

OVERCOMING SPIRITUAL & MENTAL TRAPS

THE OVERTHINKING TRAP

INTRODUCTION

This teaching series is looking at and reflecting on some spiritual and mental traps that could possibly hold us back when it comes to launching and multiplying Communities on Mission

These traps can be like an invisible force that does not let us move forward. Sometimes just identifying and calling them out by name can make a real difference. Other times we need to dig deeper and reflect on how we can overcome them.

In this session we want to overcome the OVERTHINKING trap.

STEP #1



Reflection

The Living Bible interprets Proverbs 16:9 as saying, “We should make plans counting on God to direct us.”

What does the phrase: “counting on God to direct” indicate to you?

What does that statement say about trusting in God as you move forward?

When you overthink and delay initiating a plan, is it possible that you are counting on some other resource or strength to achieve successful implementation? What might that be? Thoughts?

STEP #2



Watch the Video

STEP #3:



Answer reflection questions

REFLECTION-QUESTION #1:

As we consider the relationship of overthinking and taking action, the key lies in finding a balance between the two. On one hand, we don't want to offer God less than our best, or create chaos and negative outcomes by a lack of thoughtfulness; but on the other hand, we don't want to become so self-reliant that the outcome depends solely on our ability, rather than the Spirit's movement.

What are some tools you can use to find balance between action and contemplation?

REFLECTION-QUESTION #2:

“While pastoring a multicultural church and living overseas I observed with amusement how other cultures could ‘make something happen’ and take action much faster than those of us raised in the US culture. I began to recognize that, in some cases, overthinking has cultural roots. This is just one potential example of why some of us overthink tasks. On another occasion, I realized that I tend to overthink or over-plan an event because of insecurities. Internally I wonder: ‘Will I be perceived as unprepared or inadequate in the eyes of others?’” - Jim Cooper, Church in Action Coach

As you can see, overthinking affects us for many different reasons and different scenarios.

Can you think of other underlying reasons we overthink?

REFLECTION-QUESTION #3:

The trap of overthinking has negative results. For instance, psychologists indicate that overthinking leads to increased stress and increased stress increases ineffectiveness.

Can you think of other negative effects of overthinking?

REFLECTION-QUESTION #4:

In a coaching session one of the participants made an astute observation; it went something like this...

“Most of us have been trained by an Industrial Age production-centered mentality. That is, we are trained for the ‘rolling-out’ of a product. We go through various steps that are very structured, such as: research, strategy development, market identification, implementation, etc. But we are in a different era; the way forward is much more organic. It is slower than the industrial ‘roll-out’ model. We have to be willing to have patience with this process and have grace for ourselves when it gets ‘messy.’”

In the implementation of Communities on Mission what may this “messy-ness” look like?

What is lacking in your launch of a Communities on Mission that absolutely must be accomplished (the 70% Philip refers to in the video)?

What can wait (the things that could be added or “reversed” in the video)?
