

- a. Do you buy it? Do you think that practicing these principles would help you better embrace the present and conquer worries about the past or future?
 - b. Which of these three aspects of mindfulness is most difficult for you – and why?
5. Psalm 34:14 says, “Seek peace and pursue it.” In other words, we’re supposed to actively “pursue” peace, rather than just waiting passively to receive it. Mindfulness is one way to pursue peace, but not the only way. **Step 2 for cultivating inner peace: practice daily prioritizing.** We tend to live reactively, letting other people and external events drive our typical day. This is often called “firefighting” or operating by the seat of your pants. Instead, Vivian encouraged us to get in the habit of centering ourselves each morning by spending time in prayer and listing our most important priorities for the day in order of importance.
- a. Read Mark 1:35. Why do you think Jesus was so determined to regularly spend time in prayer before starting his day?
 - b. What keeps us from doing the same?
 - c. Let’s practice. Take two minutes in silent prayer right now to talk to God about two or three things that should be your highest priorities for tomorrow. Then let’s share what we come up with.
 - d. Do you think it would help you to make this a regular morning practice? Why or why not?
6. **Step 3 for cultivating inner peace: learn to accept yourself.** Vivian said, “Accepting yourself and loving yourself are not acts of selfishness or narcissism. They are requirements for successful and peaceful life.” She then identified several things that can keep us from loving ourselves:
- a. **Comparing ourselves to others.** Do you truly believe God has created you (both your strengths and weaknesses) as you are for an important reason? Why or why not?
 - b. **Replaying old tapes of things said to us or about us.** What old negative tapes tend to run in your brain? Why is it so hard to stop replaying those tapes?
 - c. **Refusing to accept and internalize complements directed toward us.** What’s one of the nicest things anybody’s ever said about you? Do you believe it?
 - d. **Putting yourself down.** Do you tend to put yourself down? In what ways?
 - e. Which one of the foregoing four obstacles to loving yourself do you most need to get in the habit of recognizing, stopping, and positively reprogramming?