

Mental and Emotional Health

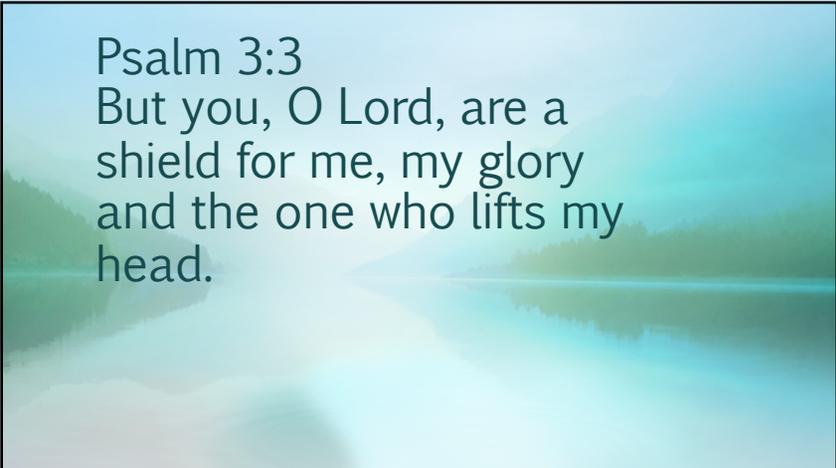
Equip Workshop
by
Melissa Ambruster MA,LLP

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Goals for tonight

- Gain an understanding of Emotional and Mental Health
- Teach about the Mind-Brain-Body connection
- Equip you with some tools to use when combating stress
- Remind you of God's wisdom, provision, and protection
- To give hope and a sense of well-being

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Psalm 3:3
But you, O Lord, are a
shield for me, my glory
and the one who lifts my
head.

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STRESS

The Corona virus Pandemic is being called "the most psychologically toxic disaster in anyone's lifetime"

George Everly, professor of Mental Health Resilience, John Hopkins

It is a disaster of uncertainty and the more uncertainty surrounding a disaster, the greater the psychological casualties.

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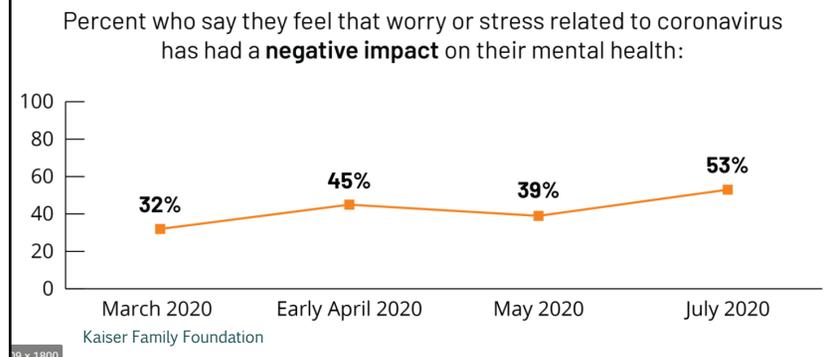
- **Stress:** defined by the dictionary as a condition typically characterized by symptoms of mental and physical tension or strain that result from a reaction to a situation in which a person feels threatened, pressured, etc.
- A study by the American Medical Association found that stress is a factor in 75 percent of all illnesses and diseases
- The International Agency for Research on Cancer and WHO have concluded that 80 percent of cancers are due to lifestyle and not genetics

Normal Stress: Our alert state that keeps us focused and aware, the state we are in when we are thinking in alignment with God.

Stress becomes **toxic** with negative thinking and behaviors

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Adults Increasingly Report That Worry And Stress Related To Coronavirus Has Had A Negative Impact On Their Mental Health



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Pandemic Stressors

- **Isolation** – According to KFF, a broad body of research links social isolation and loneliness to both poor mental and physical health.
- **Job loss ,loss of income** - is associated with increased depression, anxiety, distress, low self esteem.
- **Burnout** – Frontline workers experiencing impact on mental health.
- **Distance learning** – 30 million students displaced. 67% of parents worry the kids ages 5-17 will fall behind socially and emotionally. Additional pressure on parents
- **Disruption to daily routine** – Women are reporting more negative mental health than men. They are more likely to shoulder caring responsibilities, work in frontline jobs, earn less money. Increase of Domestic violence
- **Fear of getting sick**, or shielding vulnerable family members from illness
- **Minority groups**- experiencing exacerbations to existing societal challenges

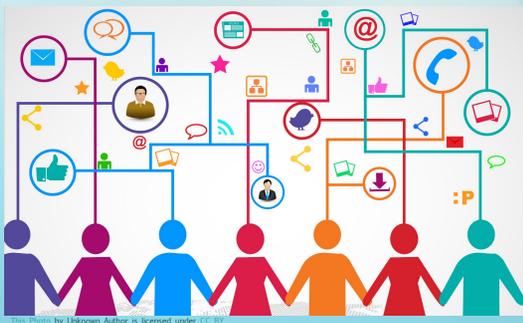
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Laughter



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Ted Talk on Social Media by Bailey Parnell



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What does Emotional and Mental Health look like?

- World Health Organization defines **Health** as being “in a state of complete physical, mental, and social *well-being* and not merely the absence of disease”.
- **Emotional health** is about how we think and feel. It’s about our sense of *well-being*, our ability to cope with life events and how we acknowledge our own emotions as well as those of others.
- **Mental health** is a state of *well-being* in which an individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and is able to make a contribution to his or her community.

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Signs of Emotional Health

- You like who you are
- You are able to cope with stressors of daily life
- You have emotional stability
- You are in touch with your emotions and can manage them
- You have meaning in your life
- You are optimistic about the future

Signs of Poor Emotional Health

- Feeling sad or down
- Reduced ability to concentrate
- Excessive fears or worries
- Withdrawal from friends and activities
- Significant tiredness, low energy, problems sleeping
- Mood changes

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The Mind “Mind over matter” science is finding more evidence the mind is designed to control the body (brain)

The Brain – malleable and adaptable

The Body – connected to the brain through neuropathways where signals are transmitted to and from the brain.

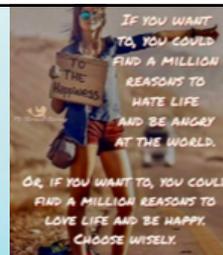


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The endless adaptivity of the human brain

- The Lord's mercies are new every morning! Lamentations 3:22-23
- God offers a fresh supply of loyal love and grace every day.
- Our Brain is neuroplastic – it can change and regrow
- Neurogenesis = new nerve cells are birthed daily for our mental benefit.
- The choices you make today impact your spirit, soul, and body

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Our Choices Matter

Research shows that DNA actually changes shape in response to our thoughts.

We used to believe that the brain was fixed or hardwired. With an injury to the brain, compensation was taught, not transformation.

With brain imaging techniques we are able to see evidence of behavioral changes made with our minds. This is NEUROPLASTICITY!

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Thought



Your mind thinks, the brain responds by sending neurological signals throughout the body. Your thoughts and emotions are transformed into physiological and spiritual effects. Those physiological experiences then transform into mental and emotional states.

EX. A belief can take on a physical existence as a positive or negative change in our cells



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Meditate on These Things

Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue, and if there is anything praiseworthy, **meditate on these things.** Philippians 4:8 NKJ

Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God which surpasses all understanding will **guard your hearts and minds** through Christ Jesus. Philippians 4:6-7 NKJ

Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the **renewing of your mind.** Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is – His good, pleasing and perfect will. Romans 12:2 NIV

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Three Blessings

- Instructions: every night for the next week, just before you go to bed, think about anything good that happened to you during that day. Write down three of these things. Remember exactly how each good thing happened then think about why each thing happened. (ie think about the person who made this pleasant thing happen) It doesn't matter if the experience was big or small. Bring it to mind: relish your good fortune, or savor the kindness.
- 1. what: good thing happened today:
- 2. How: It happened like this:
- 3. Why: It happened because:

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Mindfulness

Mindfulness means maintaining a moment -by -moment awareness of our thoughts, feelings, bodily sensations, and surrounding environment, through a gentle, nurturing lens...

When we practice **mindfulness**, our thoughts tune into what we're sensing in the present moment rather than rehashing the past or imagining the future.

Greatergood.Berkley.edu

We can trust God to provide for us because God knows precisely what we need. "Therefore, do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is it's own trouble" Matt 6:34

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Mindfulness improves well-being –
Mindfulness improves mental health
Mindfulness improves physical health

5 Ways to Practice Mindfulness Right Now

- Stop what you're doing and take a breath. Take a moment to notice the sensation of your breath.
- Put down your phone
- Do one thing at a time
- Find mindful moments in everyday tasks
- Notice the moves you already make

www.centerforresilience.org



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When our Thoughts Turn Negative

Anxiety

- **What if** thoughts, what might happen
- People pleasing, Mind reading, what others might be thinking, feeling.
- Worry, Doubt, and Fear
- Guilt, feeling responsible
- Shame, feeling unworthy
- Self Doubt, can I handle things?

Depression

- Hopelessness – the future is bleak, I can't be helped.
- Feeling empty
- Self hatred, low self esteem
- Feeling discouraged about life or the future
- What's the point?
- Shame,
- Numb

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Understanding Anxiety

Amygdala Pathway

- Fight, Flight, Freeze response
- Processes information quicker than a second.
- It's role is to attach emotional significance to situations or objects and to form emotional memories. (positive and negative)
- It is not logical, only makes associations
- Constructed of circuitry that mostly can be modified.
- Has many connections to the Cortex that can influence our thinking
- It can learn by experience so it can learn to stop responding to triggers!
- Breathing, Wet Noodle, Yoga, sleep, exercise

Cortex Pathway

- Creates our perceptions of things through our senses.
- Can create thoughts and images that go beyond our perceptions.
- Cannot create anxiety but interprets situations that initiates anxiety with "what if" type thinking, producing images that create unnecessary anxiety.
- Understanding beliefs, attitudes, interpretations can assist in reducing anxiety
- Has very few connections to the amygdala
- Responds to education, logic, argument, and experience
- Identifying the reason for anxiety reduces anxiety-eliciting thoughts

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Breathing Through Anxiety



Square breathing is good for regaining emotional balance and providing an immediate sense of calm

1. Slowly empty your lungs through your mouth. Breathe in deeply through your nose to a slow count of 4 filling your lungs and then your abdomen.
2. At the top of the inhale, hold your breath for a slow count of 4. Now breathe out through your nose for another slow count of 4. Notice the air gently leaving your lungs. Then hold your breath for the same slow count of 4.
3. Repeat the process four square breathing sets.

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Understanding Depression

Causes of Depression

- Depression through genetic vulnerability
- Through childhood abuse, loss or neglect that disrupted brain function, altering ability to handle life challenges.
- Long-term chronic stress
- Trauma
- Serious loss

Treatment for Depression

- Depends of the type of Depression, determined by physical, mental, and behavioral symptoms.
- Different therapeutic techniques are used to work toward a more positive, flexible brain. We use the brain to change the brain.
- Medications are used to change specific brain or neurotransmitter functions and can assist in helping you to use your brain to change your brain.

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Compassionate Chair work

- Think about something that has recently caused you to criticize yourself.
 - We will be using 3 chairs for this, real or imagined.
- The first chair represents a voice of self criticism
- The second chair represents the emotion or sensation of being judged
- The last chair takes the perspective of a supportive friend or wise counselor
- Your job is to play the role of each voice represented by the respective chairs
 - Our goal is to learn self compassion through accessing the different perspectives

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You Have to Feel to Heal

- Humans in pain want to get out of it as fast as they can.
- Emotional pain and anxiety signal us that something is wrong.
- Identifying feelings and processing them can bring lasting relief.
- Feelings are not all created equal (trauma, loss)
- Defense mechanisms all have expiration dates
- “God made us as whole people, in his image. That image includes physical, spiritual, emotional, intellectual and social dimensions. Ignoring ANY aspect of who we are as men and women made in Gods image always results in destructive consequences – in our relationship with God, with others, and with ourselves” Peter Scazzero

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A = Emotions

B = Emotions During Covid 19

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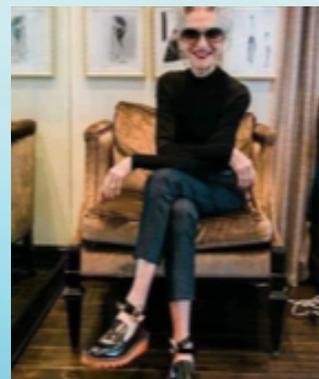
Self Care, a vital component of well-being

- **Physical** – exercise, relaxation, rest, health management, spa
- **Emotional** – Talking, solitude, physical touch, movies, journal, boundaries
- **Social** – connecting with friends and family, adventure, eating good food
- **Spiritual** – Prayer, fellowship, quiet time alone with God, bible study, forgiveness
- **Intellectual** – learning, puzzles, books, travel, conversation, hobby, job
- **Imagery for care and Nurture exercise**



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Happiness is like a bank account: you withdraw from it what you deposit.

Free your heart from hate/discord

Free your mind from worries

Live Simply

Give More - Take Less

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Faith is the substance of things hoped for,
the evidence of things not seen. Hebrews 11:1

- Faith is being sure and certain about unseen hopes and realities.
- We are not sure what the future holds, but as Christians, we know who holds the future.
- Hope is an activity of the mind that changes the structure of our brain in a positive way.
- Science is catching up to Scripture!

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References and Resources

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www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/managing-stress-anxiety.html

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Resources Continued

National Suicide prevention Lifeline **800-273-8255**

Sleep Lantern app for sleep struggles (apple)

Catherine M, Pittman PH.D., *Rewire the Anxious Brain: Using Neuroscience to end Anxiety, Panic, and Worry.*

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