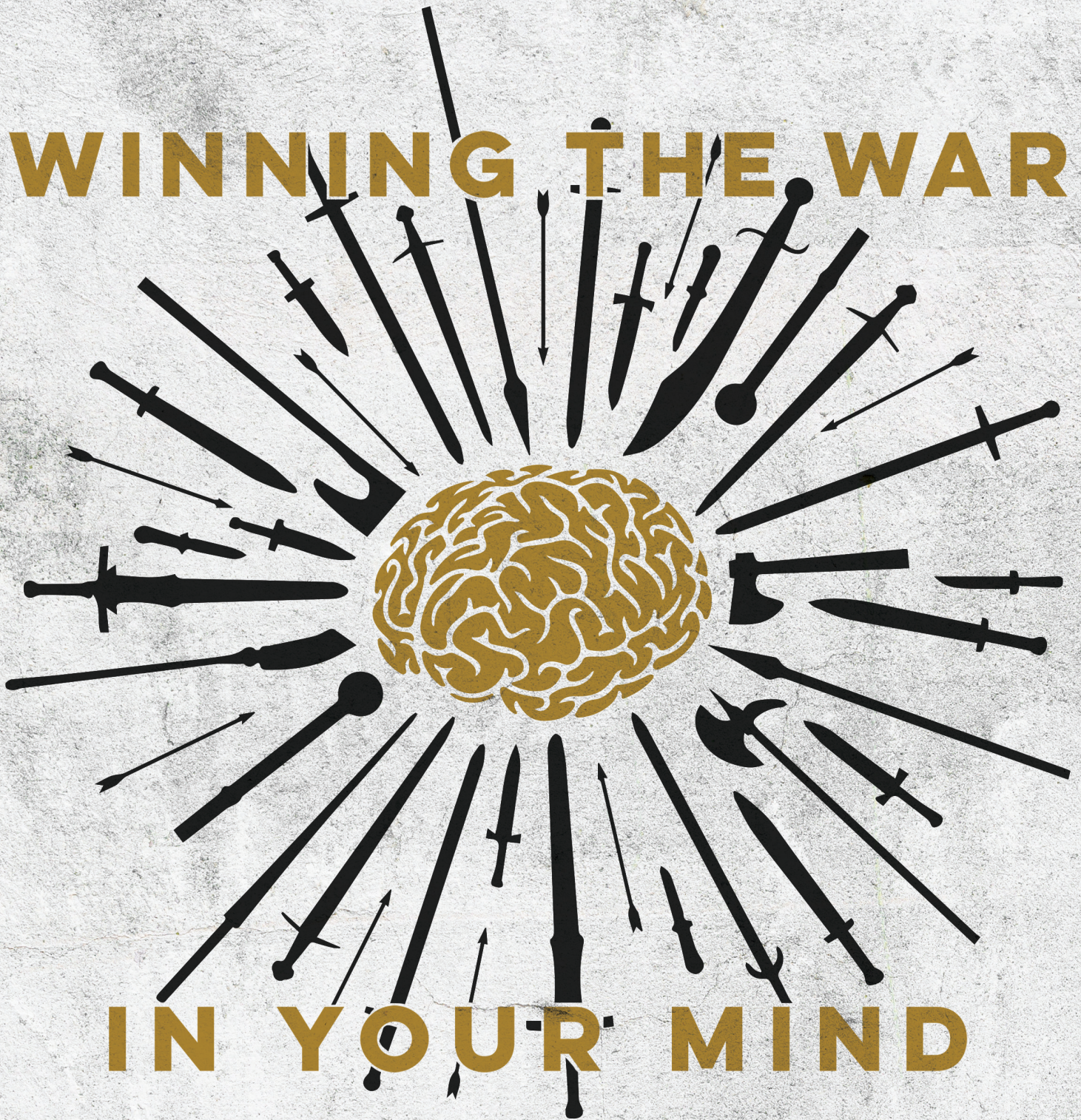


WINNING THE WAR



IN YOUR MIND

Discussion Guide

Winning The War In Your Mind

Group Schedule and Discussion Guide

***Together:**

This is suggested content for your time together as a group, or content for your group chat/ messages. Please note that depending on your group size and dynamic, you will most likely not be able to get to all of the discussion questions. As you get to know your group, choose the questions you think will open up the best discussion.

****On Your Own:**

In order to get the most out of this study and time together, we suggest you do this portion as “homework” between your group meetings.

Note:

If your group is not meeting every week, you will want to adjust your meeting content and homework accordingly. For example: Groups meeting just two times a month might want to do the Introduction Contents as the first meeting. Then for the 2nd meeting you would combine the next 2 sections and do all of Part 1 in one meeting, all of Part 2 in your 3rd meeting, and so

Introduction

***Together:**

Icebreaker, *get to know you* time.
Go over group Guidelines/ Confidentiality.
Discuss Reading Pace and Meeting Schedule for the semester.
Have everyone answer these questions about themselves:

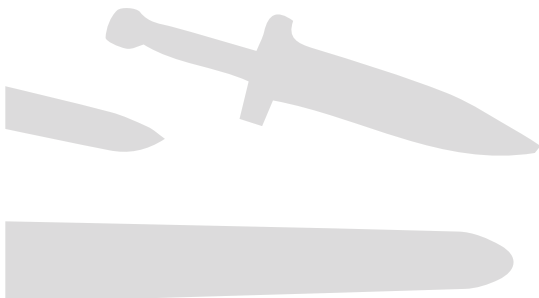
- What is your name?
- What drew you to this book study?
- What do you hope to gain from this time together?

Ask for people to share their answers with the group.

****On Your Own:**

Before your next meeting, Read and Complete Chapter 1 in [Winning the War In Your Mind](#)

Optional - Watch [Part 1](#) of Video Teaching by Craig Grochel



Part 1

THE REPLACEMENT PRINCIPLE: Remove the Lies, Replace with Truth

Meeting 1

• Together:

Discuss Part 1 video and Chapter 1 questions

Chapter 1: Perception is Reality

1. The first sentence of the book declares: “Our lives are always moving in the direction of our strongest thoughts.” Where do you think your life is headed based on your strongest thoughts?
2. In Exercise 1 of Chapter 1, Ps. Craig asks everyone to take a Thought Audit. He begins by making these two points:
 - Who you are today is a result of your thoughts in the past.
 - Who you become in the future will reflect what you think about today. Based on each bullet point, answer these two questions:
 1. What thoughts from your past have determined who you are today?
 2. What are two new ways you need to start thinking about yourself?
3. Ps. Craig describes the war in your mind this way:
 - Satan is conniving and trying to lock you in a prison of lies.
 - Satan’s strategy to win the battle for your mind is fooling you to believe his lies.
4. Overall, do your thought patterns reflect your beliefs about God and the faith you have in Jesus?

How would you describe this gap and why does it exist?
5. “You are not who others say you are. You are who I [God] say you are.” Ps. Craig says understanding this was a life changing moment for him. Have you experienced a moment like this, where you were letting the lies of others dictate who you are?
6. If you did a Thought Audit, what surprised you the most from your findings? Did you have a question after you saw the results?
7. As we wrap up this week, how will you apply what you’ve learned from this chapter to your life this week?

On Your Own:

Before your next meeting, Read and Complete **Chapters 2 and 3**

Read Ephesians 6:11-12, John 10:10, and 1 Peter 5:8-9. Then discuss how real this battle is for you, and how important it is to identify the lies we believe.



Part 1

THE REPLACEMENT PRINCIPLE: Remove the Lies, Replace with Truth

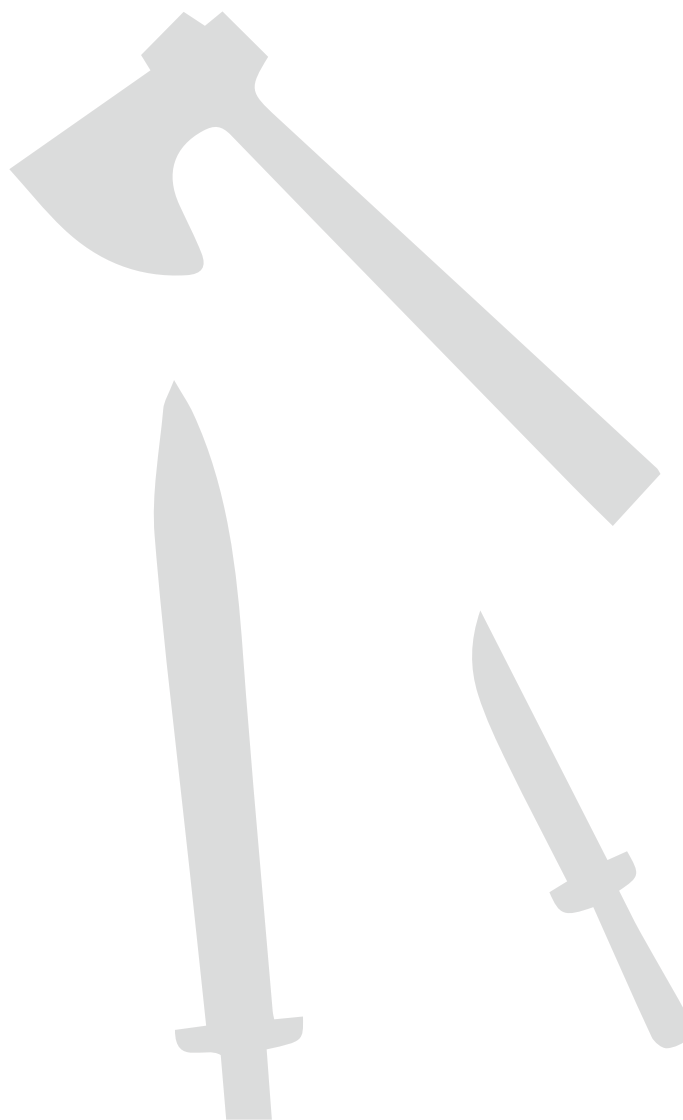
Meeting 2

• Together:

Discuss Chapters 2 and 3

Chapter 2: Becoming a Thought Warrior

1. Define what a 'stronghold' is, as the word is used in 2 Corinthians 10:4, and describe how it symbolizes the lie(s) we believe.
 2. "You cannot defeat what you cannot define." To that point, the author then asks, "What's your stronghold?" In other words:
 - What lie is holding you hostage?
 - What mistruth keeps you from taking a step of faith?
 - What wrong thought pattern robs you of living a life of freedom and joy?
- How would you answer each of these questions?
List the lies you've believed.
3. We will learn more about this in the next chapter, but how can 2 Corinthians 10:3-5 and Ephesians 1:19-20 give us *confidence* as we prepare to engage in the war for our minds?
 4. Ps. Craig says at one point: "If you want to truly change your life, you cannot just change your behavior... That's why Christianity has never been about behavior modification; it's about life transformation" (p. 35). In what way does this statement confirm for you that winning the war in your mind is a spiritual battle?
 5. Looking back, when has the devil convinced you a lie was true in order to distort your thinking and lead you astray? How was he able to succeed?
 6. What would it look like in your life to have these strongholds demolished? Who would you be without your battle with these negative, destructive thoughts?
 7. Based on our study today, what is one thing you can start doing this week to become a 'thought warrior'?



Chapter 3: Old Lies, New Truth

1. As we begin today, does anyone have any questions regarding the previous two weeks, or what they read this week in Chapter 3?
2. Describe one instance in which you know or have known that you were a prisoner of a lie. (For instance, you crave close relationships but are paralyzed by fear of rejection).
3. If you are having trouble identifying the lies in your life, Ps. Craig gives a 3-step process to realize the lie. Fill in the blanks below and identify which step is the most challenging for you:

- Identify the _____
- Ask probing _____
- Pinpoint the _____

4. Targeting Jesus when he was hungry, thirsty, and weary, the devil crafted temptations specifically aimed at these vulnerabilities. When are you especially vulnerable to listen to the enemy's lies and give in to temptation?
5. Once you identify the lie, you need to combat it with truth from the Word of God, as Jesus did in his temptations as recorded in Matthew 4:1-11. But what if you don't know the Bible that well, or you're a new Christian? What resources are available to help you discover the truth and verses that will guide you?
6. As we observed in the temptation of Jesus, how has the Devil tried to get you to question God and doubt what you know is true? What impact did this kind of questioning and doubting have on your faith?

7. To remove the lie, Ps. Craig emphasizes a 3-step process. Write out the steps of this process for a lie you've identified.

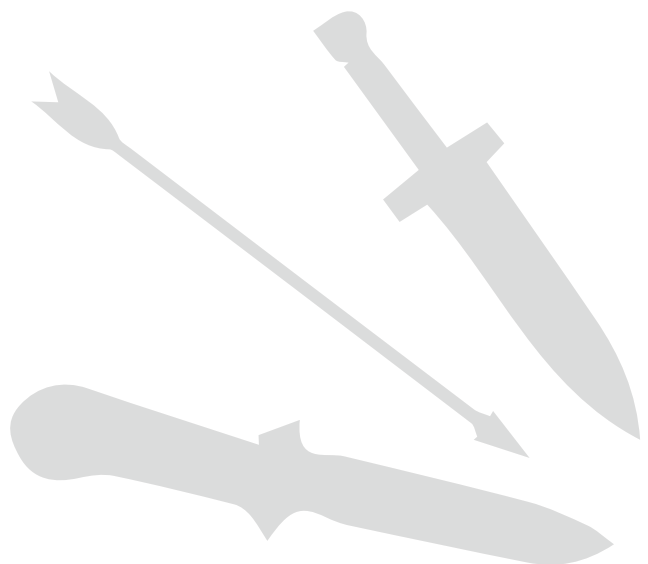
- Lie:
- Truth:
- Declaration:

For you, which is the toughest step in this process? If you've filled this out already, can you share your declaration and how you came up with it?

8. What is your one takeaway from this week, and how can it be applied to your life?

On Your Own:

Before your next meeting, Read and Complete **Chapter 4**
Optional - Watch **Part 2** of Video Teaching



Part 2

THE REWIRE PRINCIPLE: REWIRE YOUR BRAIN, RENEW YOUR MIND

Meeting 1

• Together:

Discuss Part 2 and Chapter 4

Chapter 4: Crossed Wires and Circular Ruts

1. Before we begin today's study, what were one or two takeaways from the first tool "The Replacement Principle: Remove the Lies, Replace with Truth?" Has anyone made progress as you've started to implement it these past few weeks?

2. Complete the following sentence:

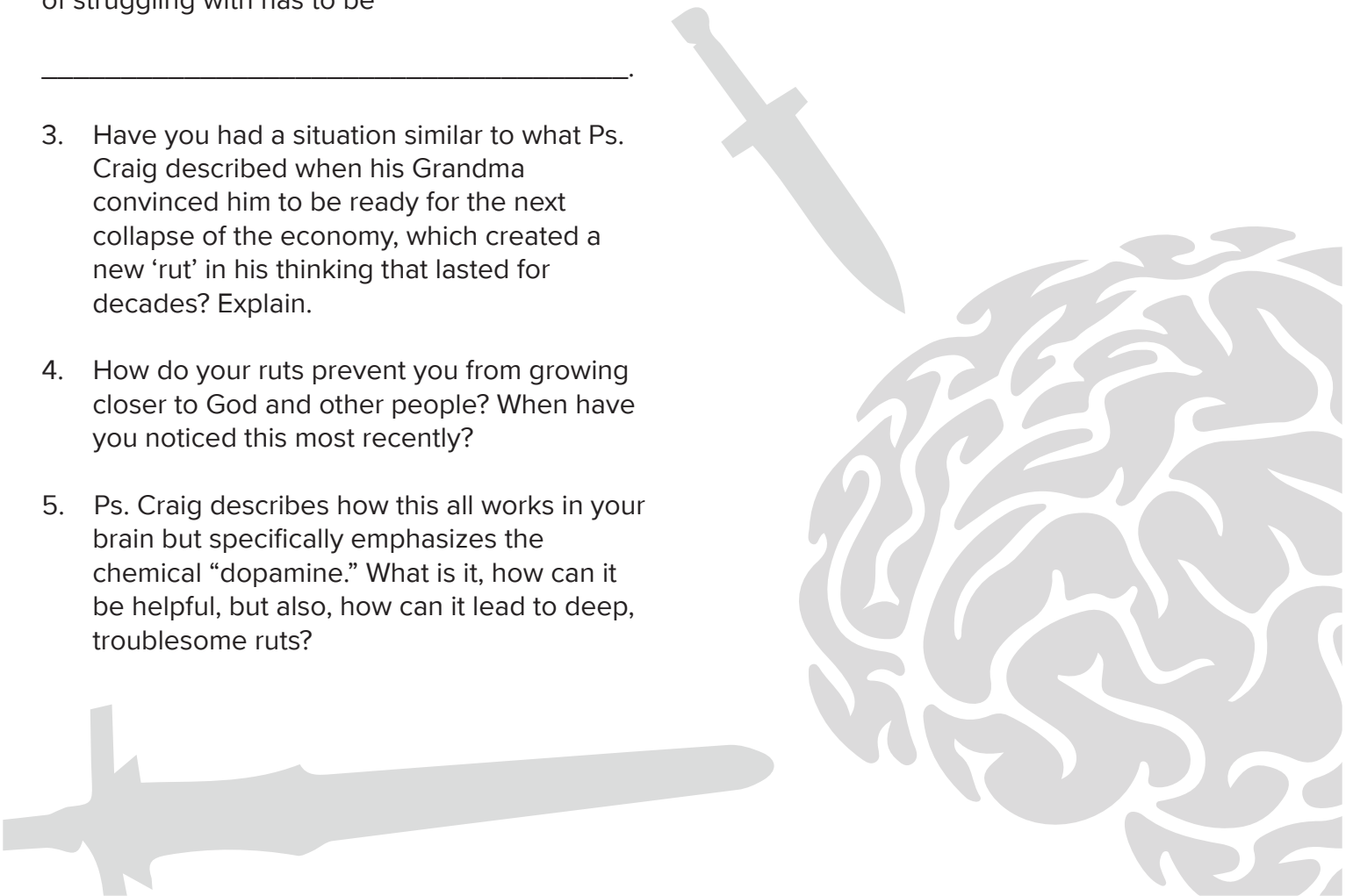
The neural rut or harmful habit I'm most ashamed of struggling with has to be

3. Have you had a situation similar to what Ps. Craig described when his Grandma convinced him to be ready for the next collapse of the economy, which created a new 'rut' in his thinking that lasted for decades? Explain.
4. How do your ruts prevent you from growing closer to God and other people? When have you noticed this most recently?
5. Ps. Craig describes how this all works in your brain but specifically emphasizes the chemical "dopamine." What is it, how can it be helpful, but also, how can it lead to deep, troublesome ruts?

6. "Unless we decide to break the pattern, our lives will continue to move in the wrong direction." In the past, what have you tried to do to break harmful patterns, or ruts? Why did you succeed? If not, why do you think your efforts failed?
7. What is the one takeaway from this chapter for you? How do you plan to implement it into your life beginning this week?

On Your Own:

Before your next meeting, Read and Complete **Chapters 5 and 6**



Part 2

THE REWIRE PRINCIPLE: REWIRE YOUR BRAIN, RENEW YOUR MIND

Meeting 2

• Together:

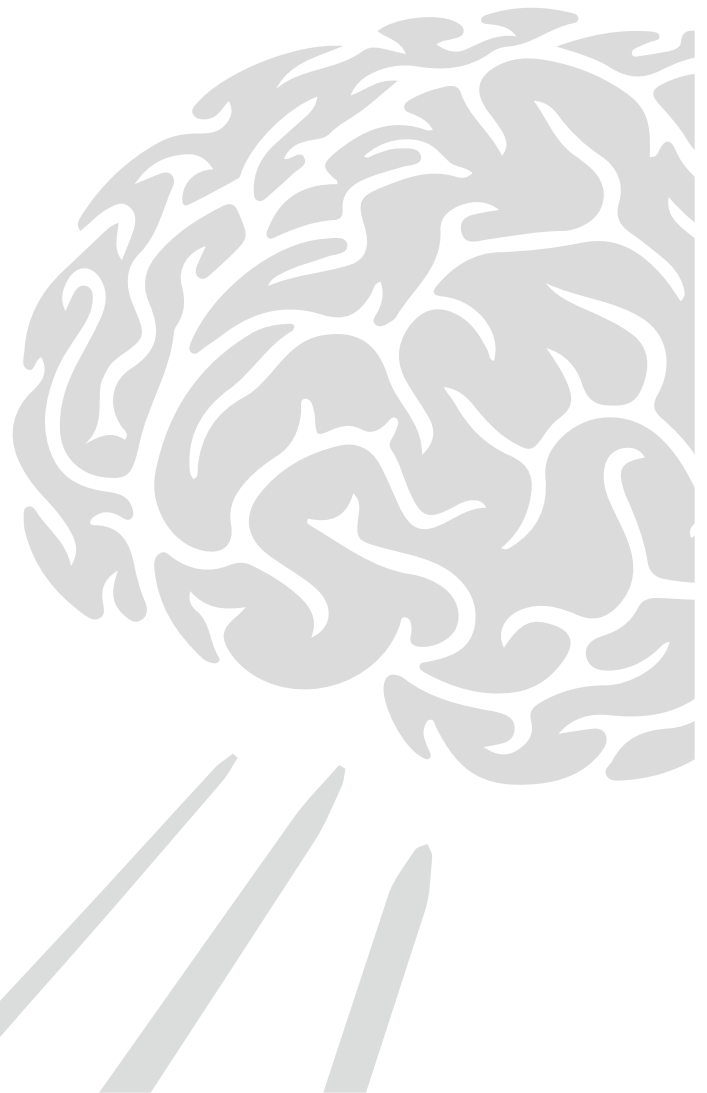
Discuss Chapters 5 and 6

Chapter 5: Creating a Trench of Truth

1. Who would like to share the following with our group?
 - What progress have you experienced so far in our study of ‘winning the war?’ Share a story.
 - What is a question you have about what we read this week?
2. What is the difference between a rut and a trench? Define and describe each.
3. To stop the lies and replace them with truth, we will need to internalize God’s Word. Being transparent, on a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being “rarely if ever” and 10 being “every day,” how often do you read or listen to the Bible? How could you improve this number?
4. How much were you exposed to the Bible as a child? What role did it have in your upbringing?
5. How does the law of exposure (the mind absorbs and reflects what it is exposed to the most) support and encourage “internalizing” or “meditating” on God’s Word?
6. What is a declaration? What is the goal of a declaration? As you craft them, what are a few qualities they should have? (p. 91-92)

7. What is the 3-step plan for renewing our minds in this chapter:
 - Identify the _____.
 - Create a new _____ of truth with God’s truth.
 - Write a _____, think it, and confess it until you believe it.
8. How will you apply what you’ve learned from this chapter to your life this week?

Which is the most challenging step and why?

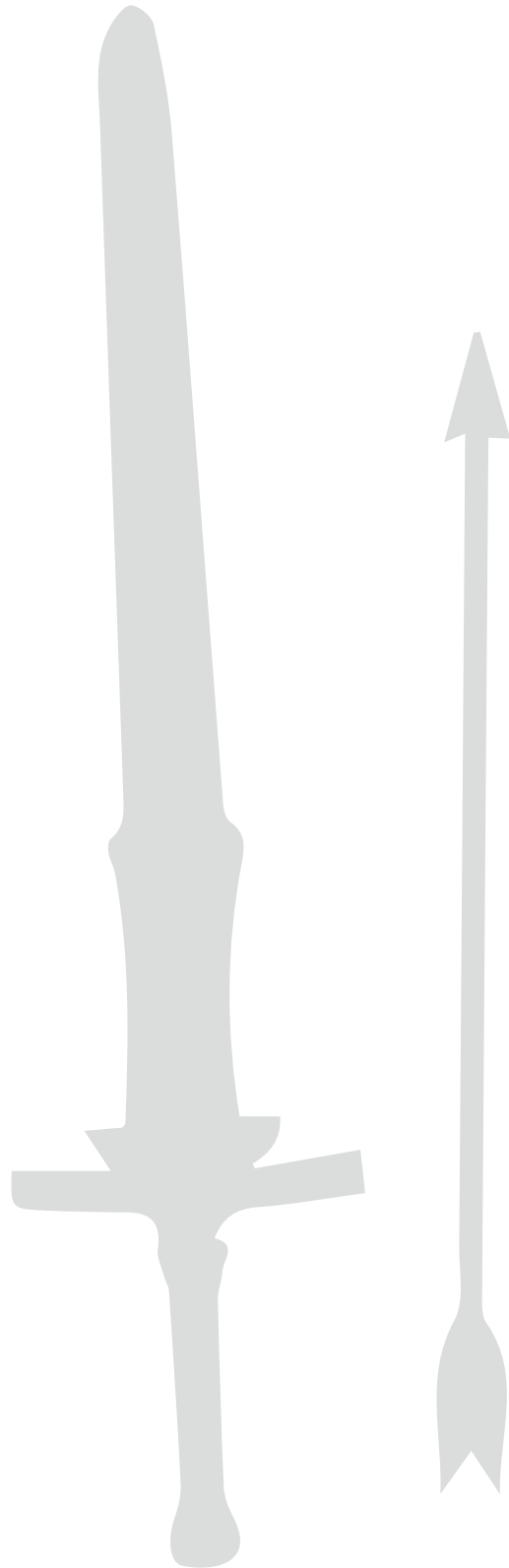


Chapter 6: Rumination and Renewal

1. What is the biggest consumer of your *attention* on a normal day? Keep in mind that just because you spend a lot of time “doing” something doesn’t mean you’re engaged or paying attention (like driving to work).
2. When was the last time you unplugged and spent time alone with God? Describe how it happened, how long it lasted, and what the benefit was to you.
3. When and where is a good time and place for you to spend time alone with God? What do you need to change to make this happen consistently?
4. Ps. Craig said at one point, “Repetition is what created the old rut. Repetition is what will create the new trench.” What does this mean, and how does it offer hope?
5. Have you meditated on God’s truth before? What was that experience like? Do you have any questions/comments/advice for the rest of us from your experience?
6. What Bible verse or passage holds special meaning in your life right now? Why is it so important to you?
7. What is the one main truth you got from this chapter? How will you apply it to your life starting this week?

****On Your Own:**

Before your next meeting, Read and Complete **Chapter 7**
Optional - Watch Part 3 of Video Teaching



Part 3

THE REFRAME PRINCIPLE: REFRAME YOUR MIND, RESTORE YOUR PERSPECTIVE

Meeting 1

• Together:

Discuss Part 3 Video and Chapter 7

Chapter 7: Lenses and Filters

1. As we begin to examine the third tool to help us 'win the war in your mind,' how has your battle been going the last few weeks? Any victories to share? What questions do you have?
2. Define Cognitive Bias. Have you been able to identify any that you have? Why can it be such a challenge for us to see them in our own lives?
3. Ps. Craig says, "You cannot control what's happened or what will happen, but you can control how you perceive it." From Philippians 1:12-14, 18-26, describe how Paul practiced Cognitive Reframing in his life.
4. Why is it so challenging to reframe events in our lives that don't make sense or align with our expectations? What's required in order to reframe them?
5. How would you explain the difference between just putting a positive spin on a painful situation, such as losing a job, and reframing it by faith?
6. When have you recently struggled to understand what God was doing in your life or where he was leading you? How did you respond then? Would you respond differently now?
7. When you consider your life's greatest losses and most painful moments, why do you continue to trust in God and his goodness? What do you do with events that seem challenging for you to reframe?
8. Based on this week's study, what is the one thing God wants you to start doing tomorrow?

On Your Own:

Before your next meeting, Read and Complete **Chapters 8 and 9**



Part 3

THE REFRAME PRINCIPLE: REFRAME YOUR MIND, RESTORE YOUR PERSPECTIVE

Meeting 2

• Together:

Discuss Chapters 8 and 9

Chapter 8: What God Didn't Do

1. Has anyone had any answered prayers this past week? Is there anything you've been praying for, but still don't have an answer yet?
2. Ps. Craig says at one point, "I'm so thankful for what God didn't do in my life." Have you been able to say this at some point in your life? Explain what happened, or what didn't happen!
3. Isaiah 55:8-9 says: "My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways," declares the Lord. 'As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.'" How does this verse help you as you work with unanswered prayers?
4. In Genesis 50:15-21, we see another biblical character who reframed his thinking in a similar way as Paul. Based on Joseph's response to his brothers (V. 20), how has Joseph reframed his brothers' jealousy, betrayal, abandonment, and deception?
5. Who are the people in your life that have been the hardest for you to forgive? Why is forgiving them an important part of reframing past events by trusting God was at work in your suffering?
6. When have you stepped out in faith by acting with kindness and generosity despite your suffering? How were you able to do this? What impact did your actions have on those around you?
7. Based on this week's study, how will your prayer life change, and what have you learned about God's plan for your life this week?



Chapter 9: Collateral Goodness

1. Do you think of yourself as more a *visionary planner* who always prepares for what's ahead or a *flexible flyer* who remains untethered and spontaneous? How has being this way influenced your expectations as you move ahead?
2. Share a time when you saw Jesus bring meaning and purpose to your pain? How did it happen and when did you discover and/or notice it?
3. When has a big disappointment turned into a surprising discovery or enjoyable experience, like with Ps. Craig's publishing issue?
4. When have you expected the worst and experienced it? Or, stated another way, are you more like a 'vulture' or a 'hummingbird'? Explain your answer.
5. How do we reframe our past?
 - We thank God for what he didn't do
 - Practice Preframing (the author adds this later)
 - We look for God's goodness

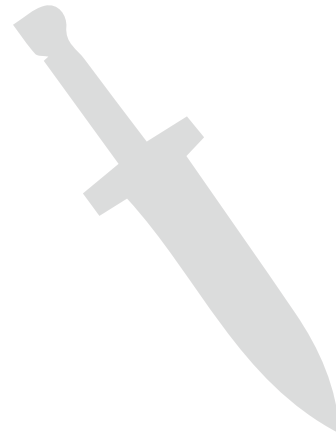
Which is the most challenging step and why?

6. Can you identify a time when you have reframed your past, and then preframed your future? How did things transpire when you encountered that future event?
7. As you look to start 'preframing' your future, what's your greatest barrier or personal obstacle to trusting God with your future?

8. How would you describe the current rhythm and pace of God's guidance in your life? Are you waiting on him to reveal your next step – or is he waiting on you to step out in faith?
9. What is your one takeaway from this week's study?

On Your Own:

Before your next meeting, Read and Complete [Chapter 10](#)
Optional - Watch [Part 4](#) of Video Teaching



Part 4

THE REJOICE PRINCIPLE: REVIVE YOUR SOUL, RECLAIM YOUR LIFE

Meeting 1

• Together:

Discuss Part 4 Video and Chapter 10

Chapter 10: Problems, Panic, and Presence

1. As we come to the fourth tool for winning the war in our minds, which of the three previous tools has been the most challenging? Why?
2. At this moment, how would you rate your current level of stress, with 1 being “slightly uncomfortable” and 10 being “debilitating despair”? What’s contributing to your score?
3. When you reach your breaking point, how does your stress and panic usually manifest itself through your behavior? Do you tend to shut down and go numb or do you tilt toward uncontrollable emotions and overreactions?
4. When Elijah was stressed and panicked, he literally ran away! What are some ways you have tried to escape or find relief?
5. Ps. Craig says that often we begin to panic because we get fixated on the presence of our problems, and we lose our focus on the presence of God. As we learned from the story of Elijah, why did the “whisper” make such a difference? Why do you think it was a “whisper?”

6. As with Elijah, when has God “whispered” to you during a bout with stress, anxiety, panic, and/or depression? How did recognizing his presence in the midst of your storm help you find your way out?

7. Ps. Craig shares a new declaration from his experience: “My experience plus God’s presence is enough.” What does he mean by this? How can that declaration help you?

8. What is your primary takeaway from this important chapter?

Start Discussing Winter/Spring Semester

On Your Own:

Before your next meeting, Read and Complete **Chapters 11, 12, and Conclusion**



Part 4

THE REJOICE PRINCIPLE: REVIVE YOUR SOUL, RECLAIM YOUR LIFE

Meeting 2

• Together:

Discuss Chapters 11, 12, and Conclusion

Chapter 11: The Perspective of Praise

1. How would you describe your prayer life today? What messages and assumptions about prayer did you pick up as a child or early in your Christian life?
2. Peter got out of the boat and was *walking on the water* towards Jesus. But he took his eyes off Jesus. Hearing the howling wind and seeing the crashing waves, he started to sink. Describe a time when you, like Peter, focused more on the presence of *problems* than the presence of Jesus?
3. Share a time when you decided to trust God instead of worrying. What prompted that decision, and what kind of impact did it have on you?
4. What does it mean for you to 'pray without ceasing' (1 Thess. 5:17) considering your present season of life and daily schedule? How can prayer become a natural part of every day?
5. If you are willing to take Ps. Craig's challenge and create a 'God box' this week, what would the first worry or problem be that you would put in it? What could help you not take it out of the box at all this coming week?

6. What are the 3 things we learn from Paul and Silas about praise in Acts 16:

- They were praising God for the _____ not the what!
- They were praising God before the _____!
- They were praising God and then he _____!

Can you describe a time when praise/worship had such an effect on you?

7. What is one key thought you learn about prayer and praise in this chapter? How will it change your prayer and praise time this week?



Chapter 12: Look Through, Not At

1. As we examine the last chapter of this book, what has this study meant to you? If you were to recommend this book to someone, how would you promote it?
2. What circumstance or relationship in your life right now do you need to stop looking at and instead *look through* to see what God is doing?
3. When is the last time a worship/praise experience changed your perspective? Describe how and what happened.
4. In the previous chapter, we learned that scientists have shown how prayer actually changes our brains. Now, research says praise also changes our brains, and other physical functions. How so? How should this encourage you?
5. Ps. Craig challenged us to never let our guard down (keep both hands up!). If one of the hands is prayer, and the other is praise, which is the stronger for you, and which is the weaker, more difficult one for you to consistently do. Explain your answer.
6. As a recap, the author says these two statements:

“The devil’s target is your mind. His weapon is that he lies.”

“You will never accidentally change the way you think.”

Which statement means the most to you right now? How are you now better equipped to win this war?

7. As we’ve discovered the 4 tools for winning the war:

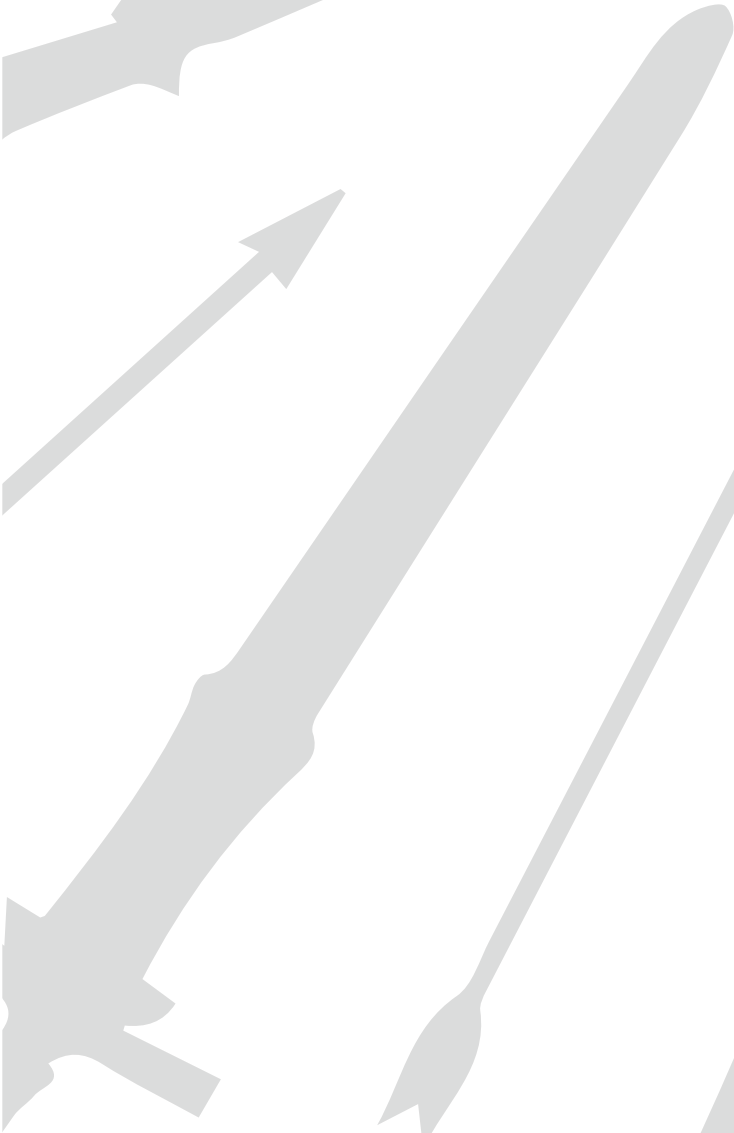
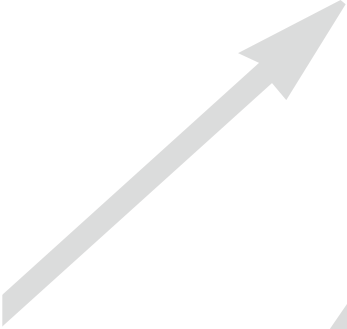
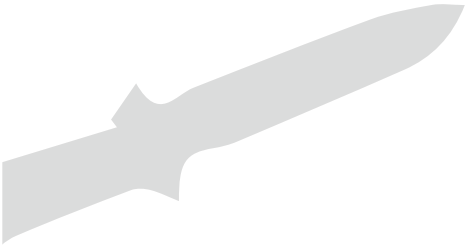
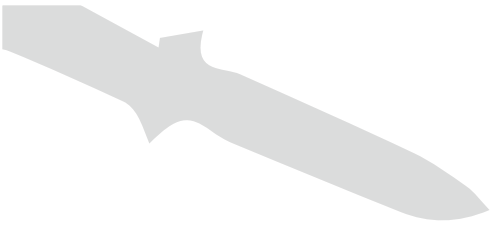
- The Replacement Principle: Remove the lies, Replace with Truth;
- The Rewire Principle: Rewire Your Brain, Renew Your Mind;
- The Reframe Principle: Reframe Your Mind, Restore Your Perspective;
- The Rejoice Principle: Revive Your Soul, Reclaim Your Life.

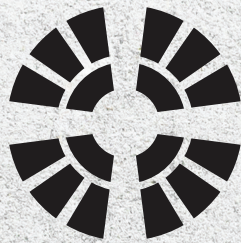
Which tool have you already started incorporating into your life? Which tool are you still learning more about?

8. How will you continue your momentum now that you’ve completed this study?
9. Close your study in prayer!

Discuss and decide on Options for Next Semester.
Celebrate Group Semester.







CHRIST FELLOWSHIP
Groups