Let's Talk Christian Mental Health

Mashup Series • Learn, Reflect, Act
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Use this handout to connect today's discussion with your own wellness and identify one next step. Your reflections are private. Share only what you choose.

Learn about mental health

Mental health includes our emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It influences how we think, feel, relate to others, and respond to daily life. Biology, inherited vulnerability, and life experiences can all play a role.

Mental health conditions vary in severity and can affect everyday functioning. Wellness includes caring for the whole person, including areas that need attention while receiving treatment or support.

Connect faith and care

John 10:10 presents Jesus as the source of abundant life. Luke 2:52 describes growth in wisdom, stature, and relationships with God and others. These passages invite reflection on caring for our whole selves.

Faith, prayer, pastoral support, and professional mental health care can work together. Struggling emotionally does not diminish your worth or your place in the community of believers.

Reflect on your wellness

For each area, write S if it feels supported or A if it needs attention. Both can be true. This is a reflection exercise, not a diagnostic assessment.

Dimension	Everyday focus	S or A
Emotional	Recognizing feelings and finding ways to cope	
Physical	Sleep, nourishment, movement, and health care	
Spiritual	Faith, meaning, purpose, and spiritual practices	
Social	Supportive relationships and connection	
Intellectual	Learning, curiosity, and creativity	
Occupational	Meaning and balance in work or daily roles	
Financial	Managing resources and financial pressures	
Environmental	Safe, supportive spaces where you live and spend time	

Adapted from SAMHSA's Eight Dimensions of Wellness. Occupational wellness can include caregiving, volunteering, or retirement routines.

1. One area I want to care for:

2. Something that already helps me:

Taking the Next Step

Reflect on seeking help

Messages about privacy, strength, faith, and mental health can influence whether we seek support. Mistrust, cost, access, and uncertainty about where to begin can also create barriers.

A message I learned about seeking help:

A barrier I want support addressing:

Know when to reach out

Consider reaching out when worry, sadness, irritability, changes in sleep or appetite, withdrawal, or trouble concentrating persist, worsen, or interfere with daily life. You can ask for support before things become overwhelming.

Find the right support

Helper	How they may help
Licensed counselor or clinical social worker	Assessment and diagnosis, therapy to explore concerns, develop coping skills, and work toward goals.
Psychologist	Assessment and diagnosis, therapy, and psychological testing when offered.
Psychiatrist or psychiatric Nurse Practitioner	Mental health evaluation and medication care. Some also provide therapy.
Primary care physician or family Nurse Practitioner	An initial health assessment, consideration of physical contributors, and referrals.
Pastor or clergy member	Spiritual guidance, prayer, community support, and connection to professional care.

When contacting a provider, ask about fees or insurance, availability, experience with your concerns, and how they respect your faith and cultural background.

Act on one wellness goal

Choose a specific, measurable step that is achievable, relevant to your needs, and tied to a timeframe. Example: “For the next seven days, I will take a 10-minute walk after lunch on three days.”

My next step:

When and how often:

A person or resource that can support me:

Resources to keep

NAMI: nami.org for mental health education and support.
Psychology Today: psychologytoday.com to search for providers. Confirm credentials, availability, and costs directly.

For emotional distress or a suicidal crisis in the U.S., call or text 988, or chat at 988lifeline.org. Support is free and available 24/7. For immediate danger or a medical emergency, call 911.

STRAIGHT TALK ABOUT DEPRESSION & ANXIETY

THE GREAT CHRISTIANITY & MENTAL HEALTH MASHUP SERIES
REV. DR. QUIANA M. GOLPHIN, LPC, NCC

Recognize signs of distress, consider how faith and care can work together, and identify a next step.

LEARN TO RECOGNIZE THE SIGNS

Depression	**Anxiety**
A mood disorder that can affect feelings, thinking, and daily functioning. Common signs include persistent low mood or loss of interest.	Anxiety involves fear or anticipation of threat. Anxiety disorders involve persistent or excessive anxiety that interferes with daily life.
Other signs may include hopelessness, guilt, irritability, low energy, sleep or appetite changes, and difficulty concentrating.	Other signs may include hard-to-control worry, feeling on edge, irritability, restlessness, avoidance, and difficulty concentrating.
Physical symptoms can include aches, headaches, digestive problems, or changes in movement and energy.	Physical symptoms can include a racing heart, sweating, trembling, muscle tension, stomach upset, or sleep problems.

Both can occur together and affect people of any age. Depression may show up as irritability or withdrawal. Symptoms can interfere with relationships, work, school, and everyday responsibilities.

Major depression generally involves symptoms most days for at least two weeks. Seek support sooner when symptoms are severe or safety is a concern. A professional assessment considers duration, severity, and impact. This handout is not a diagnostic test.

NOTICE CONTRIBUTING FACTORS

Family history, stressful or traumatic experiences, ongoing pressures, and health conditions can contribute to risk. Symptoms have multiple possible causes. A health care provider can assess physical contributors as well as mental health needs.

REFLECT ON FAITH AND COMPASSIONATE CARE

In 1 Kings 19:1–14, Elijah expresses fear, isolation, and despair. He receives food, rest, and God's attentive presence. Psalm 55:1–9 gives words to anguish, trembling, and a longing for safety. These passages help us discuss distress and care without diagnosing biblical figures.

Faith and emotional distress can coexist. Prayer and spiritual connection can accompany professional treatment. Needing help does not diminish your worth or belonging.

What needs do you notice in these passages? What might compassionate care look like today?

Support and Next Steps

LEARN ABOUT TREATMENT

- Psychotherapy helps people work with thoughts, emotions, and behaviors. Cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) is one treatment used for depression and anxiety.
- Medication may be part of care. A prescribing clinician can discuss benefits, side effects, and what fits your needs.
- For some people with depression, specialists may recommend brain stimulation treatments such as ECT or TMS, particularly when other treatments have not helped enough.
- Prayer, Scripture, and pastoral support can offer comfort and connection alongside clinical care. Sleep routines, regular meals, movement, and supportive relationships can also support recovery.

PRACTICE GROUNDING

If it feels comfortable, place your feet on the floor and look around. Name five things you see, four things you feel, three things you hear, two things you smell, and one thing you taste. If a sense is unavailable or uncomfortable, focus on another. Breathe gently at your own pace.

Grounding can help redirect attention to the present moment. It is one coping tool to try alongside other support.

What did you notice during the exercise? What helps you feel more settled?

RESPOND WITH CARE

Listen without judging or rushing to explain. You might say, “Thank you for telling me. What has this been like for you?” Ask whether practical help, company, or help contacting a provider would be useful.

Reach out to a licensed mental health professional or primary care provider when symptoms persist, worsen, or disrupt daily life. New or severe chest pain or breathing difficulty needs urgent medical evaluation, even if anxiety seems possible.

CHOOSE ONE STEP FOR THIS WEEK

Consider contacting a provider, telling someone you trust, or planning one manageable act of care. Make your step specific and choose when you will do it.

My next step, when I will take it, and who or what can support me

KEEP THESE RESOURCES

Education: nimh.nih.gov and nami.org
Provider search: psychologytoday.com or your insurance provider directory.

For thoughts of suicide or emotional crisis in the U.S., call or text 988 or visit 988lifeline.org for free, confidential support 24/7. For immediate danger or a medical emergency, call 911.

Sources: Lesson presentation; NIMH, Depression (nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/depression) and Anxiety Disorders (nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/anxiety-disorders); 988 Lifeline (988lifeline.org). Scripture reflections: 1 Kings 19:1–14 and Psalm 55:1–9.