



DEPRESSION

**BRINGING LIGHT TO THE
DARKNESS**

September 2019
Help & Hope Workshops
Colonial Care Ministry

September 28, 2019

SCHEDULE

Session 1: Depression – Description and Definition

9:00 am – 10:00 am

Session 2: Depression in the Scriptures and History

10:10 am – 11:00 am

Session 3: Help for Depression

11:10 am – 12:00 pm

LUNCH BREAK

12:00 pm – 1:00 pm

Session 4: Helping Others with Depression

1:00 pm – 1:50 pm

Session 5: Panel Discussion/Q&A

2:00 pm – 3:00 pm

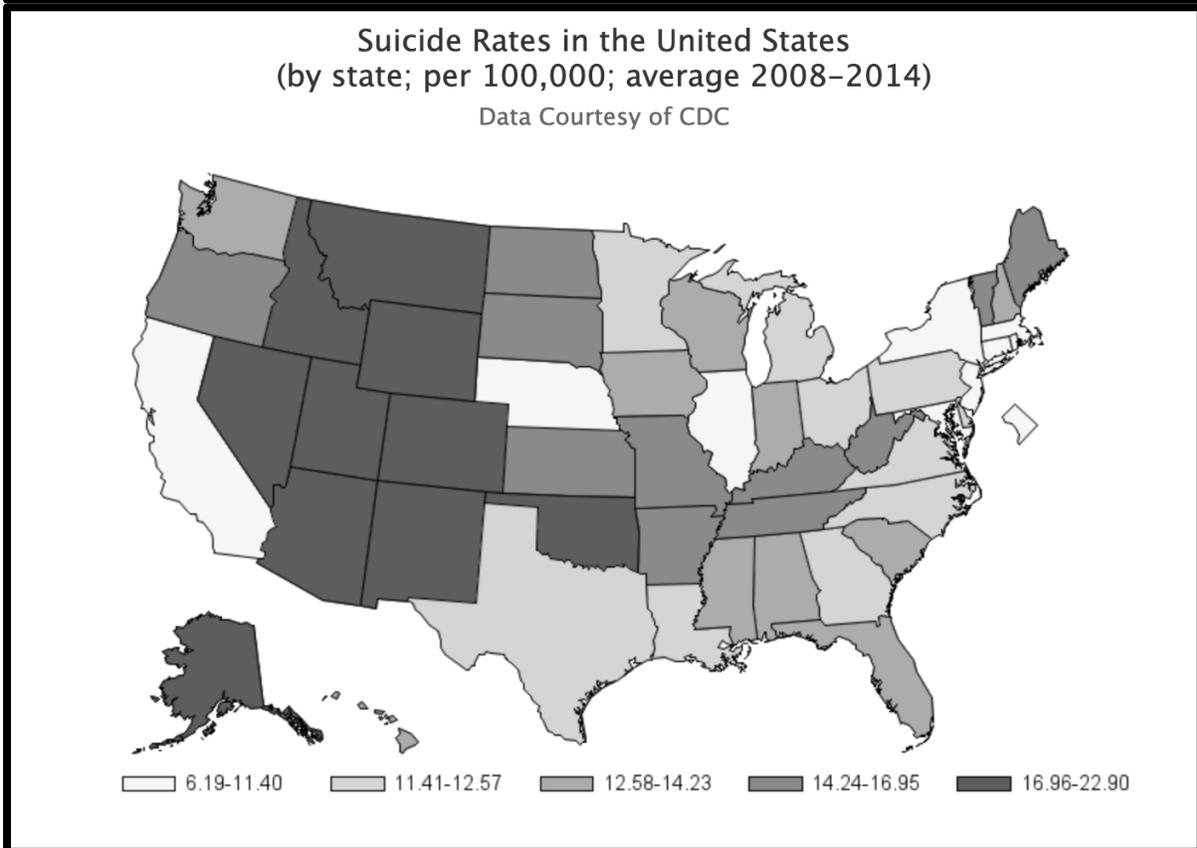
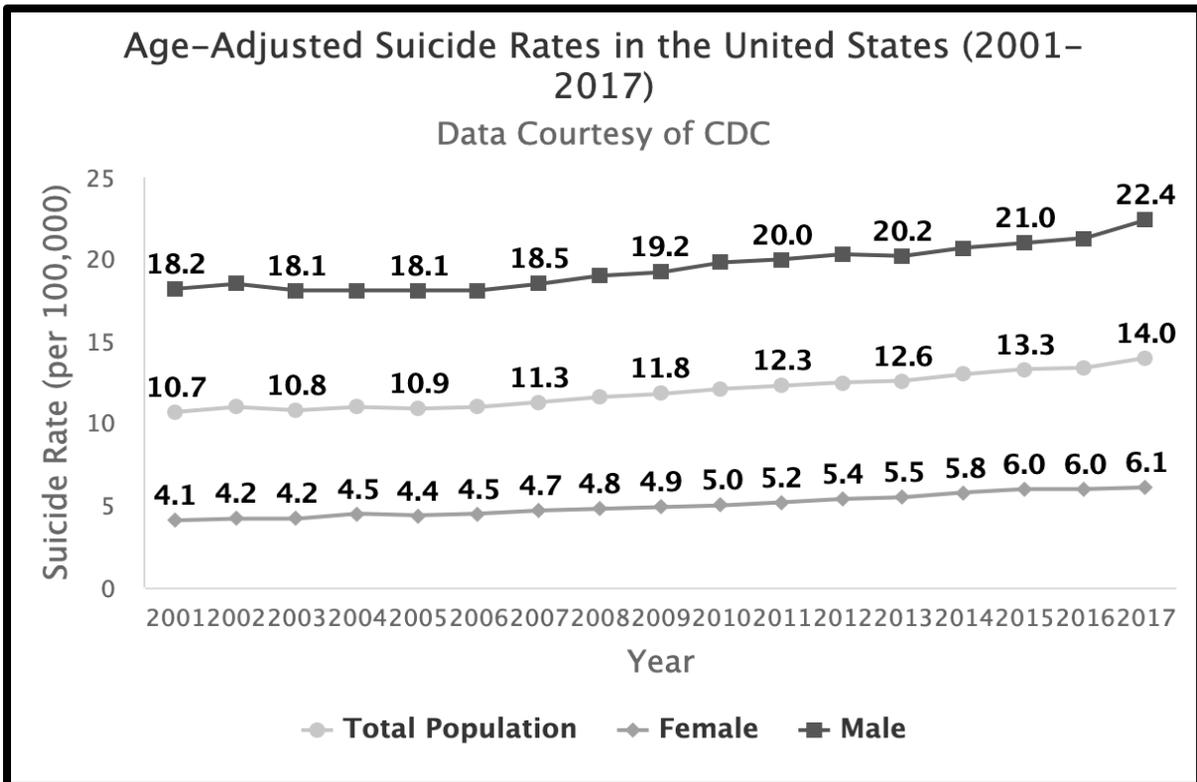
Closing Prayer

SESSION 1

DEPRESSION DEFINED & DESCRIBED

STATISTICS FOR 2017 FROM National Institute for Mental Health (NIMH)

- An estimated 17.3 million adults in the United States had at least one major depressive episode. This number represented 7.1% of all U.S. adults.
- The prevalence of major depressive episode was higher among adult females (8.7%) compared to males (5.3%).
- The prevalence of adults with a major depressive episode was highest among individuals aged 18-25 (13.1%).
- An estimated 3.2 million adolescents aged 12 to 17 in the United States had at least one major depressive episode. This number represented 13.3% of the U.S. population aged 12 to 17.
- The prevalence of major depressive episode was higher among adolescent females (20.0%) compared to males (6.8%).
- Suicide is among the leading causes of death in the U.S.
- Suicide ranks 2nd (to unintentional injury) in ages 10-34.
- Suicide ranks 4th in ages 35-54.
- Men are 3 to 4 times more likely to commit suicide than women.



WHY IS AMERICA SO DEPRESSED?

“A nine-nation study by epidemiologist Myrna Weissman of Columbia University and a cross-cultural group of international scholars found that people born after 1945 are three times more likely to experience depression than people born before. Clinical depression may, however, simply be the tip of the iceberg of America’s mental distress.

“Something is awry at a fundamental level in many people’s lives. It’s not so much what’s happening to us as what isn’t. Something is missing. Something essential and meaningful has been displaced by something . . . hollow. The possibility that forces outside our control might be overwhelming us—changing us—is so frightening that most of us busily hunt down safe responses to our escalating anxiety.

“We rely in record numbers on prescription drugs. We escape into the media/entertainment pleasureplex. We pile on the amusements only to find (as Leonard Cohen sings) that "you are locked into your suffering, and your pleasures are the seal."

“Why is America so Depressed?”, by Kalle Lasn and Bruce Grierson, from *Adbusters* (September-October 2000)

THE PROGRESSION OF DEPRESSION

- Humanism
- Existentialism
- Nihilism
- Meaninglessness
- Apathy

“Life is full of misery, loneliness, and suffering—and it’s all over much too soon.” Woody Allen

WHAT IT IS NOT

Depression is one of the most recognized psychological disorders. It's certainly common. A 2014 survey found that 6.6 percent of American adults or 15.7 million suffered from a major depressive episode within the past 12 months, said Sandra Hamilton, Ph.D, a psychologist who specializes in treating depression, anxiety and relationship issues. With something so prevalent, many of us may assume we know what it is.

Assumptions can quickly turn to misconceptions. Misconceptions about what depression looks and feels like. Misconceptions about whether people really want to get better. Misconceptions about the seriousness of depression. Which is important because depression is serious. It affects a person's entire being. It affects their entire life.

Depression isn't weakness.

- it isn't an inherent flaw
- it isn't a sign of weak mindedness
- it isn't a sign of faint heartedness
- it isn't a sign of being too sensitive

Depression isn't sadness.

- Sadness can be one symptom.
- Duration of sadness is shorter.
- Depression can seem irrational.

Depression isn't a choice.

- A person cannot think themselves into depression.
- A depressed person isn't in a state of self-pity.
- A person cannot use their own cognition to get out of depression.

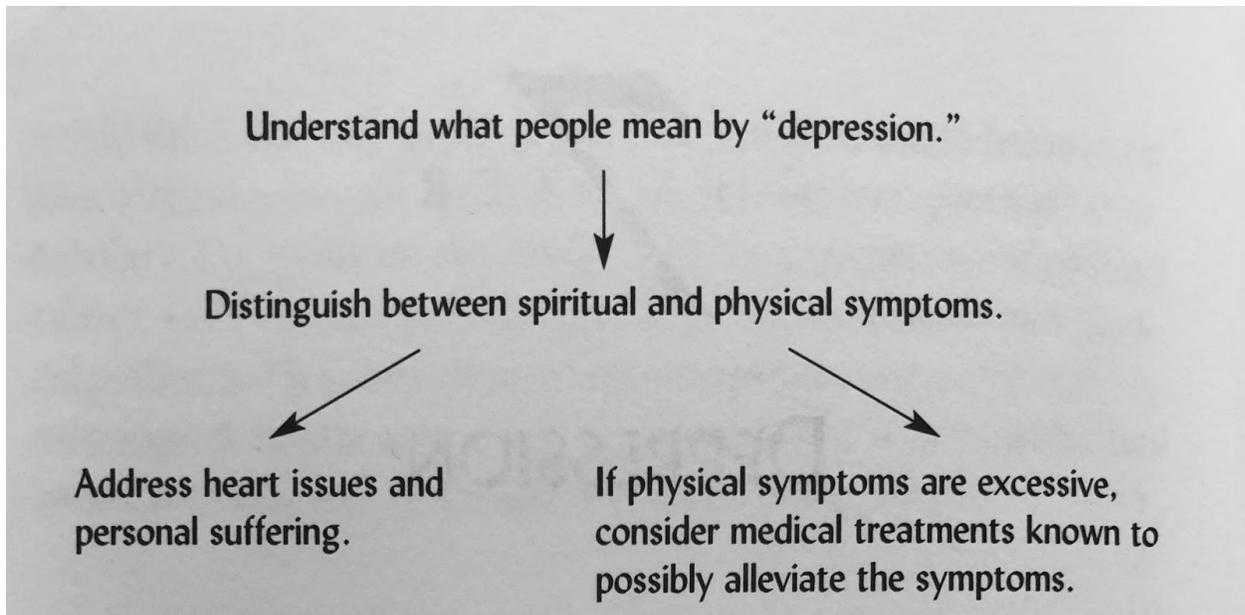
Depression doesn't look a certain way.

- "You don't look depressed."
- People mask their depression
- Shame and guilt

WHAT IT IS

“They are in great pain and horror of mind, distraction of soul, restlessness, full of continual fears, cares, torment, anxieties, they can neither drink, eat, or sleep...”

1. We want to understand the experience of depression.
2. We want to make distinctions between physical and spiritual symptoms.
3. Distinguishing between spiritual and physical symptoms will allow us to focus on heart issues.



1. We want to understand the experience of depression.
 - Most understanding will come from listening to the person
 - Two extremes
 - “Pain” is the most concise description
 - Don’t assume
 - Affects more than just thoughts
 - DSM-V description

According to the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of the American Psychiatric Association, 5th edition (DSM-V), you are technically labeled depressed if you experience 5 or more of the following symptoms during the same two-week period. Depressed mood or loss of interest or pleasure must be one of the symptoms:

1. *Depressed mood most of the day.*
 2. *Markedly diminished interest or pleasure in all, or almost all, activities most of the day.*
 3. *Significant weight loss when not dieting or weight gain.*
 4. *Insomnia or hypersomnia nearly every day.*
 5. *Feeling physically restless or slowed to an extent that is observable to others.*
 6. *Fatigue or loss of energy nearly every day.*
 7. *Feeling of worthlessness or excessive or inappropriate guilt.*
 8. *Diminished ability to think or concentrate.*
 9. *Recurrent thoughts of death, recurrent suicidal thinking without a specific plan or actual suicide attempt.*
2. We want to make distinctions between physical and spiritual symptoms.
- a. If we confuse *physical* for *spiritual* symptoms, we are liable to hold people morally responsible for physical symptoms.
 - b. If we confuse *spiritual* for *physical* symptoms, we are liable to excuse sin or have little hope for spiritual growth when someone has a psychiatric diagnosis.
 - c. To help us make this distinction, we need to ask ourselves 2 questions:
 1. Does the Bible command or prohibit this behavior?
 2. Can this behavior be best described as a strength or weakness?

Physical Symptoms

The troubling descriptions of pain are best described as physical symptoms. It's certainly not a sin to experience pain!

Emotional numbness...

Depressed people can still....

Other physical symptoms...

Spiritual Problems

When we consider the technical description of depression in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM-V), there are few symptoms that are most likely spiritual problems.

Among the other technical descriptions of depression, the symptom that might be distinctly spiritual is suicidal thinking.

Be careful...

PHYSICAL	SPIRITUAL
Insomnia or hypersomnia	Shame
Significant weight changes	Guilt
Feeling of being restless or slowed down	Fear
Fatigue, loss of energy	Thanklessness
Problems concentrating	Unforgiving spirit
Sense of alienation from things once deemed beautiful and pleasant	Hopelessness
Feeling sad, blue, down in the dumps	Unbelief
	Anger

CAN CHRISTIANS BE DEPRESSED?

YES!

ASK

- Martin Luther
- David Brainerd
- William Cowper
- Charles Spurgeon
- C. S. Lewis
- John Piper

STATISTICS FROM LIFEWAY STUDY REPORTED IN MAY 2018

- 23 percent of pastors acknowledge they have personally struggled with a mental illness.
- 49 percent of pastors say they rarely or never speak to their congregation about mental illness.
- 27 percent of churches have a plan to assist families affected by mental illness. 65 percent of churchgoing family members of those with mental illness want their church to talk openly about mental illness.
- 59 percent of those actually suffering from mental illness say the same.
- 53 percent of churchgoers with mental illness say the church has been supportive. 76 percent of churchgoers say suicide is a problem that needs to be addressed in their community.
- 32 percent of churchgoers say a close acquaintance or family member has died by suicide.
- 80 percent of pastors say their church is equipped to assist someone who is threatening to take his or her own life. 92 percent of pastors say their church is equipped to care for the family that experiences the suicide of a loved one.

- 4 percent of churchgoers who lost a loved one to suicide say church leaders were aware of their loved one's struggles.
- 68 percent of Americans feel they would be welcome in church if they were mentally ill.
- 35 percent of Americans say mental illness could be overcome with Bible study and prayer alone.

UNDERLYING QUESTIONS AND ASSUMPTIONS

- Isn't being depressed a sin?
- The Bible says Christians should be joyful, doesn't it?
- A "depressed Christian" is an oxymoron.
- Depression is a spiritual problem.
- God doesn't want me to be depressed, does He?

UNDERLYING REALITIES

- Christians are not glorified until they die.
- Christians remain in a fallen world.
- Christians are not exempt from suffering.
- Christians are not immune to mental and emotional struggles.

SESSION 2

DEPRESSION IN THE SCRIPTURES & HISTORY

DESCRIPTIONS OF DEPRESSION IN THE BIBLE

Presuppositions:

- The word “depression” does not exist in the Bible
- We are using human observation to describe depression
- “Depressed” is a word used to convey the deepest sense of struggle

Lament means to “cry out in grief, “to express deep sorrow”, or “to mourn aloud.”

- 42 Individual Psalms of Lament
- 16 Community Psalms of Lament

Martin Luther said...

“What is the greatest thing in the Psalter but this earnest speaking amid the storm winds of every kind?... where do you find deeper, more sorrowful, more pitiful words of sadness than in the psalms of lamentation?”

A look at Psalm 102

- days vanish like smoke (vs 3)
- bones burn like glowing embers (vs 3)
- forget to eat food (vs 4)
- reduced to skin and bones (vs 5)
- lie awake (vs 7)
- persecutory thoughts (vs 8, vs 10)

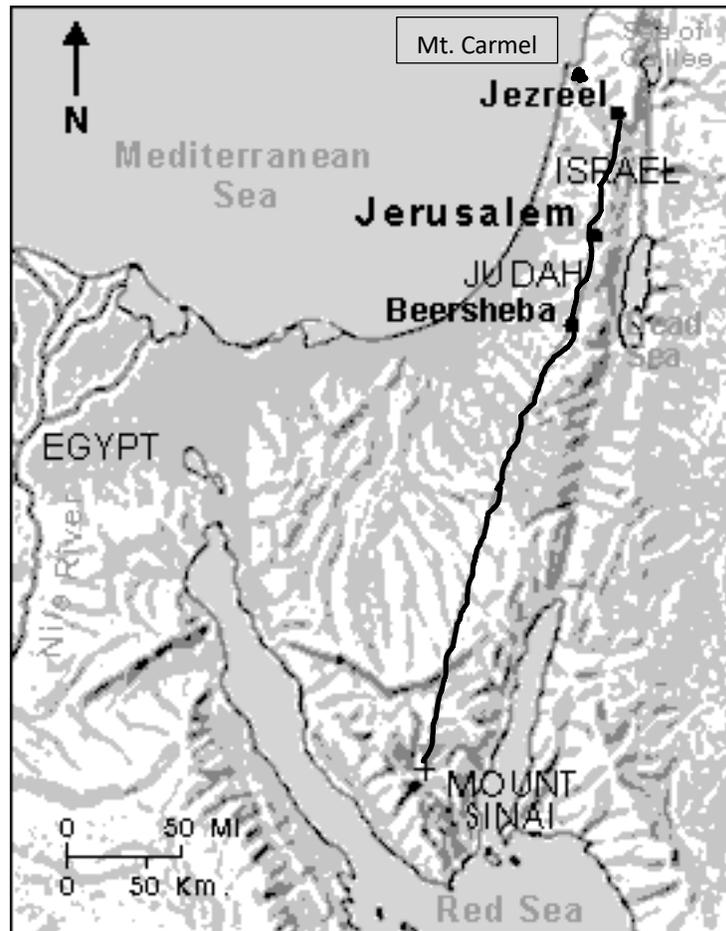
BIBLICAL CHARACTERS WHO EXPERIENCED DEPRESSION

- Cain – “The Lord said to Cain, ‘Why are you angry, and why has your face fallen?’” (Gen 4:6a)
- Job – “For the arrows of the Almighty are in me; my spirit drinks their poison; the terrors of God are arrayed against me.” (Job 6:4)
- Naomi – “She said to them, ‘Do not call me Naomi (pleasant); call me Mara (bitter), for the Almighty has dealt very bitterly with me. I went away full, and the Lord has brought me back empty.’” (Ruth 1:20-21a)
- David – “For day and night your hand was heavy upon me; my strength was dried up as by the heat of summer.” (Ps 32:4)
- Solomon – “What has a man from all the toil and striving of heart with which he toils beneath the sun? For all his days are full of sorrow, and his work is a vexation. Even in the night his heart does not rest. This also is vanity.” (Eccl 2:22-23)
- Jeremiah – “Cursed be the day on which I was born! The day when my mother bore me, let it not be blessed!” (Jer 20:14)
- Jesus(?) – “Then he said to them, ‘My soul is very sorrowful, even to death.’” (Matt 26:38a)
- Paul – “For we were so utterly burdened beyond our strength that we despaired of life itself.” (2 Cor 1:8b)

ELIJAH (1 Kings 19)

The story in a nutshell

- Right after a spiritual high and a 17-mile race with a chariot
- Reaction to a threat
 - Fear
 - Flight. Elijah ran close to 100 miles to Beer-sheba, then went another day's journey into the wilderness.
- Withdrew and ruminated
 - Wanted to die
 - Slept and ate. Slept and ate again.
 - Went on a 40-day journey to Horeb (Mt. Sinai)



- God questions him twice - “What are you doing here, Elijah?”
- Elijah’s response (same both times)
 - situation assessment
 - self-assessment
- God’s response
 - Stand before the Lord
 - Listen to the “still, small voice”
 - Return, appoint 2 kings, and appoint your replacement

LIFE LESSONS

1. Spiritual lows often follow spiritual highs.
2. Fear often causes us to take our eyes off of God and focus on our problems.
3. Don't underestimate the role of proper sleep and nutrition.
4. Don't run from God (Jonah). Run to God.
5. Depression thrives in isolation. Embrace that you are never alone.
6. Don't always look for God in the big and mighty. Listen for His whisper.
7. As long as you have breath, God has purpose for you being here.

HISTORICAL CHARACTERS WHO EXPERIENCED DEPRESSION

- Winston Churchill
- Abraham Lincoln
- Brooke Shields
- Vincent Van Gogh
- Jane Pauley
- Ludwig Von Beethoven

SESSION 3

HELP FOR DEPRESSION

HELP FOR THE BODY

“Thou shalt not kill.”

Exodus 20:13 KJV

Q. 68. What is required in the sixth commandment?

A. The sixth commandment requireth all lawful endeavors to preserve our own life, and the life of others.

from the Westminster Shorter Catechism

- Everything that helps alleviate the symptoms of depression is counter-intuitive
 - Depression says “sleep more.” *You should maintain normal sleep routines.*
 - Depression says “I don’t feel like eating.” *You should eat regular nutritious meals.*
 - Depression says “I don’t feel like exercising.” ***Exercise is proven more effective at relieving depression than antidepressants!***
 - Depression says “I want to stay in a dark room.” *You should get some sunshine.*
 - Depression says “These meds aren’t doing me any good.” *If you are on meds for depression, don’t stop taking them without consulting your doctor.*
 - Depression says “I don’t want to be with people. I just make them feel worse. I’m doing them a favor to be miserable by myself.” *Being alone deepens one’s depression. Make yourself go to church, meet with friends, go to the gym, go shopping or out-to-eat.*
 - Depression says “Why doesn’t someone help me?” *Focus on someone else’s needs and do what you can to meet them.*

HELP FOR THE SOUL

2 Corinthians 1:3–4

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.”

- “Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.” Psalm 119:105
- “The Lord is near to the brokenhearted and saves the crushed in spirit.” Psalm 34:18
- “He brought me out into a broad place; he rescued me, because he delighted in me.” Psalm 18:19
- “So we do not lose heart. Though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day. For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison.” 2 Corinthians 4:16–17
- Go to the Psalms. Let God’s Word give voice to your prayers.
- “Answer me quickly, O Lord! My spirit fails! Hide not your face from me, lest I be like those who go down to the pit. Let me hear in the morning of your steadfast love, for in you I trust.” Psalm 143:7–8
- God uses all things, including depression, to work Christlikeness into us.
- Affliction is not just to be expected... it is *promised* to all believers. It is our privilege to participate in the sufferings of Christ.
- Celebrate every victory.
 - Getting out of bed is a victory.
 - Every choice you make counter to what depression tells you to do is a victory.
- Let others help you.
 - Even if they say something stupid, they probably mean well. Find comfort in the fact that they care.
- Cry out to God. Lament your condition. Ask for mercy. Trust that He is working.

WHAT ABOUT MEDS?

- Dual nature of depression
 - Spiritual symptoms
 - Physical symptoms
- Physical symptoms = Medical treatments
- A number of medical treatments
- None of them help all of the time
- All of them can have harmful side effects
- When considering physical treatments:
 - If the person is taking medication, don't do anything unless they speak of harmful or uncomfortable side effects.
 - If the person is not taking medication but is considering it, we suggest a waiting period to consider possible causes.
 - If the person is growing spiritually but is still depressed, and if medication doesn't seem to be helping, we suggest they consider other possible problems (i.e. medical issues).

SESSION 4

HELPING OTHERS WITH DEPRESSION

WHAT DOESN'T HELP

Missteps when trying to help

- Timing (good thoughts, bad timing)
- Objectivity before Empathy
- Clichés
- We judge others according to our own circumstances rather than theirs.
- We attempt to control what should be rather than surrender to what is.

WHAT DOES HELP

- Your goal is not to get them “back to normal.” Your goal is to glorify God.
- Ask yourself: “How can I demonstrate Christ to this person?”
- Don’t forget to look for what Christ is trying to teach you.
- Leave the judging to God. Love the person beyond their words and behavior.
- Pray. Depend on the Spirit. Don’t get discouraged. Always have hope.
- Be yourself while being empathetic. Don’t act like *nothing* is wrong, but don’t act like *everything* is wrong.
- Influence them to make good choices, but don’t pressure them.
- Play music.
- Celebrate victories with them, however small.
- Remind them that depression is a *detour* - it’s not a *destination*.

CRISIS ASSESSMENT & INTERVENTION

- Many Faces of Depression...
 - Aggression, irritability, abusive
 - Lethargic, anxious, restless
 - Withdrawn, anhedonia
 - Other signs

- Practical Steps
 - Make observations over a period of time; establish a pattern of consistent signs
 - Reach out to a pastor who specializes in counseling and care
 - Try to avoid “hand-off”
 - Periodically checking in with them
 - Going with them to an appointment
 - Practice longsuffering

WHEN NOTHING SEEMS TO WORK

- Remember Job's friends
 - They were at their best when they were silent.
 - They *sympathized* but didn't *empathize*.
 - They were more interested in being right than being helpful.
 - God was angry with their counsel and called it "folly."
- Read Scripture
 - Give voice to their feelings through psalms of lament.
 - Avoid countering every negative comment with a positive Bible verse. That is NOT "mourning with those who mourn."
 - Remember that God's words have power. Yours don't.
- Be there
 - Don't be afraid of their darkness.
 - Validate their feelings.
 - Help them but don't force them.
 - You are not responsible to fix them. There is a Savior, and He is not you.
 - If there's danger of harm, get help immediately.

SESSION 5
PANEL DISCUSSION/Q & A

NOTES

RESOURCES

Note: Not every source listed is aligned with the doctrinal statement of Colonial Baptist Church, the practice of the CBC Care Ministry counselors, nor is of equal value in the treatment of depression. This list represents sources that have informed the material in this workshop. It is not an endorsement.

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DEPRESSION ANALYSIS QUESTIONNAIRE

Date: _____

<p>1. My life situation Time? Place? People? Events?</p>	
<p>2. My feelings Sum up your mood in one word if you can. Are you sad, worried, guilty, angry, ashamed, irritated, scared, disappointed, humiliated, insecure, anxious? You may want to rate the intensity of your feeling by determining what percentage of the time you feel that way.</p>	
<p>3. My thoughts What am I thinking of at this time? About myself? Other? The present? The future?</p>	

DEPRESSION ANALYSIS QUESTIONNAIRE

Date: _____

<p>4. My analysis Identify false or unhelpful thinking patterns such as false extremes, false generalization, false filter, etc.</p>	
<p>5. My behavior Impact of 1-4 on me and my relations with others. Stopped helpful activities? Started unhelpful activities? Reduced activity? Hyper-activity?</p>	
<p>6. My reasons Why do I believe the thoughts I listed in step 3 are true? What evidence is there to support my conclusion?</p>	

DEPRESSION ANALYSIS QUESTIONNAIRE

Date: _____

<p>7. My challenge List evidence and reasons against the thoughts in step 3. Think of what God would point to, to show you that your thoughts are not completely true.</p>	
<p>8. My conclusion Come to a balanced conclusion, which will also be truthful and helpful.</p>	
<p>9. My new feelings Copy some or all of the feelings from step 2 and rate them again.</p>	
<p>10. My plan How will I put the balanced conclusion into practice?</p>	

from David Murray, *Christians Get Depressed Too*, 74-77.