

Thank you for joining us in the discussion of this important topic.

While we hope you gained a lot out of this message, please remember: if you are struggling with depression and/or anxiety, the most important thing for you to do is seek professional help immediately.

You are not alone, so don't isolate yourself; get help now.

If you are using this guide to lead a discussion in a small group setting, please remember that you are not a trained professional and are not expected to serve that role as a small group leader. Your role is to remind everyone in your group that they are not alone and have access to resources.

In Pastor Paul's message, he shared the following criteria for depression. Remember, if you can relate to 5 or more of these on a regular basis ('nearly every day'), seek help immediately:

CRITERIA FOR DEPRESSION:

1. Depressed mood most of the day, nearly every day.
2. Noticeably diminished interest or pleasure in most or all activities nearly every day.
3. Either significant weight loss or weight gain.
4. Altered sleep patterns – either insomnia or sleeping too much.
5. Decreased physical activity or increased agitation nearly every day.
6. Fatigue or loss of energy nearly every day.
7. Feelings of worthlessness or inappropriate guilt nearly every day.
8. Diminished ability to think or concentrate nearly every day.
9. Recurrent thoughts of death or suicidal ideas.

Resources for those in need:

- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-8255 or www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org.
- If you need help connecting with resources, you can call the White Flag office during normal business hours.
- If you are in an emergency situation right now, call 911.



YOU ARE NOT ALONE
WEEK THREE
Overwhelmed by Depression

TALK IT OVER

Key Scriptures:

"Elijah was afraid and ran for his life. When he came to Beersheba in Judah, he left his servant there, while he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness. He came to a broom bush, sat down under it and prayed that he might die. "I have had enough, Lord," he said. "Take my life; I am no better than my ancestors." Then he lay down under the bush and fell asleep."

1 Kings 19:3-5

Goals for this message:

1. Encourage everyone that has struggled or is struggling with depression or anxiety.
2. Educate anyone who hasn't dealt with it.
3. Share what God's word says about depression.

Dealing with depression:

1. Expect seasons of highs & lows.
2. Manage your expectations.
3. Avoid isolation.
4. Cry out to God.
5. Pay attention to your health & body.
6. Focus on facts not feelings.

Start celebrating. Revisit action item(s) from last week.

- Did you implement a discipline plan for your kids?

Start thinking. Ask questions to get your group thinking.

- Consider these stats:
 - 16% of Americans will struggle with depression in their lifetime.
 - Virtually 100% of Americans will be touched by depression (either directly or indirectly by someone they know).

Start talking. Find a conversation starter for your group.

- Discuss your reactions to the [story of Pastor Andrew Stoecklein](#) from [Inland Hills Church](#) and his [wife Kayla's blog post](#).
- Think back through Paul's message. What sticks out to you?

Start sharing. Choose questions that create openness.

- Do you (or have you) struggle with depression or anxiety?
- How do you respond differently to seasons of high and seasons of low in your life?
- Do you have expectations that need to be managed differently in your life?
- What keeps you from crying out, honestly, to God?
- How might you need to pay better attention to your health & body?

Start digging. Provide these Scriptures for people to read during the week.

1 Kings 18 | 1 Kings 19:1-10

Start praying. Be bold, and pray specifically.

Father, for those of us dealing with depression or anxiety, give us hope; give us hope in you that it can and will get better because you're more powerful and you have a plan for us. For those of us not dealing with it directly, give us empathy for those that are; empathy that enables us to help them focus on who you say they are, not who the devil is saying they are. God, remind us all, every day, that we are enough because you are enough.

Start doing. Commit to a step, and live it out this week.

If you struggle with depression or anxiety, commit to seeking professional help this week; commit to crying out to God. If you do not struggle with this, pray for those in your life that do; whether you know it or not, someone you're connected to is struggling right now.

**"Depression can sink its claws into anyone."
~Paul Wingfield~**