



DVD Student Workbook

Overview

Depression is a subject that the Church tends to ignore. The reasons are many... a lack of awareness; ignorance about how to help those suffering from this affliction; and even worse... outright denial that it is a legitimate problem in the Church. We often skip over the depressive episodes of King David, Elijah and Jeremiah that are in plain view in the Scriptures.

Our silence has left many depression-sufferers twisting in the wind, uncertain where to turn for help.

Take Charge of Your Mental & Emotional Health was written and recorded to:

- Extend compassion and healing to those who suffer with depression
- Equip those who are not currently depressed with practical tools that will help them maintain mental and emotional well-being
- Empower the Church with a compassionate, biblical strategy to come alongside those who are depressed and move them toward healing

This 4-part DVD series comes out of the fires of my own personal experience with the “long dark tunnel” and my subsequent road to recovery.

Session 1 – Develop Biblical Self-Love

- Session goal – to introduce the Biblical concept of self-love. The bedrock of mental and emotional health is learning to obey the Greatest Commandment in its entirety.
- Key Scripture - Matthew 22:36-40- ³⁶“Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?” ³⁷Jesus replied: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ ³⁸This is the first and greatest commandment. ³⁹And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ ⁴⁰All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.”(NIV)

Why this subject?

- Increased joy and peace
- Ability to love others is proportional to the degree we love ourselves - Matthew 22:36-40
 - V.39 - “as” – “ws” – “in the same manner as”
 - Biblical self-love
 - _____ self-talk
 - Self-love vs. self-centeredness (Luke 9:23)
 - Acts 20:28
 - “Keep watch” – “prosecute” – “to attend to, to guard, to pay attention to, to devote thought and effort to”



- Embrace God's _____ of us
 - Psalm 139:1-3
 - Psalm 139:13-14
 - Psalm 139:17-18
- Getting in touch with our own _____ – Proverbs 19:8
- Unmasking depression
 - 23 million in U.S. - 340 million globally
 - Can be event- _____
 - Incremental (accumulated stress over a longer period of time)
 - Does not respond to the sheer force of our _____
 - "Black hole" of sadness.
 - Jesus – *"My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death."*
Matt. 26:38 (NIV)
 - Often hits when least _____
 - Can happen to anyone
- Discussion questions:
 - Why is the message of biblical self-love not understood by the Church at large?

 - What are 4 ways a person can obey the self-love portion of the greatest Commandment? Describe each one of these in more detail.

 - Consider the startling statistics regarding clinical depression in the United States and across the world (23 million in U.S; 340 million worldwide and increasing). What factors contribute to this growing mental health problem?



- Why does recovery from depression tend to take a long time?



Session 2 – Manage Your Anger

- Session goal – to provide biblical understanding of anger and a practical pathway to manage it
- Key Scripture – Ephesians 4:26 – “*In your anger do not sin.*” (NIV)

Anger is misunderstood by many people both inside and outside the Church. Mismanaged anger contributes significantly to the staggering number of people suffering from clinical depression.

It is not a sin to *feel* the emotion of anger – it's just easier to say or do something sinful when we are angry. Learning and then implementing the biblical model of processing anger helps a person stay mentally and emotionally healthy.

- Anger is often poorly understood
- Can be spewed outward or shoved inward
- How do we manage our anger biblically?
 - Give it an _____ appraisal
 - Understand that it is a normal response when healthy boundaries are crossed
 - Often involves _____ feelings from past events
 - Appropriate anger
 - Depth/duration of our anger matches the depth/duration of the offense
 - Holy anger – Mark 3:1-5
 - Has to do with the ultimate well-being of other people
 - Acknowledge the way God uses our anger
 - Energy
 - Motivation to bring positive _____
 - Bringing attention to root issues
 - Avoid unhealthy responses to anger
 - Giving way
 - Blaming others
 - Submerging it inwardly - An unwillingness to forgive keeps you chained to the trauma that was inflicted on you
- Express anger appropriately
 - Ephesians 4:31 – “*Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger*” (NIV)
 - Understand the negative impact of _____ anger
 - Identify the root of your anger
 - Identify relationships or _____ where an emotional eruption is more likely
 - Be assertive as opposed to aggressive or passive



- Aggression (Examples: Inappropriate language, screaming, or swinging our fists)
 - Passivity (Examples: Stuffing your anger (repressing it) and allowing it to fester on the inside, or giving the silent treatment)
 - Assertiveness (Examples: Express clearly, respectfully and firmly, how someone's behavior is negatively impacting you)
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- Discussion questions:
 - What are some possible sources of leftover (residual) anger?

 - What problems could arise from repressing anger? Discuss the effects of repressed anger on mental and emotional health.

 - Explore the differences between aggression, passivity and assertiveness as it relates to anger expression. Explain the impact of each response on our mental and emotional health.

Aggression _____

Passivity _____

Assertiveness _____



- Discuss the differences between being an angry person versus a person who can get angry.

- How can anger call attention to root issues that need addressing?

NOTE: If you have a history of problems with managing your anger, you may need therapeutic counseling, which is outside of the scope of your small group or Bible study. Speak privately with your leader to explore available options.



Session 3 – Protect Yourself from Abuse

Abuse of any kind is one of the most significant contributors to a lack of mental and emotional health. As our culture becomes increasingly dysfunctional, the number of abusers seems to grow proportionately. **An abusive person is anyone who harms you mentally, emotionally, verbally, physically, sexually or spiritually.** Instead of running away to a mythical place where these personality types don't exist – God want us to learn how to stand our ground in the face of their behavior. It is only by telling the truth in love to the abusive people we interact with, and refusing to tolerate their abuse by standing up for ourselves, that we get free.

- Session Goal: To equip a person with practical tools to protect themselves from abusive personalities
- Key Scripture: 2 Timothy :14-15 – "¹⁴Alexander the metalworker did me a great deal of harm. The Lord will repay him for what he has done. ¹⁵You too should be on your guard against him, because he strongly opposed our message."
- Five safeguards
 - Be convinced that _____ for yourself is the right thing to do
 - Understand difference between persecution and abuse – Matthew 5:11 - "*Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me.*" (NIV)
 - Maintain _____ in the face of abuse
 - Understand what "loving your enemy" really means – Matthew 5:44 – "*But I tell you: Love your enemies.*" (NIV)
 - Don't allow hatred to lodge itself in your heart
 - Loving our enemies means we care what happens to them, hope the best for them, and pray for them – however it does not mean you allow them to take advantage of you
 - Consistently address _____ when it happens
- Discussion questions:
 - Discuss the difference between being persecuted for Jesus' sake vs. being abused by toxic people. What are some appropriate responses to abuse?



- What factors contribute to setting ourselves up for abuse? How can we overcome those tendencies?

- Explore the negative effects of subjecting yourself to continued abuse. What impact does long-term abuse have on a person?

- Discuss the relationship between loving our enemies and not allowing ourselves to be abused. Do these activities contradict each other?

- What responsibilities, if any, do we have toward our abusers? How do we maintain self-love in the face of their abuse?

NOTE: If you are struggling with maintaining healthy relational boundaries, you may need therapeutic counseling, which is outside the scope of your small group or Bible Study. Speak privately with your leader to explore available options.



Session 4 – Refuel Emotionally

If the thought of adding one more item to your to-do list causes you to have an out of body experience – you’re probably running on emotional fumes! You and I cannot possibly say “yes” to everything that presents itself to us. As we begin to make good decisions about our schedules, and learn how to feed our souls – the mental/emotional part of our being – we will stay healthy and productive long-term.

- Session Goal: To learn how to give to ourselves emotionally
- Key Scripture: Matthew 11:28-30 – ²⁸“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. ²⁹Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.” (NIV)
- Emotional Fuel Indicators
 - Your _____ (schedule)
 - An appeal for sensible scheduling
 - Your people (friendships)
 - Eccl. 4:9 – “Two are better than one, because they have a better return for their work.” (NIV)
 - Your _____ (emotional maintenance)- Be intentional about:
 - Laughter - Proverbs 17:22 - “A cheerful heart is good medicine, but a crushed spirit dries up the bones.” (NIV)
 - Exercise
 - The _____
 - Emotional tenacity- Jesus & Moses - Emotional tenacity combines the qualities of love, kindness, truth and strength. There are situations that require us to be strong and firm... while at the same time realizing these responses are not at odds with being a loving person
- Refueling emotionally takes practice – it requires us to think and act counter-culturally
- Mark 6:30-32 - “The apostles gathered around Jesus and reported to him all they had done and taught. Then, because so many people were coming and going that they did not even have a chance to eat, he said to them, ‘Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest.’ So they went away by themselves in a boat to a solitary place.” (NIV)



- Discussion questions:
 - Which emotional indicators do you need to address: Pace? People? Plan?

- How can a person recharge their emotional batteries?

- Explore the concept of emotional tenacity. What examples of this do we see in Scripture? How does this work in day-to-day living?

Concluding Thoughts - The emotional infrastructure required to enjoy sustained health:

- Love yourself
- Manage your anger
- Protect yourself from abuse
- Refuel emotionally

If you do these things you will have a better life, better relationships with people – and a more effective, sustained ministry to a broken and hurting world.