

Personal Growth Assignment: Anxiety

Anxiety is a persistent part of human experience. It's so widespread that about 23 million Americans have panic attacks, and millions more report living with various forms of anxiety disorders. Scripture speaks honestly and helpfully to this struggle—it shines a light on the way anxiety affects our bodies and minds, and it builds the faith that strengthens our inner peace and security in Christ.

In this post, I'll offer both 6-session and 12-session sample plans rooted in biblical truth to help you walk alongside someone wrestling with anxiety—or to use for yourself. But first, let's revisit the purpose of each element of a Personal Growth Assignment (PGA), and how to use them most effectively. (If you missed my introductory post explaining the “why” behind PGAs, I encourage you to [read that first.](#))

Three Core Elements of Effective PGAs

Each PGA should typically include the following elements:

1. Engage with the Word

This is the most essential component. Our aim is to minister to the heart by nurturing a habit of meditation on Scripture. God's Word—His revealed mind in written form—is the Spirit's primary instrument to renew the mind and transform the heart (1 Cor. 2:11–16; 2 Cor. 3:18). Encourage Scripture memorization to keep God's truth close throughout the day. When assigning a passage for meditation, offer a few journal prompts to help the person engage meaningfully with the text. For example:

- What does this passage reveal about God? Which of His attributes or works speak most directly to your current struggle?
- What does this passage reveal about you? Are there weaknesses, sins, or trials that hinder a trusting response to God?
- What affections of your heart are challenged by this passage? Are there desires the Spirit wants to change in you?
- What thoughts or behaviors need confession, and where do you need God's help for change?

2. Invite More Counsel

The second element introduces trusted biblical voices through carefully chosen resources—books, articles, sermons, podcasts, or videos. In a noisy world, it's vital to point people toward biblically sound and soul-stabilizing content (Titus 2:1–6; Prov. 27:17). When you “bring another counselor into the room,” ask the person to interact with the resource actively—highlighting meaningful sentences and journaling personal takeaways. Links to recommended resources appear at the end of this post.

3. Put Feet to Faith

Spiritual growth isn't just about learning, it's about living. While renewing the mind is foundational, it must lead to changed actions (James 1:22–25). This third element invites the person to take a specific step of obedience based on what they're learning.

That step might be:

- Developing a new habit,
- Writing a prayer based on a Scripture meditation,
- Or having a hard but needed conversation.

Instead of assigning this yourself, consider asking: “*What is one way you can apply this truth to your life this week?*”

You may choose to meet weekly or biweekly. Remember, counseling is simply intentional discipleship shaped by someone’s specific needs and context. Keeping that in mind will help you avoid a one-size-fits-all approach.

Sample Plans for Addressing Anxiety

6-Session Plan

#	Engage with the Word	Memorize	Invite More Counsel	Put Feet to Faith
1	Read Psalm 46 slowly at least four times this week. Journal about God, anxiety, and life situations (sin or suffering) that match your own.	Psalm 46:1	Read <i>The Most Encouraging Promise in the Bible</i> by Armand Tiffe. Highlight meaningful sentences. Be ready to share 5–10 highlights.	Begin a “My God Is...” list in your journal, based on Psalm 46 (e.g., “My God is a refuge,” “My God is ever-present”).
2	Psalm 27 (follow the same process as above).	Psalm 27:1	Read <i>Help! I’m Anxious</i> by Philip DeCourcy (Intro & Ch. 1). If panic is more prevalent, use <i>Help! I Get Panic Attacks</i> by Lucy Ann Moll.	Complete the Practical Application Project for Ch. 1.
3	Psalm 121	Psalm 121:1–2	Read <i>Help! I’m Anxious</i> , Ch. 2	Complete the Practical Application Project for Ch. 2.
4	Psalm 91	Psalm 91:1–2	Read <i>Help! I’m Anxious</i> , Ch. 3	Complete the Practical Application Project for Ch. 3.
5	Psalm 23	Psalm 23:4	Read <i>Help! I’m Anxious</i> , Ch. 4	Complete the Practical Application Project for Ch. 4.
6	Matthew 6:24–34	Matthew 6:33	Reflect on Matthew 6 and Philippians 4:8.	Create a list of biblical truths to recall when anxious. Write a prayer based on Jesus’s counsel.

Optional Continuation: 6 Additional Sessions

#	Engage with the Word	Memorize	Invite More Counsel	Put Feet to Faith
7–10	Read through Philippians, one chapter per week.	Philippians 4:4–8	Read 5 chapters per week from <i>Anxiety: Knowing God’s Peace</i>	Reflect on the questions at the end of each chapter.

#	Engage with the Word	Memorize	Invite More Counsel	Put Feet to Faith
	Journal about truths of Christ and peace in Him.		(adjust to 3 if meeting weekly).	
11	Psalm 19:1–6. Journal how creation reveals God’s glory and brings peace.	Review all memory verses.	Continue reading <i>Anxiety: Knowing God’s Peace</i> .	Take a long walk in nature. Praise God for His creation and cast your cares on Him in prayer.
12	Psalm 19:7–14. Reflect on how daily feeding on Scripture transforms your inner life.	Review all memory verses.	Finish <i>Anxiety: Knowing God’s Peace</i> .	From Psalm 19, list how God’s Word changes you. Consider working through Psalm 119 in the same way (8 verses at a time).

Final Thoughts

These plans are flexible and meant to get you started. As you gain more experience in discipleship counseling, you’ll grow in the ability to tailor assignments based on each person’s unique context and needs. But for now, use these suggestions as a helpful framework.

Mentioned Resources:

- *The Most Encouraging Promise in the Bible* – Armand Tiffe
- *Help! I’m Anxious* – Philip DeCourcy
- *Help! I Get Panic Attacks* – Lucy Ann Moll
- *Anxiety: Knowing God’s Peace* (31-day devotional) – Paul Tautges
- *A Student’s Guide to Anxiety* (for teens) – Edward T. Welch

The above resources are available from many online bookstores, such as [Biblical Counseling Books](#), [WTSBooks](#), [CVBBS](#), and others. If you are in Canada, shop at [Reformed Book Services](#).

More recommended resources for anxiety, fear, and panic can be found [here](#).

[Download a PDF of this plan.](#)