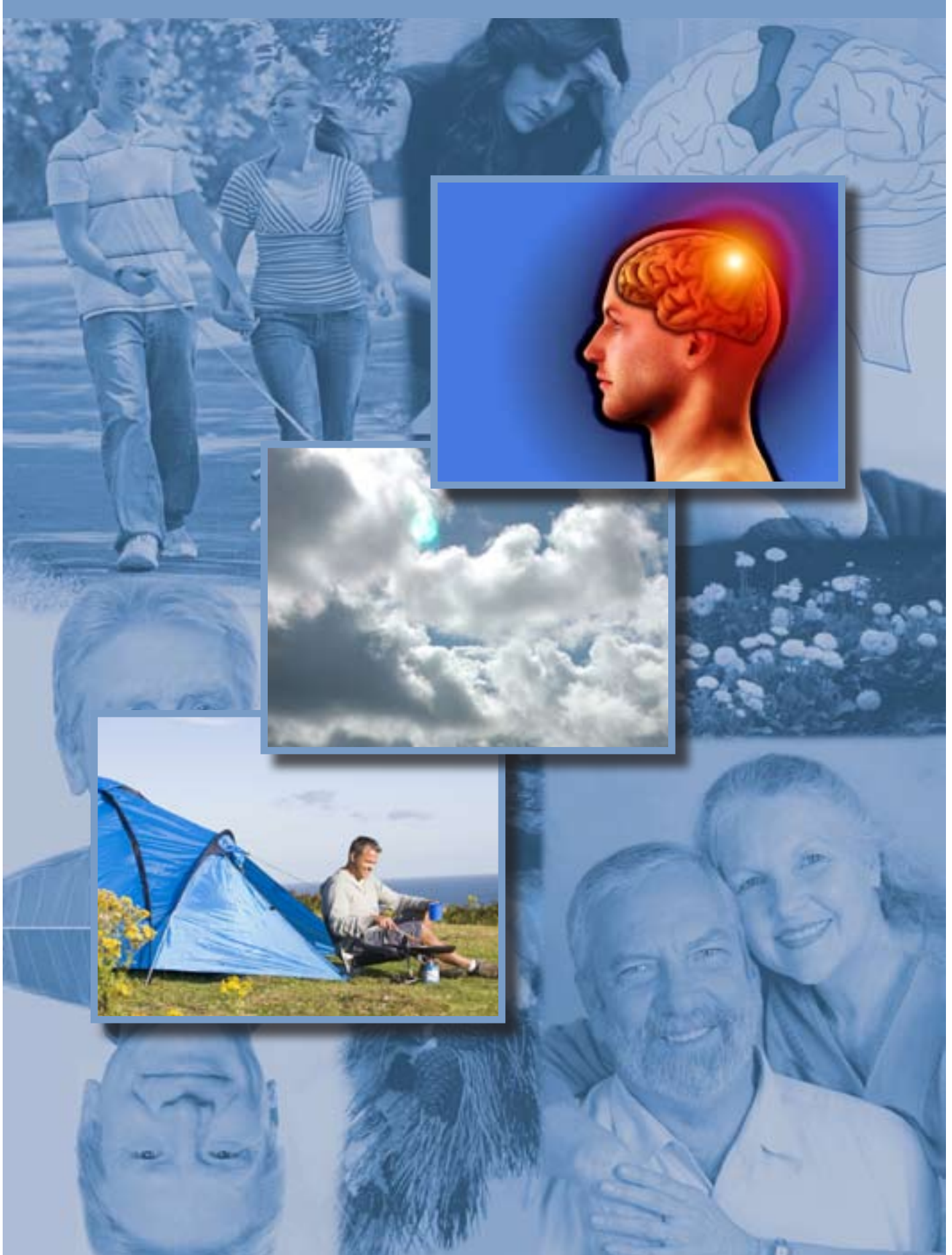


Your Thoughts

by Angela Poch, NC



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Higher Power

The Bible says: "For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he." Pr 23:7 "A Merry Heart doeth good like a medicine." Pr 14:22 There are 2 very important things about the mind; A personal relationship with God and the thoughts of the mind.

A strong relationship with God is the most important thing we can do to have good mental and spiritual health. There is a loving Creator who wants a relationship with every soul. But God will not force. Each person must ask for strength to fight temptations, deal with pain, and be guided to the right path.

Prayer time and personal devotion are the keys to unlock the great treasures of life. A meaningful prayer life is important to good spiritual health.

P - Praise God for blessings

R - Repent of wrong doing

A - Ask for your needs

Y - Yield to God's will

E - Entreat the Holy Spirit

R - Repeat through the day

The first step in a good prayer life is to praise God for all the things you are thankful for. This gets you in the right frame of mind and gets rid of many wrong thoughts..

Repenting of wrongs done and forgiving others. That's right, even if they were mean and unfair, you need to forget them. And I do mean NEED! Our bodies use chemical and electronic messengers in our brain, and thinking bad thoughts is harmful to our brains.

Ask for your needs. God knows every need, want, and desire. He doesn't need someone to tell Him because He doesn't know, He wants people to communicate with Him. That's what prayer is communication, not begging.

Surrender to God's will for your life. Sometimes our will is God's will. But when God's will is not what we want, we need to rely on the Holy Spirit for strength to see us through and we need to choose to say no. "I can do all things through Christ which strengthens me." Phil 4:13.

Entreat means to diligently ask for. The Holy Spirit has



the power to help us overcome and deal with anything that can possibly arise on this earth.

Repeat often. Turn your heart to the Lord throughout the day. Sometimes we get so busy we forget God is there to help us. Talk to Him throughout the day.

Devotions and study time are also important in building a relationship with God. Do you have personal worship each morning? If you need help with Bible studies or personal devotions, please contact us at Sette Publishing.

ABC's of thinking:

NOW, let's get a little bit into how your mind works with thoughts. You make up your own thoughts, you get temptations from Satan, and God sends you suggestions too. As your walk with God goes along, you will learn how to tell the difference between those different thoughts. For now, let's just talk about good thoughts and bad thoughts.

When bad thoughts come to us we don't have to keep thinking them. We can choose what to think about. We can't choose what happens to us, but we can choose how we react to it. Here are some ABC's to thinking.

A - Action and Activity - something happens or a thought takes action in your mind.

B - Belief and Basics - what you believe forms the basis for your feelings.

C - Consequences and Conscience - there are consequences, good or bad, to your belief and you need to listen to your conscience about your thoughts.

D - Decide and Disagree or Determine - decide if you find what you believed was right or wrong, and



disagree with that thought is it is wrong.

Well, what does that all mean? Let's go over it in more detail with a dog story as an example. Remember this applies to any thought, action, event, problem, and so on.

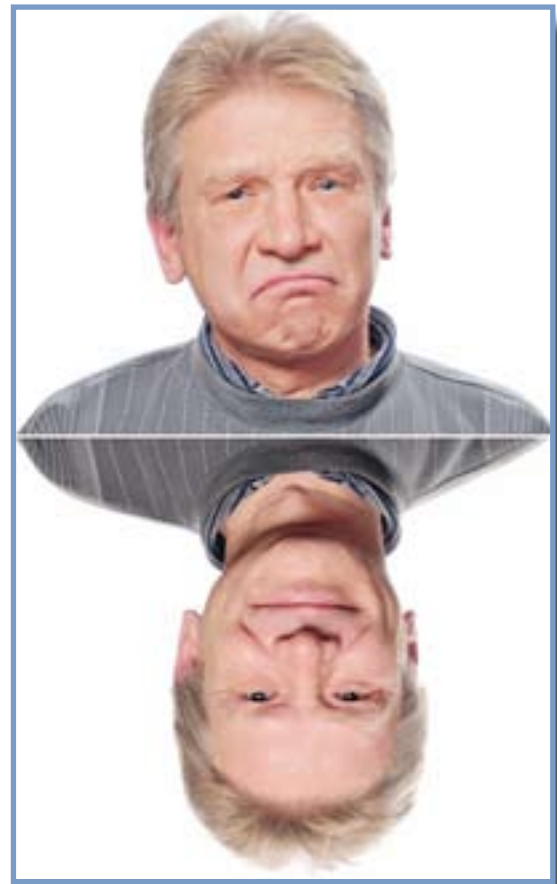
A - Action and Activity - something happens or a thought takes action in your mind. When you are riding your bike and a dog runs out from a neighbors driveway you begin to make thoughts about what is going to happen. This is an action.

B - Belief and Basis - what you believe forms the basis for your feelings. Your beliefs are made up of the thinks you choose to believe combine with how you remember things that have happened to you in the past. So the dogs comes toward you and you remember the last experience with a dog, or stories (real or imagined) about other people's experiences with dogs, or you make up a story or what if ... , and you form a belief for what will happen in this situation. Perhaps you belief the dog will or might bite you. The basis (or reason) for that belief is the memories or imaginations about dogs and bikes.

C - Consequences and Conscience - there are consequences, good or bad, to your belief and you need to listen to your conscience about your thoughts. The consequences can be physical or mental or spiritual or a combination of all three. Let's continue with our dog and bike story. Now because you believe the dog might bike you, you become afraid. You see the dog did not make you afraid, it was your belief he might bite you that made you afraid. So the consequence of your own though is fear.

D - Decide and Disagree or Determine - if you find what you believed was wrong, you need to disagree with that thought. If the thought was correct, then determine to do what is right in that situation. Is the dog really going to hurt you? Here is where you take control of your thoughts. You start really thinking about the situation. The dog is friendly and wagging his tail. You've met him before when you visited the neighbor so you don't need to be afraid. Now you need to disagree with your first thought about the dog and decide to not be afraid. Determine to do what is right by and pray for strength. You might say "Hi, Rover, I'm just riding to the park

today. You better stay home." Can you think of other ways to deal with this problem?



But what if the dog looks angry and your thoughts are right, that there is something to fear? What then? Determine to give it all to God. Ask Him for protection, get out of the situation, and tell your parents. Don't let the fear sit inside you! You are still in control of how you think even if you can't control the circumstances. You may not be able to prevent the dog from coming out, but you can control how you treat your neighbor after. Or if you will be afraid of all dogs.

You see you can make your thoughts take a U-turn, you start out happy in Jesus, temptation or problems or trials come and you can turn your thoughts back to Jesus. Turn your thoughts right around into positive, right thoughts.

So, how do you know when you are not thinking right. There are 12 pitfalls to real and logical thinking to watch out for. Check them out on the other side of this page.

The twelve pit falls of thought:

How do you know if what your thinking is right or wrong? That is an important question. First of all, are your thoughts reflecting scripture? Is what your thinking fit the Bible description of a Christian? If not, your thought may be a temptation from Satan and now is the time to put it out of your mind and ask Jesus for strength. Secondly is your thought based on reason or imagination? Have you every been in EXACTLY this situation or was it a bit different? Are you remember past thoughts from books or T.V.? Are you exaggerating a story that was told to you by someone else? Here are twelve dangerous pit falls, 6 overs and 6 unders, for wrong thoughts (I will explain them according to the dog story, but they apply to any thought):

Over-burdened (You haven't surrendered to God's will. Maybe you are feeling guilty because you were not supposed to be riding your bike today. Guilt can burden us and wrong choices can have very negative consequences.)

Over-generalizing (Using one dog story as the basis for what all dogs will do.)

Over-matched (Not having faith to fall back on. If you are not praying for strength, you will be over matched by your sinful nature and temptations.)

Over-reacting (Magnifying or dwelling on the negative. I know LOTS of bad dog stories. The dog barked so he is going to bite me, I just know it. And if he bites me its going to ruin my leg and I might die!)

Over-expectations ("shoulds and musts"). Dog should never run out there driveway. Dog must always be quiet and friendly.)

Over-simplification (All or nothing, not looking at the whole situation. You notice the dog running out toward you but you don't see he neighbor on the porch. Or you see the wagging tail, but ignore it. OR you don't see other ways to deal with the problem, just being scared and pedaling faster.)

Under-valuing the Positive (Not thinking about the positive or thinking positive parts or stories don't apply. I don't remember any good stories about dogs. The only time a dog was nice to me, my mom was there, so he had to be nice.)

Under-estimating the Value (The value of oneself or others. Dog's don't like me. I can't ride past, I'm too scared. I just can't do it. I'm not worth it. That dog is not worth anything, they should get ride of him.)

Under-tolerating (Low tolerance to anything you don't like. I don't life being bothered by that dog, even if he is no threat to me. I don't like being even a little scared, EVER!)

Under-mining (Blaming others. If the neighbors would tie up the dog, I wouldn't be scared of riding my bike. If dad would have bought me a faster bike, I would just fly past that dog, and he couldn't hurt me.)

Under-rationalizing (Emotions override logic and faith. I am scared so the dog must be bad or I wouldn't be scared even if the dog looks happy. I know Jesus can help me, but I don't think he will.)

Under-fed (Not studying your Bible will leave you underfed. It doesn't apply so much to the dog story, but if it was a thought about should I eat a piece of cake offered to me, it sure would apply. You need to know God's principles and how they apply in every situation. If the dessert was just after a dinner with a church friend, probably it is not even going to cross your mind to say no. But what if you are sick? Or what if it is between meal times? Now you must know the principle.

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