

## Pathway Practices: The Faithful Anxiety Toolkit

Anxiety is not an indicator of weak faith. It was never meant to be something you had to pray away, suppress, or fear. Instead, what if anxiety—when held differently—could become a doorway to presence, a signal rather than a sentence?

**Pathway Practices: The Faithful Anxiety Toolkit** is not about quick fixes or striving for peace through sheer willpower. It's about walking a different way—toward wholeness, toward presence, and ultimately, toward Jesus. These practices are here to help you hold anxiety with faith, not against it.

### THE "BREATH & BELONGING" PRACTICE



#### ***For When Anxiety Feels Overwhelming***

**Based on:** *Genesis 2:7 – “Then the LORD God formed a man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life.”*

- **The idea:** Anxiety pulls us out of the present. Breath is how we return.

#### **How to Do It:**

1. **Inhale:** *Breathe in deeply, saying (in your mind), “I belong to God.”*
2. **Exhale:** *Let it out slowly, saying, “He holds me together.”*
3. **Repeat 3-5 times, noticing how your body softens into the moment.**

#### **Why it works:**

- **Interrupts anxious spirals** by slowing down the nervous system.
- **Reorients the mind toward truth** instead of runaway thoughts.
- **Restores a sense of belonging.** You are **held**.

# THE "JESUS IS ALREADY THERE" REFRAME



*For When You Feel Like You Have to Invite God Into the Moment*

**Based on:** *Psalm 139:8 – “If I make my bed in the depths, you are there.”*

- **The idea:** We act like we have to *invite* God into our struggles—when in reality, **He’s already there.**

**How to Use It:**

1. **Instead of praying, “God, please be here,” pray, “God, help me see that You are already here.”**
2. **Instead of “Take my anxiety away,” pray, “Show me where You are in this moment.”**
3. **Instead of “Help me not be afraid,” pray, “Let me experience Your presence, even in fear.”**

**Why it works:**

- **Flips prayer from desperation to awareness.**
- **Reframes anxiety as a space where God is already present,** not something that disqualifies you from Him.
- **Shifts from asking God to “fix it” to experiencing Him in it.**

# THE "CLOUD & CLAY" LENS



## *For When You Feel Like You're Failing at Faith*

**Based on:** *Isaiah 64:8* – “We are the clay, you are the potter.”

- **The idea:** When we feel lost, we think God wants us to be **strong, unshakeable, certain**. But God isn't shaping us into **unmovable stone**—He is shaping us like **clay**.

### **How to Use It:**

1. **When you feel weak, ask:** “*Is this a moment for surrender or formation?*”
2. **When you feel lost, ask:** “*Am I demanding certainty when God is offering trust?*”
3. **When you feel anxious, remind yourself:** “*Clay is never ruined in the potter's hands.*”

### **Why it works:**

- **Redefines growth.** You don't have to be **fully formed to be fully held**.
- **Takes pressure off of “knowing the plan.”** God isn't asking you to **have it all figured out**.
- **Makes room for process.** The potter **doesn't discard imperfect clay**—He keeps shaping it.

# THE "ANXIETY AS A SIGNAL, NOT A SENTENCE" FRAMEWORK



## *For When You're Stuck in Panic*

**Based on:** *2 Corinthians 12:9* – “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.”

- **The idea:** We treat anxiety like a **verdict** on our faith when it's actually **just a signal**.

### **How to Use It:**

1. **Pause & Name It:** *"What exactly am I feeling right now?"*
2. **Separate the Signal from the Story:**
  - *Signal:* *"I feel tension in my chest. My thoughts are racing."*
  - *Story:* *"This means something bad is about to happen."*
  - **Challenge the story:** *"Does it? Or is this just my body's way of alerting me?"*
3. **Ask, "Where is God in this?"**
  - **Anxiety doesn't mean you've lost faith. It's a moment to practice trust.**

### **Why it works:**

- **Separates anxiety from identity. It's not a personal failure—it's a reaction.**
- **Teaches a way to engage with it instead of fearing it.**
- **Helps you slow down before reacting.**

# THE "WALKING TOWARD JESUS" CHECK-IN



## *For When You're Worried You're Not Holy Enough*

**Based on:** *John 10:27* – “My sheep hear my voice; I know them, and they follow me.”

- **The idea:** The Christian life isn't about *achieving* holiness—it's about *moving toward* Jesus.

### **How to Use It:**

1. **Instead of asking, "Am I good enough?"** ask, "Am I moving toward Him?"
2. **Instead of, "Have I failed?"** ask, "What is my next step?"
3. **Instead of, "Am I in or out?"** ask, "Am I facing the right direction?"

### **Why it works:**

- **Takes the pressure off of “arriving.”** Growth isn't about *getting there*—it's about *walking toward*.
- **Kills the “I'm not good enough” spiral.** Because holiness isn't about *perfection*—it's about *direction*.
- **Helps when you feel distant from God.** Because the question isn't “*How far have I fallen?*”—it's “*Am I willing to turn back?*”