



## My ABC's (Anxiety. Behavior. Control)

What we are about to discuss is as simple as learning our ABC's, but it's so elementary that we overlook it. We all have some need to feel in control of our lives. But we forget what we can and cannot control. Instead of just focusing on what we can control, we begin to focus on what we cannot control. When we stop focusing on controlling ourselves and our own behavior, we begin to invest ourselves in a process of trying to control other people and situations. The result is that we begin to feel anxious and we begin to lose control of our own behavior.

People who live most of their lives in the world of trying to control what's beyond their control end up losing control of themselves and get labeled "control freaks" or "neat nuts" or "worry warts." They end up getting sick or making people around them feel sick. You may struggle with "control issues" or you may daily suffer from being around people who try to control you. Have you discovered that most people do not like to be told what to do or have someone standing over their shoulder making sure you do it their way or "the right way?"

People who feel insecure may carry around a good amount of social anxiety. They may hide their fears by trying to look in control or by making sure they are not put in situations where they could feel uncomfortable. They may also spend a lot of energy trying to control you so that you don't put them in situations that make them potentially feel scared or out of control. In the long run, instead of taking steps to overcome their fears and grow self-confidence, they may train those around them to also be afraid of new people and different situations. The more you build walls around you to protect yourself from people and change, the more energy you'll likely spend trying to control what you cannot control. Ironically, what you will bring on is what you fear the most: anxiety and out of control behavior.

God has a solution that may sound as simple as learning our ABC's. God invites us to cast all our anxiety upon Him. He knows that our behavior gets out of control, so He offers us His forgiveness, grace, and help. God invites us to surrender the control of our lives over to Him since God designed us to be dependent upon Him. If we try God's solution, we'll also discover the key to experiencing peace when people and circumstances around us spin out of control.

When we step outside God's design for our ABC's, we develop some of the following boundary problems:

- We try to control how others feel instead of dealing with our own feelings.
- We try to control the behavior of others instead of practicing self-control.
- We try to control what is beyond our control and feel out of control.
- We dislike ourselves and the people around us, and people dislike being around us.

If you think this health talk is a waste of your time and energy, stop and consider how much time and energy you have spent being upset about things you have had no control over like:

- How people negatively reacted to you.
- People not acting the way you want them to act.
- Your team losing the game.
- A friend, family member, supervisor, or co-worker not treating you the way they "should."
- Leaders making decisions you didn't agree with.

So today we have had another fresh reminder of our need to continue working to develop...

**Boundaries...Boundaries...Boundaries...**

*"Health Talks"* are designed to help us learn to talk and deal with one another in ways that build understanding and a healthy, growing, supportive, Christian community.