



AN AWAKENING OF COMPASSION:
A Christian Perspective on Mental Health

Video Supplement Workbook

Video created by Rev. Peter Metcalfe of Bedford, Nova Scotia

Supplement Workbook created by Rev. Jennifer Smart of Kentville, Nova Scotia

with the

Department of Public Witness and Social Concern of the
Convention of Atlantic Baptist Churches

Dr. Lois Mitchell, Director

GROUP PARTICIPANT GUIDELINES

- ** Recognize that the Holy Spirit is in charge.
Pray for the Spirit's guidance and direction.
- ** Maintain confidentiality. "What you hear here let it stay here."
Keep whatever is shared within the group to ensure an atmosphere of safety and openness.
- ** Avoid gossip.
Refrain from criticizing others.
- ** Come to each discussion with a prayerful attitude.

This DVD set may be used for an adult Sunday School class, for the midweek prayer meeting, for a workshop, or at a Christian retreat. The Rapha Initiative encourages the small group facilitator to add his/her own questions for each class, in the spirit of care and support for persons living with mental illness.

The purpose of this DVD set is to provide a starting point to open up conversation on mental health issues and to break the silence and stigma that surrounds mental illness. When possible, we recommend that a mental health professional who approaches wellness from a holistic viewpoint (biological, emotional, and spiritual), or someone experienced with mental health issues, attend discussion sessions.

INTRODUCTORY SEGMENT 21 minutes

1. The categories used to introduce the people are loose and fluid. In other words, the Educators may also be caregivers and family members. The mental health consumers may also be educators, etc.
2. This segment should not be shown for discussion purposes since it only provides a glimpse of each person's views.

STRICTLY SPEAKING: A CLINICAL PERSPECTIVE

with Dr. Goossen, Rev. Summerville, and Dr. LeBlanc

1. Do you think the church has been silent on the issue of mental illness? Why or why not?
2. Do you know someone who is depressed? Without referring to him by name, what are his symptoms?
3. Resilience or the ability to bounce back is critical for mental health. How may faith in God strengthen one's resilience? What else supports resilience?
4. Consider the worship services held in your church. How may public worship either help or hinder the recovery of a person with depression?

SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING: PART ONE

with Brian Schrock, Paula Weaver, Berys Richardson, Tammie Thorne, Randy Goossen and Chris Summerville

1. What is a common attitude among Christians concerning mental illness? How may this stigma be eliminated?
2. In the public health care system, Christian counselling is not well known. It is holistic in that it recognizes the spirit in each person. Use of listening prayer and the Bible convey God's love to the client. "Lies" lodged in a person's spirit may keep him/her depressed. What are some of those lies? The truth instills hope.
3. What perceptions do people have of Christian counselling as compared to other forms of therapy?
4. The spiritual darkness in our world affects EVERYONE. Yet God our Creator and Redeemer is greater than the enemy of our souls. How may Christian counselling recognize and overcome this spiritual darkness?

SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING: PART TWO

with Gary LeBlanc, Berys Richardson, Paula Weaver, Tammie Thorne, Chris Summerville, Randy Goossen, Brian Schrock

1a. What can a local congregation do to support the mental health consumer and his/her family?

1b. How may the pastor lead his/her church into a better understanding and compassionate response to mental illness?

2. Mr. Summerville quotes Jeremiah 29:11, "For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." What sort of future do you envision for a person in his twenties who has just received the diagnosis of schizophrenia?

3. What "distorted perceptions" may lead a person to commit suicide? How can you challenge such thinking?

4. Dr. and Mrs. Leblanc's son Shawn took his own life. The surviving family of a suicide victim suffers guilty feelings. Dr. Leblanc points out, "Suicide is not the unpardonable sin." Discuss.

THE CONSUMERS OF MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES: PART ONE

with Sharon Fawcett and Charlene Reid

1. Sharon tried many different anti-depressants during her treatment.

Medication may help some people while for others it is of little or no help.

It may take months or even years to find the right drug(s).

However, Sharon discovered that her depression had spiritual roots; she ONLY found healing and a spiritual breakthrough in Christian counselling. Discuss.

2. Sharon comments that a suicidal person usually feels overwhelmed by inner pain.

In a eulogy, one pastor honoured the deceased person by saying he fought his inner battles with courage. Discuss.

3. How does Charlene describe her Dissociative Identity Disorder (D.I.D.)?

At least fifty percent of people who live with a mental illness are survivors of childhood trauma.

How does this fact affect your view of mental health consumers?

4. After her first marriage ended, a friend gave Charlene a "reality check."

A simple but pointed question put Charlene on the path to pursuing a better life for herself and her children.

Part of a person's healing is found in supportive relationships.

Discuss.

Defining Our Terms

WHOLISTIC HEALTH CARE An approach to health care in which patients play an active part in their own health planning.

The emphasis is as much on health as on treating illness and involves treating the whole person physically, emotionally and spiritually.

ANOREXIA NERVOSA A condition that is characterized by an intense fear of becoming obese, self-imposed diet restrictions, significant weight loss and a disturbance of body image. It occurs mostly in females.

DISSOCIATIVE IDENTITY DISORDER

The basic personality and one or more subpersonalities exist in the same individual with any one of these personalities being uppermost at a given time.

DEPRESSION is a complex mood disorder of the entire psychobiological person and characterized by persistently negative views of the self, the world and the future. It involves a slowing down of the entire person. (Sadness is primarily an emotional state triggered by the loss of something important to the person's wellbeing.)

** Definitions from: Dictionary of Pastoral Care and Counseling, Rodney Hunter, editor.

PUTTING A FACE ON MENTAL ILLNESS: PART TWO

1. About one mental health professional, Sharon comments, "She never gave up on me."

Hebrews 11:1 says "Faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see."

When a person is tempted to despair, he or she may be carried by other people's hope. Discuss.

2. Charlene had the courage to share her diagnosis of D.I.D. How did church members react to her experience? What response would have been more helpful?

3. Sharon comments that she received few visits from family or friends while living in a psychiatric ward.

How may people imagine such a unit to be like? What part does stigma play in people's perceptions?

4. Charlene quotes Psalm 116 to describe how she called out to God for healing.

When she received Christian counselling she began to find hope and healing.

Now she can identify with Joseph who forgave his brothers. At their reunion in Egypt, Joseph said to them,

"You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives."

Genesis 50:20, NIV. Discuss how forgiveness plays a part in healing of old wounds.

MY MOTHER'S KEEPER

with Sheila Clyde and Ingrid Taylor

1. After seeing a geriatric specialist, her Mother said to Sheila, "You think I'm crazy, don't you?"

Many people with dementia feel ashamed of their symptoms and try to hide them. This shame is also called "self-stigma."

What could you say to a person to help relieve this shame?

DEMENTIA is a degenerative brain disorder. Dementia produces a significant decline in intellectual functioning

and compromises such essential mental activities as language, memory, abstract thinking and judgment.

-- from *Dictionary of Pastoral Care and Counseling*, Rodney J. Hunter, editor.

2. Sheila lived with her Mother for eleven months before her Mother moved into a nursing home.

What community supports are available to family caregivers? What about respite care? What services does the Alzheimer's Society provide? (If you don't know -- find out!)

3. Ingrid's Mother had many hallucinations. Concerning her three sons, Ingrid said, "They got a little scared."

When a grandparent has Alzheimer's Disease (or dementia), how may family members work through their emotions such as fear? If these emotions are not addressed, what may happen?

4. Ingrid pointed out several things that sustained her as a caregiver: a sense of humour, and faith in God and belonging to a faith community. How did these qualities help Ingrid and how may they help you?

FROM A PASTOR'S PERSPECTIVE

with Rev. Cheryl Ann Beals, Rev. Gordon Cook, Rev. Martin Zwicker

1. Rev. Beals comments that in suffering we come face to face with ourselves and with God.

Yet in our culture, we try to avoid suffering. Rev. Beals also points out that in the midst of our brokenness God reveals his power. Discuss.

2. Rev. Beals points out that social context plays an important role in mental health.

Discuss how racism / prejudice has affected the health of the African Canadian community.

What efforts have been made for reconciliation and justice?

3. A member of the Petitediac Baptist church had the courage to share her struggle with depression and her recovery with the congregation. What impact did her open, honest sharing have?

4. Rev. Cook comments, "Depression recovery is a team sport." The pastor should not be a person's "only" caregiver. Concerning the pastor's role, Rev. Cook says, "You want to be part of the help." It is helpful to be firm and set boundaries when caring for a mental health consumer. Give an example of this approach. Discuss.

5. The Bible gives us a mandate to love God and to love people. This command includes caring for the people living in the margins of our society. Such people are vulnerable and often ignored. Jehovah Rapha is the God who heals.

"But I will restore you to health and heal your wounds," declares the Lord, "because you are called an outcast, Zion for whom no one cares." Jeremiah 30:17 (NIV) Discuss the compassionate heart of God.

6. Rev. Zwicker describes a special worship service held at First Baptist Church in Dartmouth, Nova Scotia.

If your church were to plan a worship service to address mental health issues, what would you like to see included in it?

You may consider holding it in May during Mental Health Week or in October during Mental Illness Awareness Week -- or at any time of the year!

BIOGRAPHIES

Rev. Cheryl Ann Beals grew up in the black community of Cherry Brook, Nova Scotia. She has a B.Sc. Honours (psychology) and B.Ed. from Acadia University, M.Ed. (Counselling) from University Western Ontario and a M.Div. from McMaster Divinity College. She is currently working on her D.Min. at Acadia. Rev. Beals served with CBM in Brazil for over a year as a teacher of missionary kids and for over 6 years in the Canada portfolio. She also worked as a Christian counsellor for ten years. Currently, she is pastor of the Victoria Road United Baptist Church, Dartmouth, NS.

Mrs. Sheila Clyde was born and raised in New Glasgow, NS. Her profession has been in management for 17 years in retail, wholesale and airline travel and 11 years in Mall Management

and promotions. She is a recognized Lay Pastor of the Convention of Atlantic Baptist Churches. She resides in Truro, NS with her husband, Bruce of 42 years. They have three adult children who were raised in Truro. When Sheila's mother developed Alzheimer's disease, she became her primary caregiver.

Rev. Gordon Cook earned a B.A. at St. Thomas University and his M. Div. at Acadia Divinity College. He is married to Pam and has three sons. Rev. Cook has served the Petitcodiac Baptist Church in New Brunswick for more than ten years.

Mrs. Sharon Fawcett lives in Petitcodiac, New Brunswick. She is married to Tim and has two daughters, Lauren and Jenna. She endured a deep depression for nine years until finally, she found hope and healing through Christian counselling. Since then, she wrote a book about her experiences, *Hope for Wholeness: the Spiritual path to Freedom from Depression*. Sharon conducted the interviews of Dr. Goossen and Mr. Summerville. You may learn more at her website, www.sharonfawcett.com.

Pastor Michael Fredericks is a graduate of Acadia Divinity college, in Wolfville, Nova Scotia. He is married to Julia and father of Ruthie.

Dr. Randolph B. Goossen MD CCFP FRCPC is an Assistant Professor at the Department of Psychiatry, U of Manitoba. He is married and has 4 children. Dr. Goossen has been a guest speaker on topics such as 'Maintaining the Therapeutic Alliance' as well as, 'Spirituality and Mental Health'. Besides his role as a leader in community mental health services, Dr. Goossen is a singer, songwriter.

Dr. Gary LeBlanc was born in Moncton, NB. At U.N.B., he earned a Masters degree in Economics, and a Ph. D. in Sociology from Florida State University. He serves part-time as a professor of sociology at Crandall University in Moncton, NB. Shawn, his eldest son was a young man when he ended his life.

Mrs. Charlene Reid, mother of three children and a singer with Cornerstone Ministries. Due to childhood trauma, Charlene developed Dissociative Identity Disorder otherwise known as Multiple Personality Disorder. She is married to Brent.

Mrs. Berys Richardson hails from New Zealand. She earned the M.R.E. degree from Gordon Conwell seminary and a Master's degree in Counselling Psychology from Providence Seminary (Winnipeg Manitoba). She is married to Ralph Richardson, former President and Chancellor of Atlantic Baptist University (now Crandall U.) Since 1998, she works full time with Touchstone Counselling Group as a Christian counsellor.

CHRISTIAN COUNSELLING MINISTRIES of Truro Nova Scotia Brian Schrock has been with CCM since its opening in 1994. He is a graduate of Bryn Mawr College in Pennsylvania, with a Masters degree in Social Work.

Mrs. Tammie Thorne joined CCM in 2001. She earned a Masters of Theological Studies in Counselling at Canadian Baptist Seminary in Langley, BC. Her focus is addictions counselling.

Mrs. Paula Weaver has been with CCM since its opening in 1994 and is a graduate of Smith College in Northampton, Massachusetts where she earned a Masters degree in Clinical Social Work.

CCM also has an office in Lower Sackville and Westville, Nova Scotia.

Dr. Chris Summerville is a member of the board of directors of the Mental Health Commission of Canada, CEO of the Schizophrenia Society of Canada and Executive Director of the Manitoba Schizophrenia Society. A graduate of Dallas Theological Seminary, he came to Canada in 1985 from Alabama to serve as pastor of Redeemer Bible Church in Niagara Falls, Ont. Since 1995 he has been engaged as an advocate provincially and nationally for recovery-oriented mental health services. He currently lives in Steinbach, Manitoba where he and his family are part of Emmanuel Evangelical Free Church.

Mrs. Ingrid Taylor was born to Dutch immigrants in Wolfville NS. She and her husband live in Truro where they raised three sons. In 2001, her elderly mother moved in with them, and Ingrid became her primary caregiver.

Rev. Martin Zwicker is the Associate Pastor of Community Connections at First Baptist Church in Dartmouth, Nova Scotia. Martin is a member of the Canadian Association for Pastoral Practice and Education.; he has a background in chaplaincy. Martin is an advocate for those living in poverty and for mental health consumers.

This information should not be considered complete and should not be used in the place of advice or consultation with a trained professional. If you have a health problem, we suggest that you visit your health care provider, or in the event of an emergency, contact the emergency department of your hospital.

This information should not be construed to be formal legal or medical advice. The Rapha Initiative nor the C.A.B.C. nor any of its members shall not be responsible for information provided here under any theory of liability or indemnity.

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This document is arranged in two-sided printing mode for printing a booklet. On a home printer, choose “Manual Duplex” in printer settings to print in the correct order and follow the onscreen instructions.

LINKS

The Rapha Initiative

www.baptist-atlantic.ca/departments/witness/rapha

An interfaith ministry addressing mental illness

www.pathways2promise.org/resources

Professional Association of Canadian Christian Counsellors

www.paccc.ca

Mental Health Commission of Canada

www.mentalhealthcommission.ca

Minirth Meier Clinic in Texas --many helpful workbooks

www.minirthclinic.com

Canadian Mental Health Association

www.cmha.ca

Schizophrenia Society of Canada with links to provincial websites

www.schizophrenia.ca

Caregivers NS website

www.caregiversns.org

VON's caregiver site

www.caregiver-connect.ca

Mental Health Foundation of Nova Scotia www.mentalhealthns.ca

Mental Health First Aid

www.mentalhealthfirstaid.ca/Pages/default.aspx

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7. From a Pastor's Perspective

EVALUATION

1. a. Has this DVD series been beneficial to you?
b. If so, which DVD segment was the most helpful to you?
In what ways?

2. Did any information surprise you? Upset you? Challenge you?
If so, please specify.

3. As a result of this DVD series, has your view of persons living with
mental illness changed?
If so, how?

4. Did you find the questions in the Supplement Workbook helpful
for the discussion?

5. Would you like to see more ministry done in this area?
Any suggestions for follow up?

Please send your completed forms to:

Dept. of Public Witness and Social Concern
Convention of Atlantic Baptist Churches
1655 Manawagonish Road
Saint John, New Brunswick
E2M 3Y2

THANK YOU!

Notes:

