

Keys to Overcoming Destructive Thoughts  
Lesson 02 in the series, "Winning the Battle in Your Mind"

A. We need to guard our hearts against destructive thoughts.

"Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it." Proverbs 4:23 (NIV)

"Knowing their thoughts, Jesus said, 'Why do you entertain evil thoughts in your hearts?'"  
Matthew 9:4 (NIV)

"For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ." 2 Corinthians 10:3-5 (NKJV & NIV)

B. Five Keys to Overcoming Destructive Thoughts:

1. Bring them into the light.

"Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them."  
Ephesians 5:11 (NLT)

"Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The earnest prayer of a righteous person has great power and produces wonderful results."  
James 5:16 (NLT)

2. Remove yourself from whatever triggers destructive thoughts in your life.

"Run from anything that stimulates youthful lusts. Instead, pursue righteous living, faithfulness, love, and peace. Enjoy the companionship of those who call on the Lord with pure hearts."  
2 Timothy 2:22 (NLT)

"So if your hand or foot causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It's better to enter eternal life with only one hand or one foot than to be thrown into eternal fire with both of your hands and feet. And if your eye causes you to sin, gouge it out and throw it away. It's better to enter eternal life with only one eye than to have two eyes and be thrown into the fire of hell."  
Matthew 18:8-9 (NLT)

3. Fix your thoughts/set your mind.

"And now, dear brothers and sisters, one final thing. Fix your thoughts on what is true, and honorable, and right, and pure, and lovely, and admirable. Think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise." Philippians 4:8 (NLT)

"Those who live according to the flesh have their minds set on what the flesh desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires. The mind governed by the flesh is death, but the mind governed by the Spirit is life and peace."  
Romans 8:5-6 (NIV)

4. Stay prepared and stand your ground.

"Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people."  
Ephesians 6:10-18 (NIV)

5. Train your mind to think right.

“All athletes are disciplined in their training. They do it to win a prize that will fade away, but we do it for an eternal prize. So I run with purpose in every step. I am not just shadowboxing. I discipline my body like an athlete, training it to do what it should. Otherwise, I fear that after preaching to others I myself might be disqualified.” 1 Corinthians 9:25-27 (NLT)

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