

meltdown

losing your mind & finding the mind of Christ

daily prayer (together as a group or aloud individually):

Holy Spirit, as I reflect, I ask you to create in me an attitude of humility that allows me to be open and objective. Give me eyes to observe those things you want me to see. Give me a new understanding, clarity of thought and clear direction. I want to be a better person - whole and holy. Lead me to set my mind on things above and to have the mind of Christ. I place my life in your hands. Amen.

this week's memory verse: James 1:2-4

Last week we looked at the first two behaviors - FOCUS & ATTITUDE - that change perspective and create clarity. This week we consider REFLECTION, AWARENESS, and GROWTH.

step one:

REFLECTION -- taking time to consider.

If we smell something burning, most of us will stop what we're doing to try and figure out where the smell is coming from. We may find our neighbor burning leaves or may discover we've left the oven on. A nagging cough or unexplained pain that won't go away can serve as a warning that something else is going on. Feelings about a memory also can be a signal that God wants us to look at something more closely.

Read through the following list of some things we shouldn't ignore:

1. **A strange noise your car is making**
2. **A pain in your body that won't go away**
3. **A complaint of your spouse**
4. **An explosive or exaggerated emotional response**
5. **A recurring dream**
6. **A nagging memory**

? **Discuss:** We should turn our attention to these when we experience them. Do you agree or disagree? Why or why not? **Take time** to think through the list above. **Discuss** the different situations and steps you might take to turn your attention to them.

(Or spend time thinking and journaling through the steps you might take.)

Example: As you're driving, you hear an odd knocking sound. You turn off the radio in order to hear it more clearly, then stop the car to listen. You investigate under the hood. You discover the problem and address it or are still unsure so you take it to the shop.

Read 2 Corinthians 13:5 and 1 Corinthians 11:28-31.

? **Reflection takes time**

Reflection requires rest and health

Reflection takes courage

Do you agree with these thoughts? Why, or why not?

step two: **Read** Romans 12:3.

AWARENESS

Most of us think we're more intelligent, more fair-minded, honest, and less prejudiced than the average person. We also believe we're better drivers!

In a study of college professors, 94% thought they were better at their jobs than the average professor. A research study of over one million high school students revealed that ALL of them believed they were easier to get along with than most other people.

Don't Believe Everything You Think -- Thomas Kida

We tend to perceive ourselves with our own personal bias.

Acknowledging this about ourselves is critical if we're to gain self-awareness.



Consider the following:

Awareness requires openness

Awareness requires observation

Awareness requires objectivity



Discuss: Why is awareness necessary? How difficult is it to have and maintain awareness on your own? Of what importance is community?

Read Ecclesiastes 4:9-10.

step three: **Read** James 1:2-4.

GROWTH



Silently finish the statements below with your initial thought:

Growth takes courage because...

Growth is hard work because...

Growth is an adventure because...



As a group, **share** some of your reasons. **Read** James 1:2-4 aloud.

Think & Discuss: How do I/could I create time for reflection and awareness?

If you aren't in a group, is there someone with whom you could share?

If not, will you commit to take a step toward community by being a part of the mid-week **Theological Reflection** group?

THIS WEEK

Ponder:

On what do I need to reflect?

Pray that...

...as individuals we'll do the hard work of seeking insight, clarity and change.

...groups will rise to a higher level of authentic community, grace, and love.