

YOU'RE STRONGER THAN YOU THINK

WORKBOOK

THE POWER TO
DO WHAT YOU FEEL
YOU CAN'T



Dr. Les Parrott

#1 *NEW YORK TIMES* BESTSELLING AUTHOR

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You're Stronger Than You Think Workbook: The Power to Do What You Feel You Can't

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The quotation on page iii is from Philippians 4:13 (NLT).

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SECTION 1

EXERCISES AND STUDY

This section is designed for your own personal exploration. There's no need to share it with anyone unless you choose to. This section will help you understand and apply the results of the online **Strength Profile** assessment. Here you will be able to explore your personality further and discover where you can find strength in your mind, heart, and soul. Each chapter in this section corresponds to a chapter from book *You're Stronger Than You Think*. So to get the most out of this workbook, you'll want to read the corresponding chapter in the book. I have also included a Bible study on a person from the Scriptures who is a good case study for the virtue you're studying. The Bible studies are for those interested in digging deeper and discovering the core biblical truths behind the life principles presented in *You're Stronger Than You Think*.

Here's a quick glimpse at what you'll find in each chapter.



GETTING PERSONAL

Each chapter begins with several questions about your reactions to the chapter you have read in *You're Stronger Than You Think*. This is a place

to respond to what you have read. Don't hold back. Put into words your fears and concerns. Express your "aha" reactions to the book. The exercise of writing will help you to clarify your feelings so you can get at the crux of what's going on in your life. This is a very important step in moving forward and tapping the strength of your mind, heart, and soul.

EXPLORING YOUR STRENGTH PROFILE

This part of the chapter will give you time to respond to the results of your **Strength Profile** assessment. It will help you to crystallize your thoughts on what type of person you are and how best to tap the strength God has placed in your mind, heart, and soul. This part will guide you through a series of self-tests, questions, and quizzes to help you think about how you personally would apply each principle to your everyday life—from clearing your head to taking necessary risks.

GOING DEEPER: A PERSONAL STUDY OF GOD'S WORD

The Bible study will always be at the end of the chapter for those who want to dig deeper into the biblical truths behind these life principles. I decided to focus the Bible studies on people in the Bible. Why? Because stories from real life are memorable. And because the stories in the Bible so vividly illustrate the principles in *You're Stronger Than You Think*. I hope that this scriptural study will give you insights into these important truths about how your mind, heart, and soul work. With these truths, we can harness the God-given strength within us to live fruitful and fulfilling lives.

PART 1
**THE POWER
OF YOUR MIND**



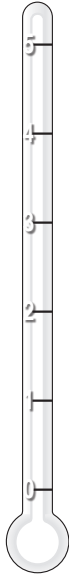
In this section, we'll explore two ways to find God's power in your mind: thinking simply and thinking expectantly.

If I were to x-ray your mind, admittedly an impossibility, and measure whether you were tapping into God's strength by thinking simply and/or thinking expectantly, what do you think I would find? Your **Strength Profile Report** may be the best means you have of answering that question. Using that information, note where you stand on the continuum below.

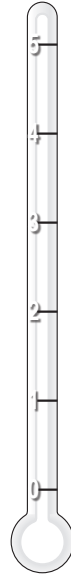


What do you make of this? What thoughts and desires come to mind when you recognize where you are on this continuum?

Draw a line on each of the two thermometers below to rank, in your own opinion, the respective importance of each of these thoughts and desires to you.



- 5—I'm desperate to do this.
- 4—I know I'd be a better person if I did this.
- 3—I need to do this.
- 2—I'd probably benefit from doing this.
- 1—This could be helpful for me.
- 0—I've got a complete lock on this already.



**Learn to Think Simply
by Clearing Your Head**

**Learn to Think Expectantly
by Cultivating Anticipation**

Now, consider why you ranked each of them the way you did.

Think Simply:

Think Expectantly:

1

THINK SIMPLY THERE'S STRENGTH IN CLEARING YOUR HEAD



GETTING PERSONAL

Now that you've read chapter 1 of *You're Stronger Than You Think*, consider the following questions and write a few notes on your thoughts.



What two or three thoughts, fears, or pressures have been clouding your mind recently? Be as specific as possible.



When are you most likely to overthink, and what kinds of issues cause you to do so? In other words, what are the triggers in your mind? Use examples.

○ Note one specific time when you were able to quiet your mind, become more intuitive, and hear the sacred gift of that “still, small voice.” When and where did this happen? What was the result?

EXPLORING YOUR STRENGTH PROFILE

G Take a moment to read the page of your online profile that’s related to thinking simply. On the following scale, how accurately do you think this page describes you?

NOT ACCURATE

VERY ACCURATE

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

With which sentence from this personalized paragraph on your report do you resonate most? Why?

With which sentence from this paragraph do you disagree most? Why?

TAKING INVENTORY OF WHAT STRAINS YOUR BRAIN

G Below is a list of some of the most common areas about which we can think too much. In other words, these are the areas where we are most likely to strain our brains. Use the space to the right of each area to jot

down one example from your own life in that area. In other words, next to each item, write a note about a situation, a concern, a stress, or a challenge. Even if you don't have a pressing concern related to one of them, force yourself to write something.

Appearance: _____

Family: _____

Friendships: _____

Future: _____

Health: _____

Money: _____

Relatives: _____

Work/Career: _____

World Issues: _____

Other: _____

Now, circle the two areas in the list above that are most likely to cause you to overthink. In the space below, write the ruminating thought or fear, self-defeating idea or notion, or the unhelpful mental tape that seems to replay in your mind about these two areas. Also, note when these mind fogs are most likely to roll into your head.

 Area 1: _____

Self-Defeating Thought _____

Time and Place It Occurs _____



Area 2: _____

Self-Defeating Thought _____

Time and Place It Occurs _____



CLEARING YOUR HEAD

Psychologists have identified several means of helping people curb their tendencies to overthink. Below is a small sample of some of these proven techniques. Use the space next to each one to evaluate its relevance to being of potential help to you.

Thought Stopping

The basis of this technique is that you consciously issue the command *Stop!* when you experience repeated negative or distorted thoughts—or simply when your mind is thinking too much. You then replace the negative or distorted thought with something more positive. If you use “thought stopping,” you become aware of unhealthy thought chains and divert your attention from them.

I’m not inclined to try this because _____ .

I’m inclined to try this because _____ .

Distracting Yourself

Never underestimate the power of distraction when you find yourself ruminating on a negative experience or rehearsing fearful events. When you busy yourself with another activity, your mind is likely to slow down. What activities make you feel happy, curious, peaceful, amused, or proud? List some activities you can do in place of overthinking, and be ready to implement them when you start to strain your brain.

I'm not inclined to try this because _____ .

I'm inclined to try this because _____ .

Organizing Your Emotions

When your emotions are all over the place, your thoughts will usually be all over the place as well. For instance, if you have been upset and you don't know why, it's likely that your mind has been in overdrive. Take a blank sheet of paper, and write down every thought that enters your mind for about five minutes; then determine the predominant emotion you have about that thought. Finally, zero in on the emotions that are most troubling, and see what your thinking is doing to stir up those emotions.

I'm not inclined to try this because _____ .

I'm inclined to try this because _____ .



GOING DEEPER: A PERSONAL STUDY OF GOD'S WORD

One of the most effective ways to apply biblical principles to our lives is to explore how a major personality in the Bible did so. For this reason, each of the six Bible studies in this workbook will direct your study toward one of these biblical figures: Moses (Think Simply), Elijah (Think Expectantly), Paul (Feel Vulnerable), Jesus (Feel Connected), James and John (Be Emptied), and Joshua (Be Bold).

The Biblical Personality: Moses

According to the book of Exodus, Moses was born in a time when his people, the children of Israel, were increasing in number. The Egyptian Pharaoh, worried that the Israelites might join with Egypt's enemies, ordered the midwives to kill all Hebrew boys at birth. Rather than give him up to be killed, Moses' mother set him adrift in the Nile, where he was found and then adopted by Pharaoh's daughter. Moses was raised in the royal family but was forced to run for his life after killing an Egyptian

slave master. He ended up in far-off Midian, tending sheep for his father-in-law, Jethro. Forty years later, Moses returned to Egypt and led the Exodus that followed the ten plagues that God unleashed on the Egyptians. Moses received the Ten Commandments on Mount Sinai and is credited with writing much of the first five books of the Old Testament. Despite living to the age of 120, Moses died before the Israelites entered the Promised Land.

The Setup

In the later part of Moses' life, he understood the principle of thinking simply. He was an Israelite raised in Pharaoh's household. However, in a moment of rage, Moses killed an Egyptian slave master and was forced to run for his life. Now, forty years later, Moses is living in Midian, tending sheep. Not exactly the life he had dreamed of as a boy growing up in the royal household.

But that's not the end of his story. Moses has an encounter with God and is given a mission to set his people free from slavery in Egypt. Almost immediately, Moses' mind becomes filled with what-ifs and how-tos and no-ways! Standing in the very presence of God, Moses becomes paralyzed by fear, indecision, and excuses.

Can You Relate?

Have you ever been overwhelmed by worry, anxiety, too much information, too many possibilities, or circumstances that seem far beyond your ability to handle? These are the moments when, like Moses, we can tap into God's power within us by thinking simply. The following passage paints the picture:

One day Moses was tending the flock of his father-in-law, Jethro, the priest of Midian. He led the flock far into the wilderness and came to Sinai, the mountain of God. There the angel of the LORD appeared to him in a blazing fire from the middle of a bush. Moses stared in amazement. Though the bush was engulfed in flames, it didn't burn

up. “This is amazing,” Moses said to himself. “Why isn’t that bush burning up? I must go see it.”

When the LORD saw Moses coming to take a closer look, God called to him from the middle of the bush, “Moses! Moses!”

“Here I am!” Moses replied.

“Do not come any closer,” the LORD warned. “Take off your sandals, for you are standing on holy ground. I am the God of your father—the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.” When Moses heard this, he covered his face because he was afraid to look at God. (Exodus 3:1-6)

○ Put yourself in Moses’ sandals. You’ve been living in Midian for forty years. You’ve been tending sheep. Your life in Egypt is a distant memory, but you know you are still a wanted man back there. Write down what you hear God saying to you (based on this passage and on what God said to Moses) and how you feel about it.

During Moses’ conversation with God, he offers various reasons for why he cannot do what God is asking him to do. Each time, God responds to Moses’ protests. Consider what is going through Moses’ mind in the following passage:

Moses protested to God, “Who am I to appear before Pharaoh? Who am I to lead the people of Israel out of Egypt?”

God answered, “I will be with you. And this is your sign that I am the one who has sent you: When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you will worship God at this very mountain.”

(Exodus 3:11-12)

○ Moses' mind is obviously clouded by feelings of inadequacy—so much so that he asks, “Who am I to do this?” Consider a time in your own life when you asked a similar question of God. What was going on, and how did God respond to you?

Moses continues his protest:

“If I go to the people of Israel and tell them, ‘The God of your ancestors has sent me to you,’ they will ask me, ‘What is his name?’ Then what should I tell them?”

God replied to Moses, “I AM WHO I AM. Say this to the people of Israel: I AM has sent me to you.” (Exodus 3:13-14)

○ Again, Moses does not yet have clarity in his thinking. He's inventing negative scenarios and playing the what-if game in his head. God's answer to Moses' whining is a bit surprising (and it became one of the most famous verses in the Torah). Why would God focus on his own identity in this moment instead of on who Moses was? What does that do to help us clear our minds?

But Moses still hasn't finished raising objections:

Moses protested again, “What if they won't believe me or listen to me? What if they say, ‘The LORD never appeared to you?’”

Then the LORD asked him, “What is that in your hand?”

“A shepherd's staff,” Moses replied.

“Throw it down on the ground,” the LORD told him. So Moses threw down the staff, and it turned into a snake! Moses jumped back.

Then the LORD told him, “Reach out and grab its tail.” So Moses reached out and grabbed it, and it turned back into a shepherd’s staff in his hand.

“Perform this sign,” the LORD told him. “Then they will believe that the LORD, the God of their ancestors—the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob—really has appeared to you.”
(Exodus 4:1-5)

○ Moses obviously needed a tangible sign to help him calm his mind and to give him strength. Why might that be? Consider a time in your own life when you needed something tangible (e.g., an encouraging word, an answer to a prayer, or money to meet a need) to help calm your mind or give you strength. What happened?

Moses’ previous objections seem to have had no effect on God, so now he resorts to pleading:

“O Lord, I’m not very good with words. I never have been, and I’m not now, even though you have spoken to me. I get tongue-tied, and my words get tangled.”

Then the LORD asked Moses, “Who makes a person’s mouth? Who decides whether people speak or do not speak, hear or do not hear, see or do not see? Is it not I, the LORD? Now go! I will be with you as you speak, and I will instruct you in what to say.”

But Moses again pleaded, “Lord, please! Send anyone else.”
(Exodus 4:10-13)

Moses clearly felt that he lacked the skills necessary to complete the task before him. What promise does God make to bring calm to Moses' mind and his swirling thoughts? To be with him, of course. Yet even so, Moses' mind still races. He needs time for everything to sink in.

○ Consider a time when you felt you lacked the resources in yourself to face a challenge. How would God's promise to Moses (to give him what he needed when he needed it most) help give you strength? Be specific.

The Point of the Passage

Exodus 3:4 makes this fascinating statement, "When the LORD saw Moses coming to take a closer look, God called to him from the middle of the bush." What's the point? It's this: Although God could have spoken to Moses at any time, he waited to speak until Moses had quieted his mind a bit, turned aside from what he was doing to look and listen. In other words, Moses heard God's voice only when he was looking for God.

Other Passages to Ponder

In order to start thinking simply, we need to stop what we are doing, clear our minds, and listen to what God might be saying to us. The verses below speak to this issue. Take a moment to consider each one and how it may apply to you, perhaps selecting one of them to meditate on in the coming days.

Jesus often withdrew to the wilderness for prayer. (Luke 5:16)

Be still, and know that I am God!

I will be honored by every nation.

I will be honored throughout the world. (Psalm 46:10)

*This is what the Sovereign LORD,
the Holy One of Israel, says:
“Only in returning to me
and resting in me will you be saved.
In quietness and confidence is your strength.
But you would have none of it.” (Isaiah 30:15)*

*If you need wisdom, ask our generous God, and he will give it to you.
He will not rebuke you for asking. (James 1:5)*

Prayer

Lord, you are the One who gives us exactly what we need when we need it most. In those moments when I feel overwhelmed by circumstances or tasks that seem too big for me, help me to be still and know that you are God. Clear my mind, and show me what to do. Give me the strength that comes from thinking simply. Amen.