



**April 13-14<sup>th</sup>, 2024**

### **Break the Ice**

Philosopher Michael de Montaigne is often noted to have said, “My life has been filled with terrible misfortune; most of which never happened.” Based on several studies, Melanie Greenberg, in her book *The Stress-Proof Brain*, claims that 85% of the things we worry about never actually happen. And of the 15% of the time when these things did happen, the worriers were able to cope better than they expected.

Ask your group to share some of their own examples where they worried about something that never happened or wasn't as bad as they worried it would be.

Then ask the group: Why is worry so paralyzing?

### **Up**

Worry can cause us to shift our eyes from God and who He is. When we look at our problems and begin to obsessively worry about them, we can make them bigger than God. Remembering God's attributes is key to overcoming worry.

**Read Matthew 6:25-34 out loud.** Ask them to describe how God's attributes are described in this passage.

When we obsess with worry, what attributes of God are we questioning?

### **In**

One study (among others) revealed that, on average, adults who are often worried and anxious are more likely to experience poor relationship quality. Worry can often lead to anxiety. And anxiety can lead to excessive anger, irritability, and stress. As a result, we can be difficult people to be around when we worry. Worry can also cause us to detach from our relationships and turn them away from us.

Ask your group to discuss how worry has overflowed from the well of their heart into the lives of others in the following relationship categories:

- Spouse
- Children

- Parents
- Friends
- Colleagues at work
- Random strangers

Often, worry is a reality when we feel that we have lost a level of control. Philippians 4:6-7 references that the solution to worry is putting control into God's hands through prayer. Share some of the areas where you find yourself worrying most often. Then, what does practical surrendering of control look like in this area?

### **Out**

God can use what you are (re)learning about what worry can do to your mental health to reach others who do not know Him. Unbelievers create all sorts of fake gods they trust in to help them self-medicate through difficult times.

Ask your group: Without coming across as offensive or (too) weird, how can we, as Christians, show unbelievers how God can be the source of peace in their life?

### **Prayer**

Conclude your time by leading the group to pray:

- For God to reveal who He is in the midst of our worry and anxiety.
- For God to reveal how our worry may be creating stress and disunity in our relationships.
- For God to reveal how we can impact the lives of unbelievers through what we learn about worry and God's peace.