



Healing from Depression: Body, Mind, & Spirit

Ana Wong-McDonald, Ph.D.

Victoria Curtin, MSW

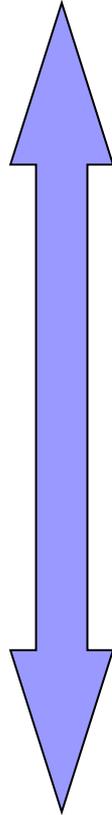
The Salvation Army – Haven

11301 Wilshire Blvd., Bldg. 212

ana.wong-mcdonald@usw.salvationarmy.org

victoria.curtin@usw.salvationarmy.org

Mood Spectrum



Mania

Normal

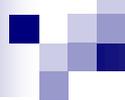
The Blues

Major Depression

The Blues vs. Depression

- A normal reaction to a life stressor
- Primarily affect only the emotional domain
- Temporary
- Rarely lead to suicidal thoughts
- Requires coping, support, and time
- A psychiatric disorder or mental illness
- Affects multiple domains – emotional, cognitive, physical
- Persistent/Chronic
- Suicidal thoughts common
- Requires professional treatment

(DiPaolo, 2006)

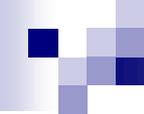


Prevalence

- **Depressive disorders (i.e, Major depression, dysthymia, bipolar disorder) affect about 20.9 million Americans each year.**
- **Or 1 in every 5 persons (9.5% of the U.S. population age 18 and older)**
- **Making it one of the most common mental illness in the U.S. (NIMH, 2003)**

Prevalence

- **If you are depressed, you are not alone. Research shows that a significant percentage of people will become depressed some time in their lives. Even famous people like Abraham Lincoln and Winston Churchill gave indications of depression in their writings (Cloud & Townsend, 2005).**
- **The apostle Paul identified with depression in his own sufferings: “But God, who comforts the depressed, comforted us by the coming of Titus” (2 Cor 7:6 NASB). Jesus described his experience in the Garden of Gethsemane in similar terms, “My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me” (Matthew 26:38).**



Causes of Depression

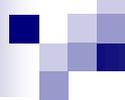
External circumstances

- trauma
- abuse
- financial difficulties
- stress and burnout
- very difficult life events (e.g., very sick family member)

Causes of Depression

External circumstances

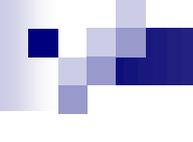
- **Some external events may be related to wrong choices or sinful behavior, leading to the person suffering the consequences of poor decisions:**
 - **going to jail for stealing**
 - **getting STD for promiscuity**
 - **loss of job due to drug use**



Causes of Depression

Example: David was depressed due to his sin with Bethsheba (Psalm 32:3-5)

When I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long. For day and night your hand was heavy upon me; my strength was sapped as in the heat of summer. Then I acknowledged my sin to you and did not cover up my iniquity. I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the Lord" and you forgave the guilt of my sin.



Causes of Depression

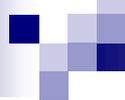
If this is the cause of your depression, be encouraged in knowing that:

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

1 John 1:9

Causes of Depression

- In the same time, it is important to note that it is simply not true that sin causes all depression, just as it is not true that sin causes all the pain we endure (e.g., Job's suffering in the Old Testament was not due to anything that he had done).
- Many bad things happen to everyone, things that they have no control over and are not their fault. Suffering and depression can have causes that have nothing to do with any moral or spiritual lapse on the part of the person (Cloud & Townsend, 2005).

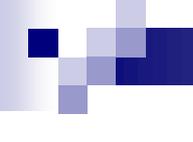


Causes of Depression

Internal Problems

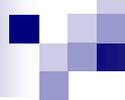
- heredity
- genetic vulnerability
- chemical imbalance in the brain

Based on scientific research, we now know that genetic disposition and stress can combine to bring about symptoms of mental illness (Lieberman, 2005).



Causes of Depression

- **Regardless of the causes (external events, wrong choices, or internal problems), when major depression hits, there is a chemical imbalance in the brain.**
- **Modern brain imaging reveals that in depression, neural circuits that regulate mood, thinking, sleep, appetite, and behavior do not function properly.**
- **Neurotransmitters (or chemicals used by nerve cells to communicate) are out of balance (NIMH, 2000).**



Symptoms of Depression

- Persistent sad mood
- Change in appetite
- Change in sleep patterns
- Fatigue
- Self-image distortions
- Problems in concentration
- Hopeless feelings
- Loss of interest in activities
- Isolation and withdrawal
- Thoughts of suicide

Male Depression Signs/Symptoms

- **Irritable – Inappropriate anger**
- **Agitated, restlessness**
- **Isolated or withdrawn – Escape behavior (i.e. Spending extra time at work, over use of TV, internet)**
- **Guarded and/or feels suspicious**
- **Fear of failure**
- **Risky behavior (i.e. reckless driving)**
- **Alcohol or substance abuse**
- **Unhealthy sexual relationships**

Male Depression

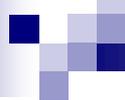
- Many ways may be worse off than depressed women
- Often goes undiagnosed –less likely to recognize signs
- Less likely to acknowledge feelings to others
- May downplay feelings – tough it out, get over it
- Less likely to seek treatment –resists help
- Can be masked by unhealthy coping behavior
- More likely to self medicate with drugs or alcohol

Male Depression

- Four times more likely to kill themselves
- Less likely to address hormonal shifts
- May see depression as a weakness
- Cultural messages - men must be strong at all times
- Men tend to act outward vs. women turn inward
- Can destroy their social support network/
tend to lack an adequate support system to begin with

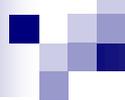
Depression Affects the Whole Person

- Physically - lack of energy, appetite change, sleep problems, restlessness or lethargy
- Mentally - poor concentration, distorted thinking (e.g., no one likes me), indecision, suicidal thoughts
- Emotionally - sad mood, loss of interest, inappropriate guilt & shame, feelings of hopelessness
- Relationally - isolation, tension/conflicts
- Spiritually - sense of despair/hopelessness, feeling abandoned by God (DiPaolo, 2006)



Psychotropic Medication: Antidepressants

- Can help to relieve symptoms of depression such as sleep difficulties, lack of energy, loss of enjoyment, difficulty concentrating, and suicidal thoughts.
- It may take 3 to 4 weeks (or longer) for these medications to take effect.
- There are 3 main types of antidepressants (i.e., tricyclics, MAOIs, and SSRIs). Patients may respond better to one medication or a combination of them.



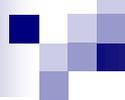
Antidepressants: Tricyclics

- Tricyclics are often used to treat severe depression.
- Common side effects include drowsiness, dizziness, dry mouth, headache, nausea, weight gain, constipation, blurred vision.
- Side effects usually decrease with time or as the dosage is adjusted.



Antidepressants: Tricyclics

- Tricyclics are often used to treat severe depression.
- Common side effects include drowsiness, dizziness, dry mouth, headache, nausea, weight gain, constipation, blurred vision.
- Side effects usually decrease with time or as the dosage is adjusted.

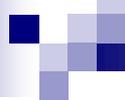


Antidepressants: MAOIs

- MAOIs or monoamine oxidase inhibitors are mainly prescribed for patients who do not respond well to other medications.
- Possible side effects include dizziness, rapid heartbeat, drowsiness, trouble sleeping, increased sweating, headaches, and weight gain.

Antidepressants: MAOIs

- MAOIs can cause severe interactions with certain foods, beverages and other drugs (e.g., aged cheese, yeast products, aged or processed meats, chicken or beef liver that is more than 2 days old, fava beans, sauerkraut, licorice, tap beer, stimulants, decongestants, and narcotics).
- Common MAOIs include (generic and trade names):
 - Phenzelzine – Nardil
 - Tranylcypromine - Parnate



Antidepressants: SSRIs

- SSRIs or Selective Serotonin Reuptake Inhibitors are most commonly prescribed as they tend to have fewer and less severe side effects than tricyclics and MAOIs.
- Possible side effects can include nervousness, restlessness, nausea, diarrhea, decreased appetite, headache.

Antidepressants: SSRIs

- Side effects usually decrease with time or as the dosage is adjusted.
- Common SSRIs include (generic and trade names):
 - Paroxetine – Paxil
 - Sertraline – Zoloft
 - Fluoxetine – Prozac
 - Trazondone - Desyrel

Antidepressants of Other Classes

- In addition to tricyclics, MAOIs, and SSRIs, there are at least 4 other classes of antidepressants.
- Common antidepressants belonging to other classes include (generic and trade names):
 - Venlafaxine – Effexor
 - Bupropion - Wellbutrin

Treatment

- **Combo of medication & psychotherapy**
 - antidepressants (SSRIs, TCAs, MAOIs)
 - cognitive behavioral therapy
 - interpersonal therapy (NIMH, 2000)
- **Family and social support**

If you are depressed, seek support even though you will not feel like it. We are to “bear one another's burdens, and thus fulfill the law of Christ” (Galatians 6:2).

Treatment

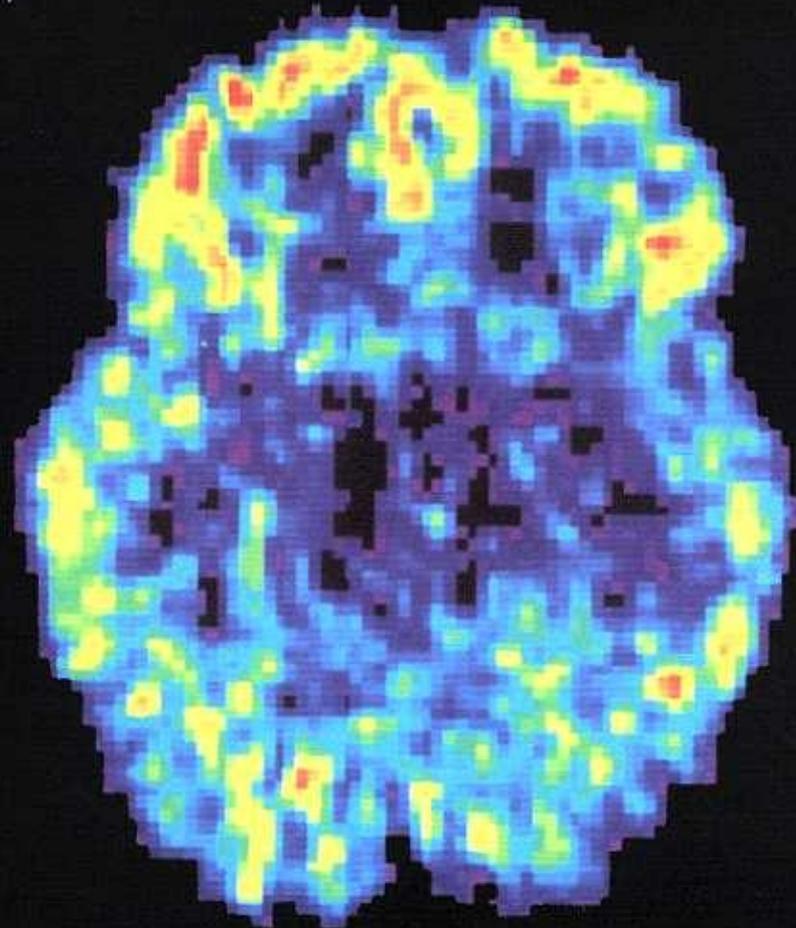
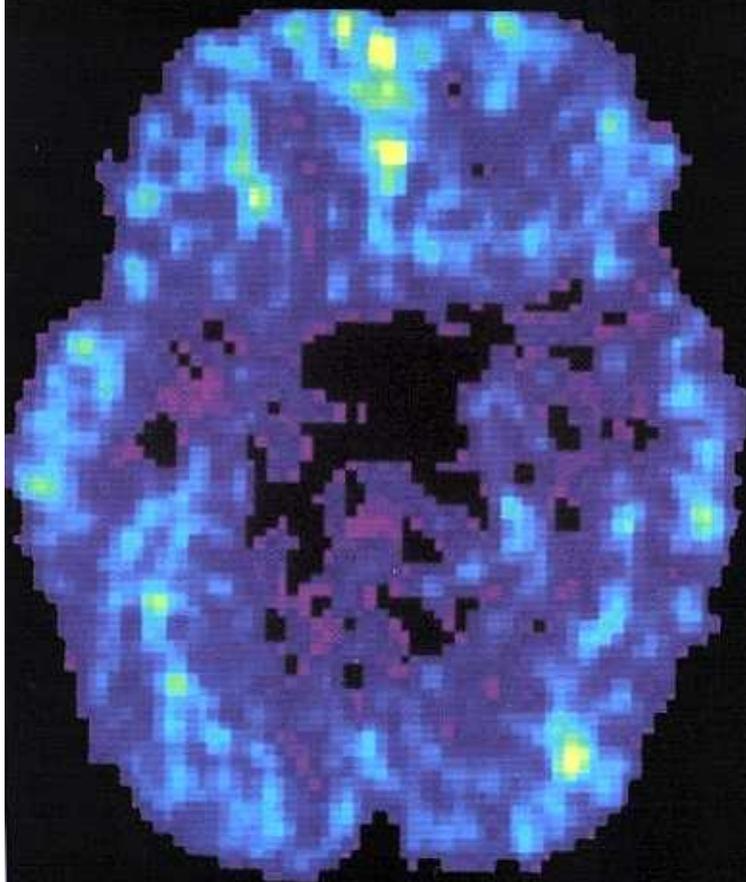
- **Proper exercise (e.g., brisk walk, jogging)**
30 min per day, 3 - 4 days per week
- **Spiritual interventions (to renew the mind)**
 - prayer**
 - using Scripture**
 - singing spiritual songs/hymns**
 - pastoral counseling**
 - reading spiritual literature**
 - meditation**

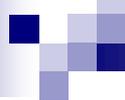
Recovery Rate

- **With medication and therapy: 80%**
- **With medication, therapy, and spiritual interventions, the rate is even higher!**
- **Results of a 3 year spirituality group for chronically mentally ill clients:**
 - **With medication & rehabilitation: 57%**
 - **With meds, rehab, & spiritual interventions: 100% (Wong-McDonald, 2007)**

Depressed Brain

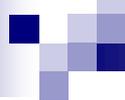
Recovered Brain





Depression Questionnaire

- **Use the depression questionnaire as a guide to see whether you (or someone you are ministering to) are clinically or severely depressed.**
- **The questionnaire is to be used as a guide only and not as a diagnostic tool. When in doubt, seek proper advise and assessment from a mental health professional (Anderson & Baumchen, 1999).**

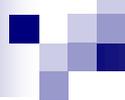


Overcoming Depression by the Transformation of Your Mind

- **Persons in the midst of depression often describe a negative and hopeless mindset about themselves, their future, and the world in general.**
 - **self: “I can’t do it. I’m useless.”**
 - **future: “Things will never change.”**
 - **world: “This is a hostile place.”**

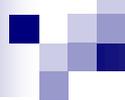
Overcoming Depression by the Transformation of Your Mind

- This hopeless mindset is undergirded by a *negative self talk*.
- Not surprisingly, one of the most effective treatment for depression is cognitive-behavioral therapy, which aims to restructure the way one thinks & one's self talk.
- Romans 12:2 – Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.



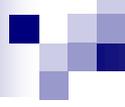
Understanding Self-Talk

- **Whether we have a case of the blues, identify with feelings of depression, or are coping with major depressive disorder, all of us can benefit from understanding our self-talk.**
- **Much of our thinking happens in the form of conversations with ourselves. Over 3,000 times per day, we talk to ourselves about ourselves (Warren, 2003).**
- **This self-talk is internal and inaudible. It sets our worldview, our feelings, our well-being, the way we make decisions, and the way we relate to others. Most of us are not even aware of our own self-talk (Kirk, 2003).**



Understanding Self-Talk

- **Our self-talk originates from**
 - our past
 - the spiritual realm
 - illness
 - our fears
 - the “flesh”
- **Some research show that 77% of an average person’s self-talk is negative (Kirk, 2003).**



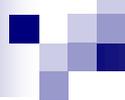
Negative Self-Talk

- **Tend to be emotionally charged: Comes from hurts (real or supposed).**
- **Is fueled by a vivid imagination: Exaggerates, makes us hypersensitive, and overgeneralizes.**
- **Is irrational & illogical: Feeds off doubts and worries, seldom stays in touch with reality.**

Negative Self-Talk

- Tends to “catastrophize”: Predicts the worst outcome, ending with a catastrophe.
- Is usually self-pitying and selfish: Centers on self as the focus of everything (Hart, 1996).

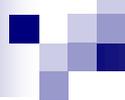
If we think (and talk to ourselves) this way most of the time (77%), we will “conform to the pattern of this world.” But Romans 12:2 exhorts us to “be transformed by the renewing of your mind.”



Renewing Your Mind

Step 1: Capture That Thought

- Intentionally monitor your self-talk.
- 2 Cor 10:5 – *Take captive every thought* to make it obedient to Christ.
- Taking captive means to not let your thoughts “run amok.” If you are not aware of your self-talk, you cannot capture it or modify it.



Renewing Your Mind

Step 1: Capture That Thought

- **Intentionally monitor your self-talk (Hart, 1996)**
 - Periodically speaking out or writing down what you are saying to yourself
 - Keeping a journal or thought record
 - Setting a specific time (e.g., using an alarm, use class break, coffee break, bathroom break, lunch) as an “appointment” to monitor your self-talk
- **The goal is to be consciously aware of the conversations you have with yourself, so you can test them and change them.**

Renewing Your Mind

Step 2 - Test it (with Philippians 4:8)

- **Whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable --- if anything is excellent or praiseworthy --- think about such things.**
- **Ask: Is it true? How do I know it is true? What are the evidences? Is it reality?**

Renewing Your Mind

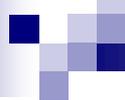
Step 3: Make That Thought Obedient to Christ

- **2 Cor 10:5 – Take captive every thought to *make it obedient to Christ.***
- **Make your thoughts conform to the way that Jesus thinks, to what he says, and to his commands.**
- **The way Jesus thinks will always conform to the Bible, what he said in Scripture, and to reality/truth.**
- **The best way to “make your thoughts obedient to Christ” is to use Scripture.**

Renewing Your Mind

Examples:

- ***Self Talk:*** No one wants me; no one loves me.
- ***Truth:*** God says, “You are precious in my eyes, and honored, and I love you.” (Isaiah 43:4)



Renewing Your Mind

Examples:

- ***Self-Talk:*** It is too late for me. I'd committed too many sins against God.
- ***Truth:*** There is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus (Romans 8:1).

Renewing Your Mind

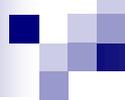
Examples:

- ***Self-Talk:*** Nothing will ever change. There is no hope for the future.
- ***Truth:*** I know the plans God has for me...Plans for good and not for disaster, to give me a future and a hope (Jeremiah 29:11).

Renewing Your Mind

Step 4: Meditate on the Word

- To renew the mind, you will need to stop the influx of negative thoughts/lies, and fill it with the truth of God's Word.
- To meditate means that you are constantly rehearsing, repeating, or restating what is good from Scripture, such that your mind is dominated by, permeated by, captivated by, and fully occupied by God's truth (Stanley, 2003).
- Meditating on Scripture: To ponder it deeply, analyze it, "chew" on it, and then "digest" it, such that it becomes a part of you.



Renewing Your Mind

- **If you commit large sections of Scripture to memory, you will find that your thinking is changed in the process. You simply cannot be filled with God's Words and negative thoughts in the same time (Stanley, 2003).**
- **One way of meditating on Scripture is to sing and memorize spiritual songs, especially those with lyrics that are taken directly from the Bible .**

Renewing Your Mind

- **Use the bookmark, Who I am in Christ, to remind yourself who you are (i.e., a beloved child of God) and to renew your mind. (This list can be obtained from the Freedom in Christ Ministries website at www.ficm.org)**
- **One woman who had successfully recovered from depression shared that she taped herself reading a list like this and listened to it when she woke up in the morning and again before she went to bed at night.**

Renewing Your Mind

- **“If what we believe does not reflect truth, then what we feel does not reflect reality.”**
-- Neil Anderson
- **Do not determine reality by just how you feel.**
- **It is time to take back any grounds lost to our enemy via negative self-talk (lies) and to renew our minds with the truth.**
- **The truth is that your self-talk was learned, and it can unlearned (or transformed).**

Changing Your Beliefs

From:

Personal

“I’m the problem”

Pervasive

“In every situation”

Permanent

“Forever”

To:

Impersonal

“It’s a problem.”

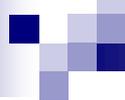
Specific

“In this one situation”

Temporary

“For a season”

(Anderson, 2000)



Renewing Your Mind

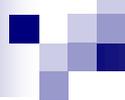
- **The transformation of your mind is a process and an ongoing battle.**
- **Combat the lie (i.e., negative self-talk) with God's truth each time it surfaces.**
- **Guard your minds: Be careful of what you allow to be put into it (e.g., TV, movies, books, music, listening to people).**
- **Fill your mind with good things (e.g., Scripture, conversations with godly people, inspirational music & films, contemplating the beauty of nature, remembering a beloved pet).**

Renewing Your Mind

- **Proverbs 23:7 – As a man thinks in his heart, so is he.**
- **John Maxwell: “Your life today is a result of your thinking yesterday. Your life tomorrow will be determined by what you think today.”**
- **Don’t copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will know what God wants you to do, and you will know how good and pleasing and perfect his will really is. Romans 12:2 (NLT)**

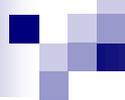
Our Response to Those Suffering

- We need to do what Jesus did – He left comfort, beauty, safety, love, and His heaven**
- We must do the same and leave what is comfortable for us – you enter into another's world of darkness when you minister**
- We need to walk beside those who are suffering – listen to their story, learn about who they are, and be understanding**
- Resist the temptation to take over and tell the individual what to do, when to do it, how to do it**



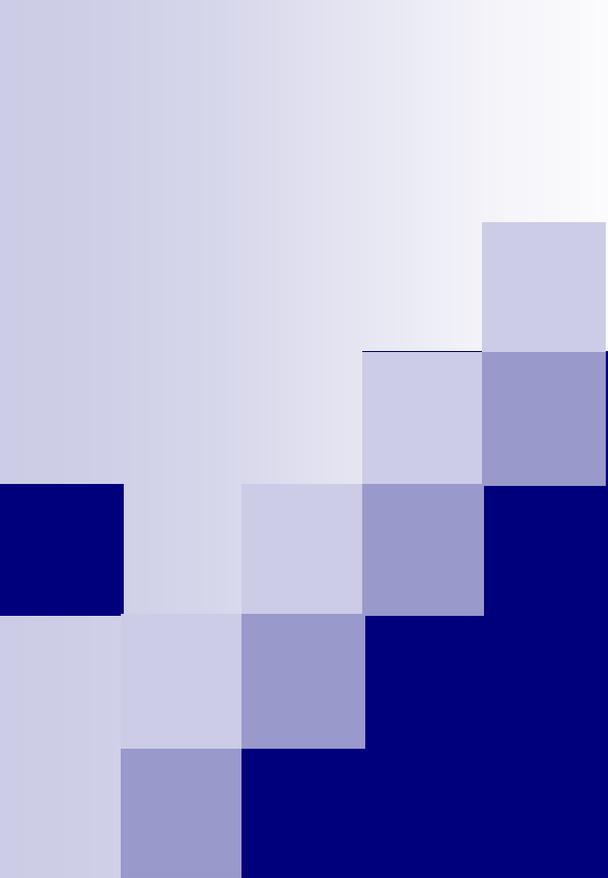
Our Response to Those Suffering

- We are to go to them, not expect them to come to us**
- Jesus became humble in all areas of His life - He sat with us in our messy world and learned from us what it is like to be human**
- Resist trying to pull the individual out of their depression by convincing them of our ways of thinking, living, or understanding**
- We do not want to instruct, but guide with a gentle spirit – take on the character of Jesus**



Our Response to Those Suffering

- **People need to SEE what love is, not just learn the words**
- **Jesus did not lose His perspective when He entered into our painful world**
- **We need to make sure we don't get lost while in the darkness - Persevere**
- **Jesus experienced the cross, but He focused on God's will to get Him through**
- **Remain in close relationship with Jesus, read His word, focus on what He is doing**



Questions & Discussions