

# HOW **NOT** TO BE **YOUR OWN WORST ENEMY**

## Pay Attention

Have you ever noticed that we rarely have to sell ourselves on good ideas? When a course of action is helpful, purposeful, or redemptive, these qualities are usually self-evident. Instead, it is often our *destructive* decisions that require a sales pitch—long discursive inner arguments where we talk ourselves into something using justification and selective reasoning. So how can a person pursue the things that are good for them, while avoiding things that aren't? The first step is to pay attention for this exact tension. And when you notice it, don't start the argument. Listen to that inner voice of hesitation.

### Start Talking

1. Have you ever talked yourself into a bad purchase? What was it? What caused your initial reticence to go through with it? How did it all turn out?
2. What's the worst sales pitch or pickup line you've ever received? What's the worst one you've ever used?

### Looking Back

1. Last week, we talked about the importance of intentionally jumping out of our comfortable "boxes." What did you do this week to avoid those habits, routines, and patterns of comfort you typically default to in order to feel a sense of security?
2. Did you notice any invitations into a riskier form of faith this week? Did you identify any situations in which it was necessary for you to get uncomfortable in order to get involved? How did you respond?
3. When did you find yourself scared this past week? What was the fear related to? How did you respond?



### **What About You?**

1. When are you most prone to sell yourself on a bad idea?
2. What does it sound like? What's your pitch?
3. When have you been your own worst enemy in the course of your life?
4. Did an internal conflict precede the decision(s) that led to your regrettable outcome?
5. What early warning signs can you use to tell when you're about to give yourself a sales pitch on a bad idea?

### **Look It Up**

*Read the Following Passages: 1 Samuel 24: 2–4, 7, 12*

6. What thoughts do you imagine captured David's imagination during the tense moment in which he had to choose whether to kill Saul?
7. Why do you think he was willing to listen to his conscience in this scenario?
8. How did David's men react to his decision? Why?
9. Saul was neither an excellent person, nor a great king. So why didn't David act to remove him on the grounds that potentially harmful behavior would have been justified by the circumstances?
10. How does David's behavior here contrast with Saul's?

### **Putting It All Together**

1. What would it look like if you intentionally decided to pause and pinpoint the cause of your hesitation this week– to explore, rather than ignore, your conscience?
2. What can you do to make that happen over the next few days?
3. What will you tell yourself when you're giving yourself a sales pitch this week?
4. Andy reminded us that every habit begins with a first time. Where do you see yourself potentially already on the slide towards a bad decision that will eventually make you your own worst enemy?
5. What can you do to reverse course?

