

Mental Health and Christianity

by Tim A. Thrasher, LMSW

Mental Health and Christianity



CRAZY, COMMITTED, OR NEED TO BE COMMITTED?

Mental Health and Christianity

Can mental health difficulties become mental illness?

Yes challenges can cause mental illness based on an individual's:

Genetic make up-brain chemistry

Life experiences-multiple traumatic events

Spiritual inward strength-not ours to determine or judge if adequate

Ability to cope with challenging and difficult situations

But with God, illness and challenges can be addressed...

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- Ways to get help?
 - Talk to your doctor
 - Connect with other individuals or family
 - Educate yourself on your diagnosed mental illness
 - Talk to the great physician
 - Find solace in God's word
 - Connect with supportive members of the Church

Mental Health and Christianity-Objectives

To assist in helping each of us realize that Mental Health is important.

To help us identify that all have and will face challenges and difficulties that can cause poor mental health which can lead to mental illness.

To provide Biblical examples of men with challenges and difficulties that caused mental health concerns in their lives.

To look at ways to cope with difficulties and challenges through the support of the Lord and His Church without judgment or stigma compared with defense mechanisms that we utilize on a daily basis.

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Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ

I Peter 1:13

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Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous: Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing.

1 Peter 3:7-9

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- How do you cope with challenges and difficulties in your life?

- Saul-turn to the occult
- Moses-turn to violence-murder
- Jonah-turn completely away from the important

Have you turned your back on God/others?



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I can do all things through him who strengthens me.

Philippians 4:13

And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.

Philippians 4: 7-8

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For as a man thinketh in his heart, so *is* he.

Proverbs 23:7

Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God;

Philippians 4:6

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For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those *who live* according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded *is* death, but to be spiritually minded *is* life and peace.

Romans 8:5-6

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Who has put wisdom in the mind?
Or who has given understanding to the heart?

Job 38:36

I am forgotten as a dead man out of mind: I am like a
broken vessel.

Psalms 31:12

Mental Health and Christianity-“For as a man thinks in his heart (mind), so *is* he.” Proverbs 23:7

How is your brain wired?

“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, *which is* your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what *is* that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.” Romans 12:1-2

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The Great Commandment

³⁴ But when the Pharisees heard that he had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together. ³⁵ And one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question to test him. ³⁶ “Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?” ³⁷ And he said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with **all your mind**. ³⁸ This is the great and first commandment. ³⁹ And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. ⁴⁰ On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets.”

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1Corinthians 2: 12-16

Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might understand the things freely given us by God. And we impart this in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual.

The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned. The spiritual person judges all things, but is himself to be judged by no one. "For who has understood the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him?" But we have the mind of Christ.

Mental Health and Christianity-Suicide

Judas-Matthew 27:5-hanging-due to remorse of betraying Jesus

One of the original apostles selected by Jesus

Betrayed Jesus for 30 pieces of silver with a kiss in the Garden of Gethsemane

Betrayal predicted at last supper

Tried to return the silver to the chief priests

Committed suicide by hanging

Mental Health and Christianity-Suicide

If you were in the twin towers and couldn't get out what would you have done?

We have to realize that individuals who commit suicide do so for a variety of reasons, through a variety of methods and only God understands their circumstances.

Let's continue to love the families of those who have been affected by suicide. Being judgmental will not return their loved ones or encourage their spiritual well being.

Mental Health and Christianity-Depression

- Lamentations 3-Depression
 - Symptoms
 - Affliction v. 1
 - Darkness without light v. 2
 - God is against him v. 3
 - Skin and flesh waste away-broken bones v. 4
 - Besieged and enveloped with bitterness and tribulation v. 5
 - Dwell as if dead- v. 6
 - Imprisoned-a wall about him v. 7
 - Prayer is not heard v. 8

Mental Health and Christianity-Depression



LAMENTATIONS
3:22-23

The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.

Mental Health and Christianity-Depression

Do not be **anxious**
about anything,
but in **every situation**,
by **prayer and petition**,
with **thanksgiving**,
present your requests to **God**.

~**Philippians 4:6**~

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peacefulhome.com

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Mental illness does affect our ability to comprehend God's plan by preventing rational/logical thought.

Mental illness does affect our ability to comprehend God's plan by limiting our ability to process truth.

Mental illness at times causes us to be unable to realize the importance of faith in God.

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My family has always been in the church. Dad was a pastor for 10 years. When schizophrenia came knocking, we were steeped in church life, yet the church was mostly silent on the reality of mental illness—and we got the message that we should be silent as well. This silence was isolating and cruel.

Yet our greatest moments of hope have come through encounters with individuals in the church who have made eye contact, visited Mom in prison, answered late-night phone calls to help her sort through her thoughts, showed up for small group when Dad cried every week. These are simple acts of love that reflect the heart of our creator, who knows far more than we do about how wretched we all are.

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- So how can we as a Church address mental illness?

1. Do Not Judge.

Judgement, and even well-intended religious statements (“You just need to pray more.”), will further isolate those with mental illness and potentially exacerbate their struggles. Try meeting these individuals with compassion and a listening ear. Church leaders do not need all the answers in order to be supportive. “More listening, less talking” is a good motto.

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2. Read and Research

Although most church leaders are not in a position to treat mental illness, they do need to have basic knowledge of mental health disorders and diseases. Why? Many struggling individuals may first seek help among their church leaders. It is important to recognize when church members' struggles are related to mental health issues so that church leadership can help them find adequate support and treatment.

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3. Refer Out

Church leaders are not typically trained to treat mental illness; it is simply not their job. When church members demonstrate mental health issues, leaders should offer compassion and support, but also provide them with proper referrals for treatment. Generate a referral list and utilize when needed.

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4. Stop the Stigma

Stigma regarding mental illness still exists in both our country and our churches. As church leaders, there are simple ways to help reduce that stigma, including:

Avoid offensive language (i.e. words and phrases involving psycho, crazy, they are nuts, etc.).

Discuss mental health issues from the pulpit and in leadership meetings.

Use the church bulletin to feature mental health topics and supportive resources.

Acknowledge that mental health issues are complex in nature and involve biological, psychological, developmental, societal, spiritual, and familial

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5. Recognize Complexity

Although I believe all diseases and disorders are a result of humanity's fall, I do not believe all diseases and disorders are direct results from one's own sinful nature. To categorize mental illness as simply a spiritual issue is to ignore the beautiful complexity of which we are designed. Mental health issues are typically a combination of psychological, biological, developmental, societal, spiritual, and familial issues. Infant depression, schizophrenia, and Autism Spectrum Disorders are great examples of complex mental health issues.

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6. Understand the Impact on Family and Friends

Not all victims of mental illness are individuals with a diagnosable condition. Family and friends of individuals with mental illness often struggle with helping their loved one. Be careful what you say, offer support, and pray for them too.

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7. Care for Personal Mental Health

Last, but certainly not least, church leaders should take care of their own mental health. Leading a church can be a stressful position, and stress alone can lead to physical and mental deterioration. Church leaders should have adequate support, take time to relax, and reach out for support if they are struggling. Remember, it is okay to say “no” to requests for additional work. If church leaders are suffering, so will their ministries.

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8. Talk about it.

Every year, more than 25 percent of the U.S. adult population suffers from a diagnosable mental illness—mostly quietly and in shame.

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9. Assemble a network

Before a crisis, find professionals with a variety of specialties. Build relationships with them, ask for advice, and be ready to partner when someone needs care.

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10. Foster friendships

People affected by mental illness need friends who will not abandon them when they're symptomatic.

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11. Walk through treatment

Visit the hospital. Bring casseroles. Help with the cost of medications. Ask how treatments are going. Minister to people with mental illness in the ways you minister to people recovering from surgery or enduring cancer treatments.

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Like it or not, the church is the first place many turn in crisis. And fair or not, the church's silence or rejection feels like rejection from God. We cannot keep turning away from the most vulnerable among us. It's time to be part of the solution.

Mental Health and Christianity-Depression

DO NOT CONFORM ANY LONGER
TO THE PATTERN
OF THIS WORLD,
BUT BE

TRANSFORMED

BY THE RENEWING OF YOUR MIND.

- ROMANS 12:2