

## Questions for Individual or Groups:

1. Tell about your experience with mental illness? Do/have you experienced a mental health struggle? A family member? Friend?
2. Look at the definition of mental illness in your notes. What stands out to you about the definition? Does this definition change your understanding in any way?
3. Why are Christians often tempted to hide their struggle with mental illness?
4. Read Romans 8:18-38. How might this passage help us think (for a theology) about mental illness? What truths in this passage might be helpful for those who are struggling?
5. Galatians 6:2 tells us, “Bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.” In your group brainstorm some ways the church might help bear the burdens of someone struggling with mental illness?



## The Struggle with Mental Health

### Five practices for spiritual thriving:

- Being rooted in Christ
- Developing spiritual friendships
- Maintaining healthy relationships
- Living your purpose
- Dealing with your “stuff”

Our “stuff” is not always \_\_\_\_\_.

## What is mental illness?

“Mental illness is a life struggle, which is common to all people to some degree, that significantly and persistently impairs an individual’s mental, social or emotional ability to function. With the exception of responses to trauma, this impairment is beyond a normal response to their life circumstances.”

“Thank you for making me so wonderfully \_\_\_\_\_.”

--Psalm 139:14 (NLT)

## What causes mental illness? Three factors:

1. \_\_\_\_\_: chemical imbalances, genetics, injury, etc.
2. \_\_\_\_\_: trauma, childhood experiences, major life changes, etc.
3. \_\_\_\_\_: sinful or unwise choices. It could be poor boundaries or lies we believe about ourselves.

## Determining the cause:

- Is not to give people an excuse for \_\_\_\_\_ behavior
- Is not to place \_\_\_\_\_.
- IS to help determine the best course of \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_, blaming, hiding, stigmatizing or ignoring are never good treatments.

## The Goals for Today:

1. To \_\_\_\_\_.
2. To \_\_\_\_\_.
3. To learn how our church community can \_\_\_\_\_ well for people experiencing mental illness.

“<sup>37</sup>No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. <sup>38</sup>For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, <sup>39</sup>neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

--Romans 8:37-39

“Bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.”

-- Galatians 6:2

Don’t \_\_\_\_\_ from struggle, move \_\_\_\_\_ it.

## Resources:

- National Institute on Mental Health (NAMI) [www.nami.org](http://www.nami.org)
- <http://bradhambrick.com/mentalhealth/>
- [www.hope4mentalhealth.com](http://www.hope4mentalhealth.com)
- Book: “Life’s Healing Choices” by John Baker
- Class: Emotionally Healthy Discipleship Course @ Waite Park Church begins Sunday, March 1<sup>st</sup> 5:00 pm