



Sermon Series—Dealing with Depression
Part Two—Talk Talk Talk

Pastor Dan Turpin *WestCoastChurch.com*

Objective Sentence: Everyone can overcome depression by taking eight steps that will help one to focus on the good of life and not the bad.

Introduction: Stuart Sorenson, Registered Mental Health Nurse: One thing common to almost every form of depressive illness is treatability. The approach may vary depending upon the nature and severity of the illness but the prognosis is usually excellent—so long as the sufferers are prepared to take an active part in their own treatment. The more the depressed person does to help themselves the greater the chances of continued success.

Dr. Chuck Falcon; Counseling Psychologist: Four out of five cases of severe depression clear up without treatment within six to nine months (80%), but half of the people with severe depression experience it again later (40%). Depression involves sadness, pessimism, a preoccupation with personal problems, feeling sorry for one's self, anguish, crying and hopelessness. Depressed people often lose interest in many activities and social contacts because of a loss of pleasure in ... their usual activities ... they may become socially withdrawn. Low energy, chronic tiredness, excessive sleeping and insomnia are common. Other possible symptoms include poor appetite, heavy eating, weight loss or gain, feelings of inadequacy or worthlessness, anxiety, regrets, decreased productivity, poor concentration, or recurrent thoughts of death or suicide.

Ed Hinson: My thoughts about medication Generally I am very much opposed to it. The main reason is that it does not address the underlying causes of the depression. It does nothing to improve the social and family conditions. In my opinion, it simply perpetuates them. For me, depression has a purpose. It causes us to slow down and rest, and think. If we use this as an opportunity to think about why we are depressed, for example to identify the specific unmet emotional needs, we can start to get some insight into what changes we need to make. I think most of us could use some slowing down. I think if we took time to listen to each other, for example, there would actually be less depression. I also think that if we would stop and ask why

we are working so hard, and reflect on what is really important; we would see that relationships and inner peace are life's most important priorities; not money and material things. We would then invest more energy on self-growth and personal relationships.

#1. *One Thing Common to Almost Every Form of Depressive Illness is Treatability*

A. *Stewart Sorenson RMN: The approach may vary depending upon the nature and severity of the illness but the prognosis is usually excellent—so long as the sufferers are prepared to take an active part in their own treatment. The more the depressed person does to help themselves the greater the chances of continued success.)*

1. **Talk to Self and Don't Allow Self to Talk to You** (*Martyn Lloyd-Jones: I suggest that the main trouble in this whole matter of ... depression in a sense is this; that we allow ourselves to talk to us instead of us talking to ourselves. Most of our unhappiness in life is due to the fact that we are listening to ourselves instead of talking to ourselves. The main art in the matter of life is to know how to handle yourself. You have to take yourself in hand, you have to address yourself, preach to yourself, question yourself.*

- a. *Gardiner Harris:* Recent studies suggest that talk therapy may be as good or even better than drugs in the treatment of depression, but fewer than half of depressed patients now get such therapy.
- b. *Dr. Louisa Lance a therapist who believes in TALK MORE PERSCRIBE LESS:* Medication is important but it's the relationship that gets people better.
- c. *National Institute of Mental Health:* Talking" therapies help patients gain insight into and resolve their problems through verbal exchange with the therapist, sometimes combined with "homework" assignments between sessions. Behavioral therapists' help patients learn how to obtain more satisfaction and rewards through their own actions and how to unlearn the behavioral patterns that contribute to or result from their depression.
- d. *Pastor Dan:* One of our big problems is that we allow life to control us instead of us controlling life.
- e. *Pastor Dan:* All of us must contend with **THE VOICE**. My greatest challenge has been in learning to content with the **voice** that tells me that I am a lost cause, my situation is hopeless and that I am not going to make it.
- f. *Pastor Dan:* When I was a teenager living in the gated community the thought, "You are not saved," hit me like a ton of bricks. It was the day dad brought my mom to the jail to visit. During that thirty minute visit I said, "Mom, I'm never going to get in trouble again; I've accepted Jesus Christ as my Savior and everything is going to be different now. Mom said to me, "Your daddy don't believe you." When I got back to me cell the VOICE began talking to me, "You're not a Christian, you're just doing this because you are in trouble." So I asked myself, "Am I really a follower of Jesus and if I am how do I know that I'm saved? The only thing I had to cling at that moment was God's Word the Bible. It was then that I began to practice self talk and how to resist that nagging negative voice that discouraged me with positive message that offered me hope. So I've had to learn how to listen to another voice—that still small voice; that gentle whisper—God's voice that gives in hope in every situation I face.

**** John 1:12; 3:16; 8:31-32; Luke 11:48; Romans 6:23; 8:1; 10:9-13;**

- g.** *Pastor Dan—the Voice:* If you were really a follower of Jesus you wouldn't think the things you think.
 ** 2 Corinthians 10:3-5 ... casting down imaginations and arguments; everything that exalts itself against the knowledge of God and bringing every thought captive to the obedience of Christ.
- h.** *Pastor Dan—the Voice:* If you were really a follower of Jesus you wouldn't have said what you said.
 ** Isaiah 1:18 Come now, and let us reason together,” Says the LORD, “Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall be as wool.
- i.** *Pastor Dan—the Voice:* You're not going to make it; you are going to fall flat on your face and make a fool of yourself.
 ** 1 Chronicles 16:9; Philippians 4:13; Romans 8:38-39;
- j.** *Pastor Dan—the Voice:* You are going to fail in ministry.
 ** Somehow Someway by some supernatural set of circumstances and by some miracle means I am going to make it (Isaiah 41:10; 43:1-3; Joshua 1:9; Psalms 3).
- k.** *Pastor Dan—the Voice:* You are a scumbag and there is no way that God could ever love you. No one really loves or cares for you. Note: I've had to learn that I can't sit back and wait for other people to love or care for me; I must take the initiative of loving and caring for others. The love and concern I give to others is the love and concern I receive for myself.
 ** Psalm 145:8 For the Lord is gracious and full of compassion; slow to anger and great in mercy. v18. The Lord is near to those who call on Him; to all who call upon Him in truth.
 ** Psalm 149:4 For the Lord takes pleasure in His people and will beautify the humble with salvation.
 ** Luke 6:38 Give, and it will be given to you. They will pour into your lap a good measure—pressed down, shaken together, and running over [with no space left for more]. For with the standard of measurement you use [when you do good to others], it will be measured to you in return.
- l.** *Zig Zigler:* The scientific evidence is conclusive—self-talk has a direct bearing on your performance. In reality, the most influential person who will talk to you all day is you, so you be very careful about what you say to you.
- 2. Talk To Others** (*Proverbs 11:14 Amplified: Where there is no [wise, intelligent] guidance, the people fall [and go off course like a ship without a helm], but in the abundance of [wise and godly] counselors there is victory*).
- a.** *National Institute of Mental Health:* Many forms of psychotherapy, including some short-term (10-20 week) therapies, can help depressed persons. “Talking” therapies help patients gain insight into and resolve their problems through verbal exchange with the therapist, sometimes combined with “homework” assignments between sessions. “Behavioral” therapists help patients learn how to obtain more satisfaction and rewards through their own actions and how to unlearn the behavioral patterns that contribute to or result from their depression.

- b. **Proverbs 19:20 Amplified:** Listen to counsel, receive instruction, *and* accept correction, that you may be wise in the time to come
- c. **Proverbs 1:5; 27:9 Amplified:** The wise will hear and increase their learning, And the person of understanding will acquire wise counsel *and* the skill [to steer his course wisely ...] **27:9** Oil and perfume make the heart glad; so does the sweetness of a friend's counsel that comes from the heart.
- d. **Pastor Dan:** Two thousand years ago, James, Christ's brother said (**James 5:16**), "**Confess your faults to one another** and pray for one another that you may be healed." He outlines three concepts that have proven to be effective in helping us deal with problems:
 ** It is not good for us to go through things alone. It is good to talk about problems.
 ** We are not powerless when encountering pain. There is no issue that good counsel, prayer and love will not resolve.
 ** We are not meant to live with disease or affliction.
- e. **National Institute of Mental Health:** Try to be with other people and to confide in someone; it is usually better than being alone.
- f. **Marian Margulies, PhD,** a psychologist in New York City ... psychoanalysis at the Institute for Psychoanalytic Education at the NYU Medical Center lists ... [eleven] benefits of talk therapy and I have listed a few:
 ** The beauty of "talk therapy ... it addresses not just the symptoms but also the causes of one's problems. Antidepressants, **though essential for some** people, don't exactly get to the underlying source. If you're not getting to the cause of the pain you're essentially chained to the past. Psychotherapy gets to the root.
 ** Depression and anxiety ... have significant, and sometimes debilitating, physical effects. When people do not express feelings but swallow them and keep them buried ... one's body often reacts ... somatizing [relating to the body] via stomach aches, headaches, sleeping problems, and ulcers. These are just some of the ways our body reacts to stress and psychic [emotional] pain. Going to therapy ... can help these issues fade away.
 ** The most serious drawback of not talking about things may be that unexpressed feelings and traumas can pile up and explode later. Lots of people avoid talking about their feelings ... but repressing or damping down one's feelings doesn't make them ... go away. If anything, they linger and fester, only to explode when an innocuous [innocent] comment is made ... *not* fully processing events and emotions often creates negative thought patterns that can affect every area in your life—your relationships with your spouse, parents, kids, coworkers, and even yourself.
 ** Talking about things gives them shape. It's so easy to feel dwarfed by a problem when it's just an amorphous [formless] blob in your head—but talking about it gives it a beginning, middle, and end. And that helps you wrap your brain around it. When I think of the process of engaging in talk therapy, I think of the analogy with writing. The more you write, the more you know what you are trying to say—it clarifies your thinking. Similarly with talking and with talk therapy, one becomes more aware of what is making one feel anxious, sad, angry or frustrated. And then one is freer to decide how to manage these feelings or take a You know you're not alone

- ** Seeing a psychologist can be a huge relief in-and-of itself since you know you're taking action against what ails you. It also comforting just knowing that you have a built-in support structure that you can go to once a week. And, if you're so inclined, joining a support group for people grappling with similar issues as you – say, divorce – can be very helpful. “If one, for example, is newly divorced and feeling sad and lonely, then joining a support group might help alleviate some of the painful feelings.” Not that misery loves company, but it is true that being with people who are dealing with similar issues can be very reassuring.
- ** Talk Therapy will rewire your brain. One of the coolest things about therapy is that it can bring about change at the level of the brain. We think of medication as changing the depressed brain, but there's very compelling evidence that talk therapy does the same.
- ** Talk Therapy will help you not have to self-medicate anymore. Self-medicating to “deal” with psychological stuff is incredibly common. But it doesn't do anything to actually address what's going on – it just masks it. It also creates an addictive cycle, which may exacerbate [ig/zaser/bate—aggravate] the real problem. Getting to the root of your past stuff in therapy will, with time, obviate the need to self-medicate. When you're no longer living by the negative things in your past, the need to avoid them – and yourself – will disappear.

g. **Hebrews 3:13 NKJV:** Exhort and encourage one another daily ... lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. **Amplified:** But continually encourage one another every day, as long as ... [there is an opportunity], so that none of you will be hardened [into settled rebellion] by the deceitfulness of sin [its cleverness, delusive glamour, and sophistication]. **Hebrews 10:25 NKJV:** Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching. **Amplified:** Not forsaking our meeting together [as believers for worship and instruction], as is the habit of some, but encouraging *one another*; and all the more [faithfully] as you see the day [of Christ's return] approaching.

3. **Talk to God** (*Philippians 4:6 Don't worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; ⁷ and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus*).

- a. **Pastor Dan:** Prayer is that time you set aside in your life whereby you nurture relationship with God and allow Him to nurture relationship with you ... it's that time you set aside in your life where you pour out your heart to God and allow God to pour out His heart to you.
- b. **Hosea 10:12** Sow for yourselves righteousness; reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground, for *it is* time to seek the Lord, till He comes and rains righteousness on you.
- c. **Pastor Dan:** Pray your problems out of you but don't you allow your problems to keep you out of prayer. **National Institute of Mental Health:** Expect your mood

to improve gradually, not immediately. Feeling better takes time. People rarely snap out of depression, but they can feel a little better day by day.

- d. **1 Thessalonians 5:16-18** Rejoice always, ¹⁷ pray without ceasing, ¹⁸ in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.
- e. **Jeremiah 33:3** Call unto Me and I will answer you

Closing and Invitation; Capture Time; July 12: A Stronger Pill: It is easy to get a thousand prescriptions but hard to get one single remedy. Philip Brooks, best known for writing ... Oh Little Town of Bethlehem, issued a challenge, “Do not pray for easy lives, but pray to be stronger people. Do not pray for a lighter load but for a stronger back. Do not ask for tasks equal to your powers, but pray for power equal to your tasks.” The 21st Century mindset of many today is different and might be summed up as follows: “Do not pray to become a stronger person; pray for a stronger pill. Do not pray for strength to cope with stress; pray for medication to numb the pain.”

“There are about 48,000 psychiatrists in the U.S. and most of them no longer provide talk therapy,” writes Gardiner Harris of the New York Times, “the form of psychiatry ... that has dominated the profession for decades. The trend today is to prescribe medication, usually after a brief consultation with a patient. Just a few decades ago the average psychiatrist treated 50-60 patients ... in a 45 minute weekly therapy session. Now the average psychiatrist may treat 1200 people mostly in 15 minute visits for prescriptions and adjustments to medical treatments” Psychiatrist Dr. Donald Levin painfully admits, “In the beginning my goal was to help my patients become happy and fulfilled: now, it is to just keep them functional. I had to train myself not to get too interested in their problems and not to get sidetracked trying to be a semi-therapist.” Dr. Levin could have accepted less money and provided more time to patients but he said, “I want to retire with the lifestyle ... I have been living for the last 40 years.” Today it’s all about insurance, drug companies, and money. “Brief consultations have become common in psychiatry and today the trend,” writes Dr. Steven S. Sharfstein, “is to check up on the people and pull out the prescription pad.”