

Faith and Depression

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People of faith are not exempt from the things that lead to depression. Don't expect easy answers or platitudes, but be encouraged to respond to depression from a faith perspective.

For
Adult, Couple

Season
Winter

Needed

Bible, openness to discussing one's feelings and to exploring new understandings about depression

Prepare in Advance

Mark your Bible at Psalm 13:1-6; Psalm 25:1-22; Psalm 43:1-5; Isaiah 41:10; Matthew 11:28-30; 2 Corinthians 1:3-4; Philippians 3:12-14.

Print this article on faith and depression: [Depression Demands Living by Faith, Not by Sight](#).

Activity Plan

1. Say this prayer aloud to begin.

God of hope, we need something to hold onto when life is hard. Help us find that stability in you. Amen.

2. Pick words from the list below that you associate with a faith-focused life:
 - Confidence
 - Assurance
 - Doubt
 - Failure
 - Hope
 - Darkness
 - Risk
 - Self-care
 - Depression
 - Fear
3. Read the article [Depression Demands Living by Faith, Not by Sight](#). Discuss the article with another person, listening to his or her understanding of it.
4. Read several of the following passages from your Bible or from the text at the end of this activity: Psalm 13:1-6; Psalm 25:1-22; Psalm 43:1-5; Isaiah 41:10; Matthew 11:28-30; 2 Corinthians 1:3-4; Philippians 3:12-14. After reading these scriptures, care for each other by discussing the following questions.
 - What do you hear that corresponds to your thoughts on depression and faith?
 - What do you hear in these verses that opens new ideas for you?
 - How are the people of faith who are speaking in these passages dealing with feelings of depression and alienation from God?



5. If depression is long-lasting or leaves a person feeling like life is not worth living, seek medical help immediately. A professional can often determine causes of depression and make treatment recommendations. Seeking medical help can be an expression of faith.
6. If you are dealing with depression, agree to stay connected with people who speak honestly and graciously to you. If you are in relationship with someone who is struggling with depression, promise him or her that you will listen and respond honestly with compassion. Take time to agree how and when you will check in with each other to have a caring conversation. You may want to text each other at different times of the day or talk face-to-face at regular intervals. Commit to praying for each other when you are not together.
7. Bring your conversation to a close by praying for each other.

Psalm 13:1-6:

¹ How long, O Lord? Will you forget me forever?
How long will you hide your face from me?
² How long must I take counsel in my soul
and have sorrow in my heart all the day?
How long shall my enemy be exalted over me?
³ Consider and answer me, O Lord my God;
light up my eyes, lest I sleep the sleep of death,

⁴ lest my enemy say, "I have prevailed over him,"
lest my foes rejoice because I am shaken.
⁵ But I have trusted in your steadfast love;
my heart shall rejoice in your salvation.
⁶ I will sing to the Lord,
because he has dealt bountifully with me.

Psalm 25:1-22:

¹ To you, O Lord, I lift up my soul.
² O my God, in you I trust;
let me not be put to shame;
let not my enemies exult over me.
³ Indeed, none who wait for you shall be put to
shame;
they shall be ashamed who are wantonly
treacherous.
⁴ Make me to know your ways, O Lord;
teach me your paths.
⁵ Lead me in your truth and teach me,
for you are the God of my salvation;
for you I wait all the day long.
⁶ Remember your mercy, O Lord, and your
steadfast love,
for they have been from of old.
⁷ Remember not the sins of my youth or my
transgressions;
according to your steadfast love remember me,
for the sake of your goodness, O Lord!
⁸ Good and upright is the Lord;
therefore he instructs sinners in the way.
⁹ He leads the humble in what is right,
and teaches the humble his way.
¹⁰ All the paths of the Lord are steadfast love and
faithfulness,
for those who keep his covenant and his
testimonies.

¹¹ For your name's sake, O Lord,
pardon my guilt, for it is great.
¹² Who is the man who fears the Lord?
Him will he instruct in the way that he should
choose.
¹³ His soul shall abide in well-being,
and his offspring shall inherit the land.
¹⁴ The friendship of the Lord is for those who fear
him,
and he makes known to them his covenant.
¹⁵ My eyes are ever toward the Lord,
for he will pluck my feet out of the net.
¹⁶ Turn to me and be gracious to me,
for I am lonely and afflicted.
¹⁷ The troubles of my heart are enlarged;
bring me out of my distresses.
¹⁸ Consider my affliction and my trouble,
and forgive all my sins.
¹⁹ Consider how many are my foes,
and with what violent hatred they hate me.
²⁰ Oh, guard my soul, and deliver me!
Let me not be put to shame, for I take refuge in
you.
²¹ May integrity and uprightness preserve me,
for I wait for you.
²² Redeem Israel, O God,
out of all his troubles.

Psalm 43:1-5:

¹ Vindicate me, O God, and defend my cause
against an ungodly people,
from the deceitful and unjust man

deliver me!
² For you are the God in whom I take refuge;
why have you rejected me?



Why do I go about mourning
because of the oppression of the enemy?

³ Send out your light and your truth;
let them lead me;

let them bring me to your holy hill
and to your dwelling!

⁴ Then I will go to the altar of God,

to God my exceeding joy,
and I will praise you with the lyre,
O God, my God.

⁵ Why are you cast down, O my soul,
and why are you in turmoil within me?
Hope in God; for I shall again praise him,
my salvation and my God.

Isaiah 41:10:

[F]ear not, for I am with you;
be not dismayed, for I am your God;
I will strengthen you, I will help you,
I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.

Matthew 11:28-30:

²⁸ Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰ For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”

2 Corinthians 1:3-4:

³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, ⁴ 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.

Philippians 3:12-14:

¹² Not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect, but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. ¹³ Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it my own. But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, ¹⁴ I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

