

Finding Hope Again

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Lesson One: The Agony of Depression

Lesson Objective:

To understand the signs and symptoms of depression to determine the severity of the problem.

The signs of approaching melancholy are "...anguish and distress, dejection, silence, animosity... sometimes a desire to live and at other times a longing for death, suspicions on the part of the patient that a plot is being hatched against him..."

Caelius Aurelianus, fifth century A.D.

A. The Scope of the Problem

B. Symptoms of Depression

1. Physical symptoms of depression
 - a. Low energy level
 - b. Sleep disturbance
 - c. Diminished activity level
 - d. Lack of sex drive
 - e. Somatic complaints
 - f. Loss of appetite
2. Mental and emotional symptoms
 - a. Sadness
 - b. Despair
 - c. Irritability and low frustration tolerance
 - d. Isolation and withdrawal
 - e. Negative thought patterns
 - f. Thoughts of suicide

Depression Diagnosis

Notes

1. Low energy	1	2	3	4	5	High energy
2. Difficulty sleeping or sleep all the time	1	2	3	4	5	Uninterrupted sleeping patterns
3. No desire to be involved in activities	1	2	3	4	5	Very involved in activities
4. No desire for sex	1	2	3	4	5	Healthy sex drive
5. Aches and pains	1	2	3	4	5	Feel great
6. Loss of appetite	1	2	3	4	5	Enjoy eating
7. Sad (tearfulness)	1	2	3	4	5	Joyful
8. Despairing and hopelessness	1	2	3	4	5	Hopeful and confident
9. Irritable (low frustration tolerance)	1	2	3	4	5	Pleasant (high frustration tolerance)
10. Withdrawn	1	2	3	4	5	Involved
11. Mental anguish	1	2	3	4	5	Peace of mind
12. Low sense of worth	1	2	3	4	5	High sense of worth
13. Pessimistic (about the future)	1	2	3	4	5	Optimistic (about the future)
14. Perceive most circumstances as negative and seen as harmful to self	1	2	3	4	5	Perceive most circumstances as positive and seen as opportunities for growth
15. Self-destructive (myself and others would be better off if I weren't here)	1	2	3	4	5	Self-preserving (glad I'm here)

Notes

C. Severity of Depression

45 - 75	Likely not depressed
35 - 44	Mildly depressed
25 - 34	Depressed
15 - 24	Severely depressed

D. Prognosis (Ps. 38:3-18)

1. Hope

2. Help

E. Responding to the Emotional Symptoms of Depression

1. Suppression

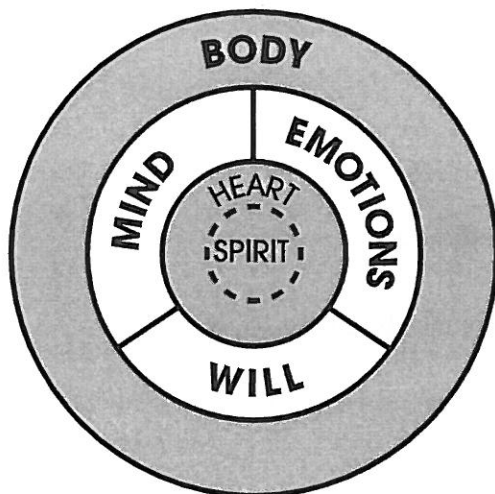
2. Indiscriminate expression

3. Acknowledgement

A. Integrating Science and Theology (Ps. 19:1-10)

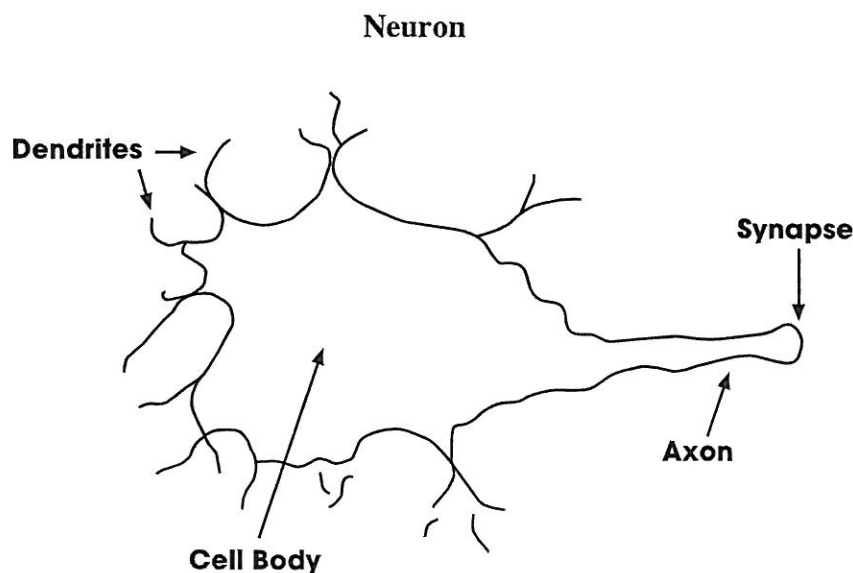
1. General revelation (Ps. 19:1)
2. Special revelation (Ps. 19:7-10)

B. Integration of the Outer Man and the Inner Man (2 Cor. 4:16)



C. Integrating the Hardware and the Software

Our brains are living organisms composed of approximately 100 billion neurons. Each one is a living organism that in and of itself is a micro computer. Every neuron is composed of a grain cell, an axon and many dendrites (inputs to the brain cell) as shown below:



Lesson Two: The Agony of the Body

Lesson Objective:

To understand how our brains function and explore the causes and cures of endogenous depression.

Notes

D. Bipolar Depression

E. Unipolar Depression

F. Antidepressant Medications

Selective Serotonin Reuptake Inhibitors (SSRI's):

1. Prozac
2. Zoloft
3. Paxil
4. Luvox

Non-SSRI Antidepressants:

1. Effexor
2. Serzone
3. Remeron
4. Wellbutrin
5. Ritalin

For a more complete reference on these medications see Finding Hope Again pages 60-63.

G. Electronconvulsive Therapy (ECT)

Notes

H. Toward a Complete Solution

1. The problem of causation
2. Conventional wisdom
3. False Conclusions
 - a. "Taking medications is not trusting God."
 - b. "Depression is a physical illness that can only be resolved simply by taking medications."
 - c. "Depression is a spiritual attack and deliverance from demons is the only answer."

Lesson Three: The Agony of the Soul

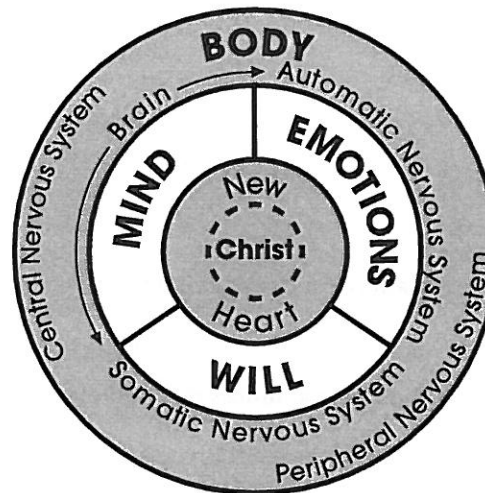
Lesson Objective:

To understand how our body (material or outer self), soul and spirit (immaterial or inner self) function together with the external world and our Creator.

A. How our Computers were Programmed (Eph. 2:1)

B. The Necessity of Reprogramming our Minds (Rom. 12:2)

C. How the Outer Self Correlates with the Inner Self



1. When stress becomes distress
2. The mind interprets external factors and regulates the body
3. Reprogramming the mind changes the electro-chemical system in our bodies

D. Biblical Faith Leads to Wholeness

1. A biblical example (Matt. 9:28, 29)
2. Research reveals a link between brain chemistry and hope
3. Toward a more balanced use of medications (2 Cor. 4:16)

Notes

E. Cognitive Therapy and Repentance

1. The person is taught to recognize and monitor his/her negative thoughts or distortion of reality.
2. Then he is helped to see — or must come to realize—the connection between these negative thoughts, the emotions they create and the subsequent behavior that follows.
3. Next he must examine the evidence for and against such distorted thinking or perceptions of reality.
4. If he has concluded that what he's believed is not true and his perception of reality isn't right, then he must substitute old ways of thinking and responding with new ways.
5. Finally, he is helped to identify and change the inappropriate assumptions that predisposed him to distort his experiences.

F. Renegade Thoughts

1. Taking every thought captive (2 Cor. 10:3-5)
2. "GIGO" (garbage in, garbage out)
3. Detecting viruses
John 17:15-17
2 Corinthians 11:3
1 Timothy 4:1

G. Finding Freedom in Christ

- 48% improvement in depression
- 46% improvement in anxiety
- 70% improvement in tormenting thoughts/voices
- 46% improvement in uncontrolled habits
- 55% improvement in inner conflict/distress

Lesson Four: Overcoming Hopelessness

Lesson Objective:

To overcome the lie of hopelessness and learn how to live in the truth that in Christ there is always hope.

Why are you downcast, O my soul?
Why so disturbed within me?
Put your hope in God,
for I will yet praise Him,
my Savior and my God.

Psalm 43:5

A. The Truth will Set You Free (Jn 8:32)

*If what you believe does not conform to truth,
then what you feel does not conform to reality.*

1. The truth about God (Ps. 13)

Truth

Loving and Caring
Good and Merciful
Steadfast and Reliable
Unconditional Grace
Present and Available
Giver of Good Gifts
Nurturing and Affirming
Accepting
Just, Fair and Impartial

Truth about God is filtered
through the grid of:

1. Ignorance
2. False prophets and teachers
3. Blasphemous mental thoughts
4. Unhealthy interpersonal relationships during dearly developmental years
5. Role model of authority

Lie

Hateful and Unconcerned
Mean and Unforgiving
Unpredictable and
Untrustworthy
Conditional Approval
Absent When Needed
Takes Away, "Killjoy"
Critical and Unpleasable
Rejecting
Unjust, Unfair, Partial

2. The truth about who you are in Christ

a. Position in Christ (1 Cor. 15:22)

In His death	Romans 6:3; Galatians 2:20; Colossians 3:1-3
In His burial	Romans 6:4
In His resurrection	Romans 6:5, 8, 11
In His ascension	Ephesians 2:6
In His life	Romans 5:10, 11
In His power	Ephesians 1:19, 20
In His inheritance	Romans 8:16, 17; Ephesians 1:11, 12

b. Identity in Christ (1 Jn. 3:1-3)

In Christ

Notes

I am Accepted:

Jn 1:12	I am God's child.
Jn. 15:15	I am Christ's friend.
Rom. 5:1	I have been justified.
1 Cor. 6:17	I am united with the Lord and am one with Him in spirit.
1 Cor. 6:20	I have been bought with a price—I belong to God.
1 Cor. 12:27	I am a member of Christ's body.
Eph. 1:1	I am a saint.
Eph. 1:5	I have been adopted as God's child.
Eph 2:18	I have direct access to God through the Holy Spirit.
Col. 1:14	I have been redeemed and forgiven of all my sins.
Col. 2:10	I am complete in Christ.

I am Secure:

Rom. 8:1,2	I am free from condemnation.
Rom. 8:28	I am assured that all things work together for good.
Rom 8:31f.	I am free from any condemning charges against me.
Rom. 8:35f.	I cannot be separated from the love of God.
2 Cor 1:21	I have been established, anointed and sealed by God.
Col. 3:3	I am hidden with Christ in God.
Phil. 1:6	I am confident that the good work that God has begun in me will be perfected.
Phil. 3:20	I am a citizen of heaven.
2 Tim. 1:7	I have not been given a spirit of fear, but of power, love, and a sound mind.
Heb. 4:16	I can find grace and mercy to help me in time of need.
1 Jn. 5:18	I am born of God and the evil one cannot touch me.

I am Significant:

Matt. 5:13	I am the salt and light of the earth.
Jn. 15:1, 5	I am a branch of the true vine, a channel of His life.
Jn. 15:16	I have been chosen and appointed to bear fruit.
Acts 1:8	I am a personal witness of Christ's.
1 Cor. 3:16	I am God's temple.
2 Cor. 5:17f.	I am a minister of reconciliation.
2 Cor. 6:1	I am God's co-worker.
Eph. 2:6	I am seated with Christ in the heavenly realm.
Eph. 2:10	I am God's workmanship.
Eph. 3:12	I may approach God with freedom and confidence.
Phil. 4:13	I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.

Notes

B. The Lie of Hopelessness

1. The anchor for our soul (Heb. 6:17-19)
2. False perceptions (Lam. 3:1-26)

C. Hope: The Present Assurance of some Future Good

"Why are you in despair, O my soul? And why have you become disturbed within me? Hope in God, for I shall again praise Him for the help of His presence." (Ps. 42:5)

Martin Luther said, "Everything that is done in the world is done in hope. No husbandman would sow one grain of corn if he hoped not it would grow up and become seed; no bachelor would marry a wife if he hoped not to have children; no merchant or tradesman would set himself to work if he did not hope to reap benefit thereby".

D. Challenges to Hope

"Life with Christ is an endless hope; life without Christ is a hopeless end."

A. The Deceptive Nature and Limited Power of Positive Thinking

1. The limitations of humanistic thinking
2. The deception of New Age thinking

B. The Power of Truth Believing

*"With people this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."
(Matt. 19:26)*

C. The Problem of Learned Helplessness

1. Research results
2. Bound in Egypt (Exod. 6:6-9)
3. Bound in the wilderness (Num. 13:27-14:9)
4. The courage of David (1 Sam. 17:45-47)

*If you want to feel helpless and depressed, try doing God's
work for Him.*

Lesson Five: Overcoming Helplessness

Lesson Objective:

To understand how we develop
a sense of helplessness and how
we can overcome it.

Notes

D. Overcoming Helplessness (1 Kgs.19)

1. Physical considerations (vs. 5, 6)

a. Nutrition

Amino acids (DLPA or L-tyrosine)

St. John's wort

Postadrenalin depression and Vitamin B-12

b. Aerobic exercises

c. Rest

2. Spiritual considerations

a. Elijah believed a lie

b. God gave Elijah an object lesson (vs. 11-15)

c. Become the person God has created you to be (Rom. 5:3-5)

Twenty Cans of Success

1. Why should I say I can't when the Bible says I can do all things through Christ who gives me strength (Philippians 4:13)?
2. Why should I worry about my needs when I know that God will take care of all my needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus (Philippians 4:19)?
3. Why should I fear when the Bible says God has not given me a spirit of fear, but of power, love and a sound mind (2 Timothy 1:7)?
4. Why should I lack faith to live for Christ when God has given me a measure of faith (Romans 12:3)?
5. Why should I be weak when the Bible says that the Lord is the strength of my life and that I will display strength and take action because I know God (Psalm 27:1; Daniel 11:32)?
6. Why should I allow Satan control over my life when He that is in me is greater than he that is in the world (1 John 4:4)?
7. Why should I accept defeat when the Bible says that God always leads me in victory (2 Corinthians 2:14)?
8. Why should I lack wisdom when I know that Christ became wisdom to me from God and God gives wisdom to me generously when I ask Him for it (1 Corinthians 1:30; James 1:5)?
9. Why should I be depressed when I can recall to mind God's loving kindness, compassion and faithfulness and have hope (Lamentations 3:21-23)?
10. Why should I worry and be upset when I can cast all my anxieties on Christ who cares for me (1 Peter 5:7)?
11. Why should I ever be in bondage knowing that there is freedom where the Spirit of the Lord is (Galatians 5:1)?
12. Why should I feel condemned when the Bible says there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus (Romans 8:1)?
13. Why should I feel alone when Jesus said He is with me always and He will never leave me nor forsake me (Matthew 28:20; Hebrews 13:5)?
14. Why should I feel like I'm cursed or have bad luck when the Bible says that Christ rescued me from the curse of the law that I might receive His Spirit by faith (Galatians 3:13, 14)?
15. Why should I be unhappy when I, like Paul, can learn to be content whatever the circumstances (Philippians 4:11)?
16. Why should I feel worthless when Christ became sin for me so that I might become the righteousness of God (2 Corinthians 5:12)?
17. Why should I feel helpless in the presence of others when I know that if God is for me, who can be against me (Romans 8:31)?
18. Why should I be confused when God is the author of peace and He gives me knowledge through His Spirit who lives in me (1 Corinthians 2:12; 14:33)?
19. Why should I feel like a failure when I am more than a conqueror through Christ who loved me (Romans 8:37)?
20. Why should I let the pressures of life bother me when I can take courage knowing that Jesus has overcome the world and its problems (John 16:33)?

Lesson Six: Dealing With Loss

Lesson Objective:

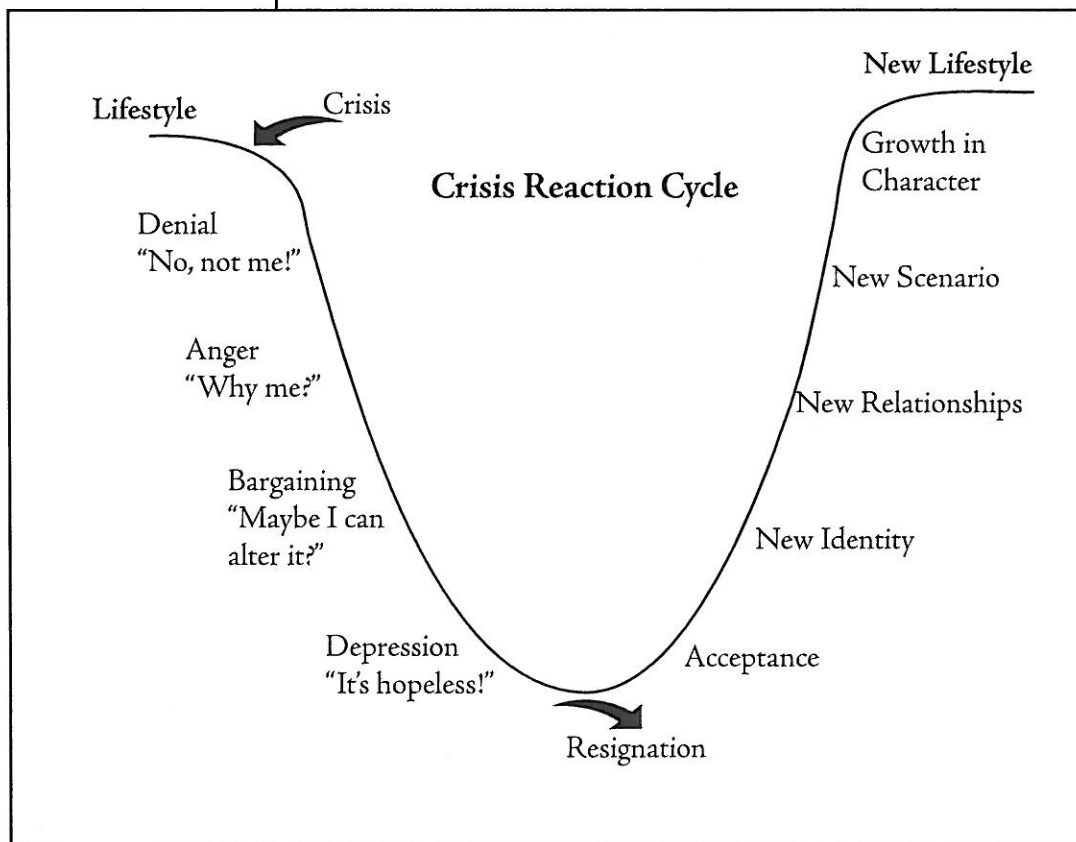
To understand how we can survive the inevitable crises of life in a profitable way.

A. Preparing for Impermanence

1. The foolish approach (1 Cor. 15:32)
2. The biblical approach
 - Mark 8:31,32
 - Mark 9:32
 - Mark 10:32-34

B. Stages of Grief

1. Denial: "No! Not me!"
2. Anger: "Why me?"
3. Bargaining: "Maybe I can alter it."
4. Depression: "It's hopeless!"



Notes

C. Explanatory Styles or Why Some Recover Faster Than Others

1. Permanence: "It will last forever."
 - "I'm going to ignore her." That is denial.
 - "I'm going to try controlling her." That is anger.
 - "I'm going to try appeasing her." That is bargaining.
 - "I'm going to try to change her." That will be depressing!
 - "I'm going to avoid her." That is resignation.
 - "I'm going to love her and learn to live with her." That is acceptance.

2. Pervasiveness: "It will ruin my whole life."
 - a. A time to mourn

 - b. In losing, we win (Phil. 3:7, 8)

 - c. Gaining what we cannot lose (Matt. 16:25, 26)

3. Personalization: "It's me! It's all my fault!"

D. Getting Out of the Rut**Changing your beliefs**

From:	To:
Personal: "I'm the problem"	Impersonal: "It's a problem"
Pervasive: "In everything"	Specific: "In this one thing"
Permanent: "Forever"	Temporary: "For a season"

E. Losses: Are They Real, Imagined or Threatened?

1. Real
2. Imagined
3. Threatened

Notes

F. The Recovery Process

1. A deeper evaluation of who we are
2. New relationships
3. New scenario
4. Growth in character (Heb. 12:7-11)

"My depression forced me, at the age of forty-one to stop and, for the first time, examine my life," said Buzz Aldrin, the second man to walk on the moon.

A. Why do Christians Suffer?

1. For the sake of righteousness (2 Tim. 3:12)
2. As a consequence of sin and the discipline of God (Heb. 12:11)
3. From living with frail bodies in a fallen world (Rom. 8:23)

B. The Value of Suffering

1. Warning
"God whispers to us in our pleasures, speaks in our conscience but shouts in our pain." C.S. Lewis
2. Gets our attention

C. Suffering builds Character**D. Suffering Draws Us to God****Suffering Helps Us to Understand God and His Work**

Lesson Seven: Suffering for the Sake of Righteousness

Lesson Objective:

To understand how suffering is a part of our sanctification and how brokenness is necessary for spiritual victory.

Notes

F. We Are Given Only What We Can Bear (1 Cor. 10:13)

"The will of God will never take you where the grace of God will not sustain you."

G. God Provides Grace and Comfort in the Suffering

"Cast your cares on the Lord and He will sustain you." (Ps. 55:22)

"The Lord stood at my side and gave me strength." (2 Tim. 4:17)

H. God's Ministry of Darkness (Is. 50:10, 11)

1. Keep on walking in the light of previous revelation.
 - a. Never make a major decision when you are down.
 - b. Never doubt in darkness what God has clearly shown in the light.
2. Don't create your own light.
 - a. Abraham
 - b. Moses
 - c. "This too will pass."
 - d. Morning comes (Is. 21:11, 12)
 - e. Brokenness, the key to ministry
3. A lesson in trust

A. Commit Yourself to Complete Recovery

B. Commit Yourself to Prayer

The first thing a Christian should do about anything is pray. May we suggest the following prayer to begin your process of recovery:

Dear Heavenly Father, I come to You as your child. I declare my total dependence upon You and acknowledge that apart from Christ I can do nothing. Thank You for sending Jesus to die in my place in order that my sins could be forgiven. I praise You for Your resurrection power that raised Jesus from the grave in order that I, too, may have eternal life. I choose to believe the truth that the devil has been defeated and that I am now seated with Christ in the heavenlies. Therefore, I choose to believe that I have the power and the authority to do Your will and be the person You created me to be. I submit my body to You as a living sacrifice and ask You to fill me with Your Holy Spirit. I desire nothing more than to know and do Your will, believing that it is good, perfect and acceptable for me. I invite the Spirit of Truth to lead me into all truth that I may be set free in Christ. I choose, from this day forward, to walk in the light and speak the truth in love. I acknowledge my pain to You, and confess my sins, doubts and lack of trust. I now invite You to search my heart, try my ways, and see if there is any wicked way within me, and then lead me into the everlasting way by the power and guidance of Your Holy Spirit. In Jesus' precious name, I pray. Amen.

C. Commit Yourself to an Intimate Relationship with God

D. Commit Yourself as a Child of God

Lesson Eight: A Commitment to Freedom from Depression

Lesson Objective:

To understand the commitments and steps that are necessary in order to overcome depression.

Notes

E. Commit Your Body to God (Rom. 12:11; 1 Cor. 6:19, 20)

1. Get a complete physical exam
2. The endocrine system
3. Low blood sugar
4. The pituitary gland
5. Adrenal exhaustion
6. Female reproductive system

Whenever you start to sense that you are physically and mentally slipping back into a depression, don't just succumb to it, take charge of your life by praying as follows:

Dear Heavenly Father, I submit myself to You as Your child, and I declare myself to be totally dependent upon You. I yield my body to You as a living sacrifice, and ask You to fill me with Your Holy Spirit. I renounce the lies of the evil one and I choose to believe the truth as You have revealed it to us in Your Holy Word. Give me the grace and the wisdom to resist the devil so he will flee from me. I now commit myself to You and my body as an instrument of righteousness. In Jesus' precious name, I pray. Amen.

F. Commit Yourself to the Renewing of Your Mind (Rom. 12:2; Phil. 4:6-8)

Every mental stronghold that is torn down in Christ makes the next one easier. Every thought you take captive makes the next one more likely to surrender. Lifestyle depression is the result of repeated blows that come from living in a fallen world. Rehearsing the truth again and again is the key to renewing your mind.

G. Commit Yourself to Good Behavior**Notes****H. Commit Yourself to Meaningful Relationships (Heb. 10:24, 25)****I. Commit Yourself to Overcome Every Loss (Phil. 3:7, 8)**

1. Identify and understand each loss.
2. Separate the concrete from the abstract losses.
3. Separate real, imagined and threatened losses.
4. Convert imagined and threatened losses to real losses.

5. Facilitate the grieving process.

“Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.”
(Matt. 5:4)

6. Face the reality of the loss.

7. Develop a biblical perspective on the loss.

A bend in the road is not the end of the road unless you fail to make the turn.

8. Renew your mind to the truth of who you really are.

Notes

J. Exchange Your Ashes for His Beauty (Isaiah 61:1-3)

"The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me,
Because the Lord has anointed Me
To preach good tidings to the poor;
He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted,
To proclaim liberty to the captives,
And the opening of the prison to those who are bound;
To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord,
And the day of vengeance of our God;
To comfort all who mourn,
To console those who mourn in Zion,
To give them beauty for ashes,
The oil of joy for mourning,
The garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness;
That they may be called trees of righteousness,
The planting of the Lord, that He may be glorified."