Session 3: Stepping Out of the Crazy and Into the Light.

This week we're going to study what scripture says about our crazy-making cycles, what they look like, and the solution that God has been offering us all along.

CONNECT

20% of your time

Pray to open this time together. Who wants to volunteer?

Connect question:

Where do you feel most yourself in your life right now?

Check-in questions:

Last week we talked about practical, tangible ways that we can start trusting Jesus with our cycles instead of trying to resist them ourselves. How did that play out this past week? If you didn't take the step you chose last week, what do you think held you back?

What stood out to you this week, either from our conversation last time or the Digging Deeper material?

LEARN

20% of your time

First, have someone read James 1:13–15 and 1 John 1:7 out loud for the group. The NLT versions are below.

> James 1:13–17
> "And remember, when you are being tempted, do not say, "God is tempting me." God is never tempted to do wrong, and he never tempts anyone

else. Temptation comes from our own desires, which entice us and drag us away. These desires give birth to sinful actions. And when sin is allowed to grow, it gives birth to death.
So don't be misled, my dear brothers and sisters. Whatever is good and perfect is a gift coming down to us from God our Father, who created all the lights in the heavens. He never changes or casts a shifting shadow."

1 John 1:7
"But if we are living in the light, as God is in the light, then we have fellowship with each other, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, cleanses us from all sin."

Now, watch the "Stepping Out of the Crazy and Into the Light" video.

LIVE

Live
60% of your time
Time of Reflection:
Spend five minutes in silence to contemplate and meditate on 1 John 1:7. Reflect on this passage in silence, re-reading it, taking notes, and praying. Use the prayers below as a guide if helpful.

As I read this, God please make it clear what word or truth you want me to understand more fully.
God, show me areas of this verse that I struggle to fully trust you with.
God, what do you want to communicate to me through this?

Apply:

What faith step is God inviting me to take?

This is not a theoretical study or an intellectual exercise. Following Jesus requires doing what he says and stepping into the light. We want to invite you to share your cycle with this group *if you feel you have built enough trust to share*. If you haven't, or you do not feel safe in this group yet, that is perfectly okay. However, **you do need to identify one person that you can commit to sharing your cycle within your life**—this is how we step into the light and out of the crazy. As 1 Corinthians 10:13 (NIV) says, "No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it." This is the way God has provided out of our crazy-making cycles. We can bring our cycles into the light with another.

As we discussed in our first meeting, many of us struggle to identify who is safe to share with and who is not. Here's a reminder of a few things to look for to determine if someone is safe:

You have experienced their integrity. They are consistent with what they say and how they live.

They model vulnerability. One way to evaluate this is whether they have other people that they openly share within a trusting relationship.

They do not try to fix you, belittle you, or preach at you.

They will maintain confidentiality. One way to evaluate this is by their tendency to gossip or talk about others.

You trust that they would respond with gratitude that you shared and be able to walk alongside you moving forward.

No one will respond perfectly. Only Jesus is perfectly trustworthy and consistent. But Jesus often loves us through the arms, eyes, and voices of those we trust in our lives.

Share:

If you are the leader, we invite you to share first. There are a few questions below that you can use as a guide. Then, whoever is comfortable sharing can go next. Allow Jesus to remind you of who you are and infuse you with his courage. Feel free to take a few moments to think through the following questions.

***TIP*: If in a group with men and women, it is often valuable to periodically meet separately as men and women to foster an environment for vulnerability. This might be a great time to do that as a group.**

My cycle usually looks like…
I think some of my triggers are…
The self-thoughts I struggle with usually sound like…
The hardest part of the cycle for me is…

When whoever is comfortable sharing with the group has gone, discuss the questions below together.

If you didn't share your cycle, share who you will share with over the next week.

It's frightening to share so vulnerably with a group, and sometimes afterward we feel a spike of fear. "What do they think of me now?" might go through our heads. How can you all love and encourage each other over the next week,

reminding each other that you are loved, that you belong, and that you are a beloved saint?

Pray to close out this time together.

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Published by RightNow Ministries International

6300 Henneman Way
McKinney, TX 75070
www.rightnow.org

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