



The FASTER Scale

FLESH SERIES

Forgetting Priorities
Anxiety
Speeding Up
Ticked Off
Exhausted
Relapse

Look at the FASTER Scale on the following pages as you read this description or check out the online version at fasterscaleapp.com. The FASTER Scale is an amazing tool that was developed by a Christian counselor named Michael Dye. Throughout decades of working with individuals struggling with habitual sin, Michael saw the subconscious and emotional things that would take place in someone's life before they ended up back in their habitual sin, otherwise known as Relapse. "FASTER" is an acronym for Forgetting Priorities, Anxiety, Speeding Up, Ticked Off, Exhausted, and Relapse. Jesus says in John 10:10 that He came to bring us abundant life. Our goal is to experience this abundant life as we live in restoration, where we are experiencing God, connected with others and sticking to our priorities. But the problem is we so quickly forget priorities on a daily basis and become consumed by the details and tasks of our lives. We take life into our own hands and move away from trusting God. These choices are how we begin the slow descent to Relapse on the FASTER Scale. It begins by Forgetting Priorities and experiencing one or more of the behaviors or thoughts in that category. If we don't deal with those, we are soon in Anxiety, then so on, all the way down the scale to Relapse, which is however we cope when we're at the end of our rope.

FACTS ABOUT THE FASTER SCALE (From Living Free¹)

1. It's a downward only scale. You can't go back up; you can only get off of it by addressing the Double Bind.
2. Each category stacks on top of one another; you don't leave one and go to the next. Example: If I'm in Speeding Up then I'm also in Anxiety and Forgetting Priorities.
3. The scale is generic until you become self-aware. All of us have different ways of experiencing each category.
4. You can't skip a category of the scale.
5. At a minimum, a relapse is your go-to coping mechanism when you are emotionally exhausted. It could be sexual sin, drinking alcohol excessively, binging on Netflix or video games, overeating, etc.

THE DOUBLE BIND (From Living Free¹)

A Double Bind is when you have a decision to make and are stuck between a rock and a hard place. One side of the bind is the easier choice and involves going down the FASTER Scale and trusting your coping mechanisms. The other side of the bind, the harder choice, involves surrendering to God by dealing with the issues at hand and the underlying emotions or behaviors you are experiencing. Taking the harder choice of the Double Bind, involves a Spirit-filled step of faith, and allows you to get off of the FASTER Scale.

Example 1: I am in Anxiety on the FASTER Scale because I have been procrastinating with studying for the test I have next week. I'm really worried because if I don't get an A on the test, I won't get an A in the class. I've been taking the easier choice: I have been procrastinating so much that I went from Forgetting Priorities to now being pretty fearful and in Anxiety. The harder choice probably involves the following: plan out when I will study each day and ask a friend to encourage me and hold me accountable so I don't procrastinate, and identify and address my fears of getting a bad grade with the truth of who I am in Christ (am I fearing feeling like a failure, feeling rejected by my parents or friends if I don't get straight A's, or something else?). Rather than living in fear, I can take these steps of faith in the power of the Holy Spirit and trust God with the tasks He has called me to do. If I don't deal with this now, I'll continue to go down the FASTER Scale and eventually relapse.

Example 2: I'm Ticked Off on the FASTER Scale because my friend and I got into an argument. I took the easier choice here by going down the FASTER Scale and getting Ticked Off. Now, I have to take the harder choice, which is to address the fear behind my anger (normally a fear of rejection) and not being heard by my friend with the truth of who I am in Christ. I can ask God's forgiveness for my anger and I can dwell on past experiences of God's love and provision for me to help me believe the truth. I could also make a phone call to process my emotions. This is how I can take the harder choice of the Double Bind and get off the FASTER Scale.

F.A.S.T.E.R. RELAPSE AWARENESS SCALE (Adapted from The Genesis Process by Michael Dye)

Restoration **(accepting life on God's terms, with trust, vulnerability, and gratitude)**

- No current secrets
- Working to resolve problems, identifying fears and feelings
- Keeping commitments to meetings, prayer, family, church, people, goals and self
- Being open and honest, making eye contact
- Reaching out to others
- Increasing in relationships with God and others
- True accountability

Forgetting Priorities (start believing the present circumstances and start moving away from trusting God; denial; flight; a change in what's important; how you spend your time and what you think about)

- Secrets
- Less time/energy for God, meetings, church
- Avoiding support and accountability people
- Superficial conversations
- Sarcasm
- Isolating
- Changes in goals
- Obsessed with relationships
- Breaking promises and commitments
- Neglecting family
- Preoccupation with material things: TV, computers, other entertainment
- Procrastination
- Lying
- Over-confidence
- Bored
- Hiding money

Forgetting Priorities will lead to:

Anxiety (a growing noise of undefined fear; getting energy from emotions)

- Worry, using profanity, being fearful
- Being resentful
- Replaying old negative thoughts
- Perfectionism
- Judging other's motives
- Making unrealistic goals and to-do lists
- Mind-reading
- Fantasy, co-dependent rescuing
- Sleep problems, trouble concentrating, seeking drama
- Gossip
- Using OTC medication for pain, sleep, or weight control
- Flirting

Anxiety leads to:

Speeding Up (trying to outrun the anxiety, which is usually the first sign of depression)

- Super busy and always in a hurry (finding good reason to justify the busyness), workaholic, can't relax
- Avoiding slowing down
- Feeling driven
- Can't turn off thoughts
- Skipping meals
- Binge eating (usually at night)
- Overspending
- Can't identify own feelings/needs
- Repetitive negative thoughts
- Irritable
- Dramatic mood swing
- Too much caffeine
- Over-exercising
- Nervousness
- Difficulty being alone and/or with people
- Difficulty listening to others
- Making excuses for having to "do it all"

Speeding Up leads to:

Ticked Off (getting adrenaline high from anger and aggression)

- Procrastination causing crisis in money, work, relationships
- Increasing sarcasm
- Black and white (all or nothing) thinking
- Feeling alone
- Nobody understands
- Overreacting, road rage
- Constant resentments
- Pushing others away
- Increasing isolation
- Blaming
- Arguing
- Irrational thinking
- Can't take criticism
- Defensive
- People avoiding you
- Needing to be right
- Digestive problems
- Headaches
- Obsessive (stuck) thoughts
- Can't forgive
- Feeling superior
- Using intimidation

Ticked Off then leads to:

Exhausted (loss of physical and emotional energy; coming off the adrenaline high, onset of depression)

- Depressed
- Panicked
- Confused
- Hopelessness
- Sleeping too much or too little
- Can't cope
- Overwhelmed
- Crying for "no reason"
- Can't think
- Forgetful
- Pessimistic
- Helpless
- Tired
- Numb
- Wanting to run
- Constant cravings for old coping behaviors
- Thinking of using sex, drugs, or alcohol
- Seeking old unhealthy people and places
- Really isolating
- People angry with you
- Self abuse
- Suicidal thoughts
- Spontaneous crying
- No goals
- Survival mode
- Not returning phone calls
- Missing work
- Irritability
- No appetite

Exhausted then leads to:

Relapse (returning to the place you swore you would never go again)

- Giving up and giving in
- Out of control
- Lost in your addiction
- Lying to yourself and others
- Feeling you just can't manage without your coping behaviors, at least for now
- Result is reinforcement of shame, guilt, condemnation and feelings of abandonment and being alone

FASTER SCALE EXERCISE

1. Underline all the behaviors on the FASTER Scale that you identify with.
2. Circle the most powerful one in each section. Write it in the corresponding heading in the following pages.
3. Answer these three questions:
 - A. How does it affect me? How do I act and feel?
 - B. How does it affect the most important people in my life?
 - C. Why do I do this? What is the benefit for me?

Restoration:

A.

B.

C.

Forgetting Priorities:

A.

B.

C.

Anxiety:

A.

B.

C.

Speeding Up:

A.

B.

C.

Ticked Off:

A.

B.

C.

Exhausted:

A.

B.

C.

Relapse:

A.

B.

C.