



# **“Do You Want to Be Made Well?” (John 5:6)**

## ***Caring for Your Emotional, Spiritual, Mental, Physical Health***

### **Session One – Overview**

*“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself.” (Luke 10:27)*

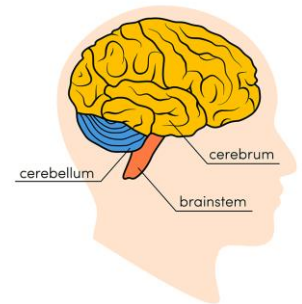
- God cares for our whole being (Genesis 1:26-27; Psalm 139:1-14; Isaiah 58:5-8)
- In his public ministry, Jesus cared for people holistically...
  - physical needs (Matthew 8:14-15; Mark 3:7-12; Luke 9:10-17; John 2:1-11)
  - emotional wellbeing (Matthew 14:22-33; Mark 5:21-33; Luke 8:40-56; John 11:17-33)
  - mental health (Matthew 11:28-30; Mark 4:35-41; Luke 12:22-32; John 14:27)
  - spiritual life (Matthew 20:26-28; Mark 1:1; Luke 24:13-35; John 10:10-16)
- The Greatest Commandments call us to love God and each other with our whole being
  - heart – emotional health (Phil 4:4-8)
  - soul – spiritual health (Ephesians 4:11-16)
  - mind – mental health (Romans 12:1-2)
  - strength – physical health (1 Cor 6:19-20)

### **Session Two – Emotional Health**

*“See, I am sending you out like sheep into the midst of wolves; so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves.” (Jesus to the Disciples, Matthew 10:16)*

#### **Emotions Defined**

- Emotion: “a natural instinctive state of mind deriving from one's circumstances, mood, or relationships with others” (*Oxford English Dictionary*) – feelings, sentiments, sensations, intuitions
- Five core emotions: happiness/ joy; sadness; anger; fear; disgust (or shame)
- Our emotions come first, and then our thoughts follow – how the mind evolved<sup>1</sup>
  - Daniel Goldman, *Emotional Intelligence* (Bantam Dell, NY, 1995)
  - Travis Bradberry & Jean Greaves, *Emotional Intelligence 2.0* (TalentSmart, San Diego, 2009)
  - Jonathan Haidt, *The Righteous Mind* (Vintage Books, NY, 2013) – “the Rider and the Elephant”
  - Paul’s struggle, Romans 7:14-20

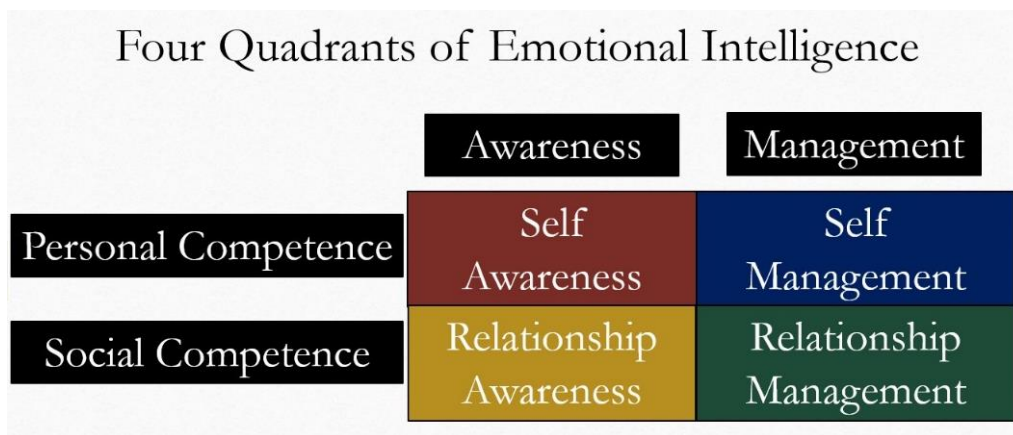


<sup>1</sup> Image from <https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/conditions-and-diseases/anatomy-of-the-brain>

- Emotions...
  - are part of being human, not ‘good’ or ‘bad’ – Jesus, fully human and without sin, expressed emotion
    - wept with Martha and Mary, before raising their brother Lazarus (John 11:35)
    - “moved with compassion” for the crowds (Matt 20:34)
    - cleansed the Temple, “zeal” (John 2:17)
    - anguish in Garden of Gethsemane (Luke 22:44)
  - give us valuable information about ourselves and others
  - don’t last forever
  - we can increase our Emotional Intelligence

### Emotional Intelligence

your ability to recognize and understand emotions in yourself and others (awareness), and your ability to use this awareness to manage your behavior and relationships (management)



#### Self Awareness

- being aware of your self as who you bring to your relationships and your ministry; paying attention to your thoughts and feelings in the moment – Romans 12:1-3
- practice using the RULER

#### Self Management

- be true to yourself and loving to others; practice a wide range of possible responses to internal emotions – Ephesians 4:22-32
- “respond, don’t react”

#### Relationship Awareness

- increase capacity to recognize and understand the emotions of others; grow in the ability to identify healthy and unhealthy relationships – Romans 12:9-18
- active listening – Maya Angelou, “I’ve learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.”

## Relationship Management

- increase your capacity to have a positive impact on others; grow in your ability to inspire and guide individuals and groups to move toward effective and healthy relationships – 1 Corinthians 12:13-27
- being a “non anxious presence”

### Developing Self Awareness – Using the RULER

*Tool developed by Marc Brackett, PhD*

Recognizing	How am I feeling?
Understanding	Why might I be feeling this?
Labeling	What am I going to call it? ( <i>emotion wheel, p 6</i> )
Expressing	Can I share this?
Regulating	What am I going to do about what I am feeling?

### **Session Three – Spiritual Health**

*“We must no longer be children, tossed to and fro and blown about by every wind of doctrine, by people's trickery, by their craftiness in deceitful scheming. But speaking the truth in love, we must grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by every ligament with which it is equipped, as each part is working properly, promotes the body's growth in building itself up in love.” (Ephesians 4:14-16)*

### Spiritual Maturity

- Justification and Sanctification
  - Justification – “act of making just or right”
    - God in Christ has made us right with God (righteous) / justified us / saved us (Romans 5:12-18; Galatians 2:15-21)
    - free gift of God’s grace, not our works (Ephesians 2:8-9)
  - Sanctification – “process of making holy”
    - the Holy Spirit’s work in us to sanctify us / transform us / dedicate us to serve the Lord (John 17:17-19; 1 Corinthians 1-3)
    - our journey in God’s grace (Philippians 2:12-13) – Luther, ‘saint and sinner’
  - “Good works do not make a person good; but a good person does good works.” – Martin Luther, *The Freedom of a Christian* (Romans 6:1-11)

- Discipleship (Matthew 28:19-20) – Dallas Willard, *The Divine Conspiracy* (HarperCollins, San Francisco, 1997)
  - being a disciple is being an apprentice to Jesus, “learning from Jesus how to lead my life as he would lead my life if he were me,” doing good and developing positive virtues in our daily life
  - how to become a disciple...
    - ask – express your desire to know Jesus more fully as he really is
    - dwell/reside/abide in Jesus’ words – study the words and life of Jesus in the Gospels (John 8:31-32) *and* put them into practice (Matthew 7:24-25) – also, seek out inspiring examples and become deeply involved with fellow disciples
    - decide / intend / commit

### **Spiritual Disciplines – Jesus and the Disciples**

- Jesus
  - Jesus said, “Learn from me” (Matthew 11:28-30)
  - Jesus said, “When you give alms....when you fast....when you pray” (Matthew 6:1-18)
  - Jesus engaged in spiritual disciplines – e.g., prayer (Luke 9:28), solitude (Mark 1:35), fasting (Matthew 4:2), study (Luke 2:46)
- Disciples
  - the example of early church (Acts 2:42-47) – they devoted themselves to “apostle’s teaching and fellowship” and “breaking bread and prayers” – Word and Sacrament
  - the Apostle Paul’s guidance – “train yourself in godliness” (1 Timothy 4:7-8), “pray without ceasing” (Philippians 4:4-8), “let love be genuine” (Romans 12:9-18)
  - “The one who claims to remain in Jesus ought to live in the same way as he lived.”  
(1 John 2:6, CEB)

**Spiritual Disciplines** – Adele Ahlberg Calhoun, *The Spiritual Disciplines Handbook* (InterVarsity Press, Downers Grove, IL, 2005)

- Pray – connect with God
- Fast – experience God’s provision
- Give – share the grace of God
- Study – know more fully who God is and who we are

William Law, *A Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life* (Vintage Books, NY, 2002),

“Do not therefore please yourself with thinking how piously you would act and submit to God in a plague or famine or persecution, but be intent upon the perfection of the present day; and be assured that the best way of showing a true zeal is to make little things the occasions of great piety.”

## **Session Four – Mental Health**

*“Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts [Greek, cardia: inner self, emotional and volitional center] and your minds [Greek, noemata: content and capacity for thinking] in Christ Jesus.” (Philippians 4:6-7)*

### **Family Systems Theory**

~ Murray Bowen (<https://www.thebowencenter.org/>)

~ Edwin Friedman

*Generation to Generation; Family Process in Church and Synagogue* (Guilford Press, NY, 1985)

*Failure of Nerve: Leadership in the Age of the Quick Fix* (Church Publishing, NY, 2017)

- a family (or any group of people) is a system
  - a family operates like cells in a body
  - changes in one person lead to changes in the group
  - biblical wisdom – “For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ.” (1 Corinthians 12:12)
- a family system finds ways to manage anxiety
  - *anxiety* – American Psychological Association (<https://www.apa.org/topics/anxiety/>)
    - “an emotion characterized by feelings of tension, worried thoughts, and physical changes” (increased blood pressure, sweating, dizziness, etc.)
    - “a future-oriented, long-acting response broadly focused on a diffuse threat” – acute vs. chronic anxiety – “what if...?”
    - Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount, “Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.” (Matthew 6:34, NIV)
  - not *fear* – “an appropriate, present-oriented, and short-lived response to a clearly identifiable and specific threat” – fight/flight/freeze, not meant to be sustained
- a family system has different ways of dealing with anxiety
  - unhealthy
    - enmeshment – poorly defined personal boundaries
    - emotional cut-off – no connection or investment in the relationship
  - healthy – self-differentiation

**Self-Differentiation** – a self-differentiated person has an appropriate sense of who they are in relationship with the larger group – staying connected with clearly defined boundaries

*Friedman, Failure of Nerve, page 195*

Differentiation is...

- the capacity to take a stand in an intense emotional situation
  - Jesus before Pilate (John 18:33-37)
- saying “I” when others are demanding “we”
  - “Be not conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may discern what is the will of God...” (Romans 12:2a)
- the ability to avoid being polarized
  - “If it is possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all.” (Romans 12:18)
- maintaining a non-anxious presence in the face of anxious others
  - Jesus calming the storm at sea (Mark 4:36-41)
- knowing where one ends and another begins
  - “Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.” (I Corinthians 12:27)
- being able to cease automatically being one of the system’s emotional dominoes
  - characteristics of love (1 Corinthians 13:4-7) – patient; kind; not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude; does not insist on its own way; not irritable or resentful; does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things
- being clear about one’s own personal values and goals
  - Jesus launches his public ministry (Luke 4:16-21)
- taking maximum responsibility for one’s own emotional being and destiny rather than blaming others or the context (Ephesians 4:15-16)

**Practices for Mental Health/ Easing Anxiety and Depression**

- **Breath** – breath in and breath out the life-giving Breath/Wind/Spirit (Hebrew, *ruach*; Greek, *pnuema*) of the Lord

**Box Breathing (4 x 4 Breathing; Square Breathing)**

Breathe out slowly, releasing all the air from your lungs.

1. Breathe in through your nose as you slowly count to four in your head. Be conscious of how the air fills your lungs and stomach.
2. Hold your breath for a count of four.
3. Exhale for another count of four.
4. Hold your breath again for a count of four.

Repeat for three to four rounds.

(<https://health.clevelandclinic.org/box-breathing-benefits/>)

➤ **Pray** – experience the presence of our life-giving Lord and know you are not alone

**Centering Prayer**<sup>2</sup>: Chose a word or phrase and repeat it silently or aloud for a few minutes to draw into the presence of Christ. The word or phrase might be a designation for God (Jesus, Good Shepherd, Healer of our every ill) or a reflection of desire (love, grace, peace).

**Pray-As-You-Go.Org** – daily guided prayers/reflections on Scripture (approx 15 minute) hosted by Jesuit Media Initiatives.

**ContemplativeOutreach.org** – Centering Prayer app guides in creating a structured prayer time

➤ **Go to Church** – being part of a nurturing faith community improves mental health<sup>3</sup> and helps prevent “deaths of despair”<sup>4</sup>

➤ **Get Help** – reach out to someone you trust and share what’s going on

- Suicide Prevention Hotline – call “988”
- [NAMI.org](http://NAMI.org) (National Alliance on Mental Illness), Mon-Fri, 7 am - 7 pm PST  
call 1-800-950-NAMI (6264); text “HelpLine” to 62640; email [helpline@nami.org](mailto:helpline@nami.org)
- SAMHSA’s (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration)  
Disaster Distress Helpline provides 24/7, 365-day-a-year crisis counseling  
call 1-800-985-5990 ([samhsa.gov/find-treatment](http://samhsa.gov/find-treatment))

➤ **Find Joy** – do something that lightens your mood

- go for a walk
- listen to a favorite song or album / watch a favorite movie or show
- write something, paint something, make something, bake something
- take a hot bath or shower

➤ **Move Your Body** – physical activity helps reduce the symptoms of anxiety and depression<sup>5</sup>

➤ **“Do the Next Right Thing”** – one day, one moment, one step at a time

**The Full Serenity Prayer** by Reinhold Niebuhr

“God, give me grace to accept with serenity the things that cannot be changed, Courage to change the things which should be changed, and the Wisdom to distinguish the one from the other. Living one day at a time, Enjoying one moment at a time, Accepting hardship as a pathway to peace, Taking, as Jesus did, This sinful world as it is, Not as I would have it, Trusting that You will make all things right, If I surrender to Your will, So that I may be reasonably happy in this life, And supremely happy with You forever in the next. Amen.”

<sup>2</sup> Adele Ahlberg Calhoun, *Spiritual Disciplines Handbook*, IVP Books, Downers Grove, IL, 2005

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.nami.org/Blogs/NAMI-Blog/December-2016/The-Mental-Health-Benefits-of-Religion-Spiritual>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/human-flourishing/202005/deaths-despair-and-the-role-religion>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/depression/in-depth/depression-and-exercise/art-20046495>

## **Session Five – Physical Health**

*“Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you,  
which you have from God, and that you are not your own?*

*For you were bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body.” (1 Corinthians 6:19-20)*

### ***Why Seek Physical Fitness?***

**Our Bodies Matter** – “God likes material, he made it.” (C.S. Lewis)

➤ Our bodies are wonderfully made by God (Genesis 1:26-27 & 2:7; Psalm 139:13-16; Isaiah 44:1-5)

“Take care of yourself, you’re the only you you’ve got”

- God calls us to care for our own physical needs and the physical needs of others
  - the food laws of the Torah (Leviticus 11; Deuteronomy 14)
  - the words of the prophets (Micah 6:8; Amos 5:24, Isaiah 58:5-8)
  - the words of the disciples (1 Corinthians 6:19-20; 1 John 3:17-18; James 2:14-17)
  - the words of Jesus (Luke 10:25-37) – love is demonstrated by the Good Samaritan in caring for the physical needs of another
- Jesus cared for the physical needs of others
  - turned water to wine at wedding in Cana (John 2:1-11)
  - feed the 5000+ (Matthew 14:13-21; Mark 8:1-10; Luke 9:10-17 John 6:1-15)
  - healed bodies (Matthew 4:23; Mark 1:29-34; Luke 5:12-26; John 5:1-9; ...)
- Jesus came *in the flesh* (Matthew 1:18-25; Luke 1 & 2; John 1:1-18; Philippians 2:1-11) – Jesus redeems our whole being
- We believe in “*the resurrection of the body*” (Apostles’ Creed)
  - Jesus had a physical presence after his resurrection – he was not a “ghost” (Matthew 28:1-10; Luke 24:36-49; John 20:19-29)
  - We will be our whole self, our best self, our true self in glory (1 Corinthians 15:35-58; 1 John 3:2; Revelation 21:1-4)

### ***How to Seek Physical Fitness (from LiveStrong.com)<sup>6</sup>***

- Kick unhealthy habits – smoking, drugs, excessive drinking, unhealthy eating, being sedentary – and replace unhealthy habits with healthy ones
- Get your checkup – visit your doctor for regular physicals, and also if you feel something is in need of attention
- Wash your hands – and cough or sneeze into the crook of your elbow or into a tissue

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.livestrong.com/article/97879-stay-fit/>



- Grow a support system – family, friends, church, clubs, classes, support groups...
- Reduce your stress – pray, breath, journal, take a media break, do something that brings you joy
- Make sleep a priority – 7 to 9 hours a night
- Stay hydrated – drink lots of water
  - about 11.5 cups (2.7 liters) of fluids a day for women
  - about 15.5 cups (3.7 liters) of fluids a day for men
- Eat a nutritious diet<sup>7</sup>
  - include – fruits and vegetables; whole grains; lean sources of protein like fish and poultry; non-fat or low-fat dairy products
  - limit – added sugars; saturated fats and trans fats; refined carbs (e.g., desserts and white bread); processed food (packaged items with a long list of ingredients)
- Do Yoga and/or other meditative practices – “Yoga with Adriene (Mishler),” yogawithadriene.com
- Exercise regularly
  - “For substantial health benefits, adults should do at least 150 minutes (2 hours and 30 minutes) to 300 minutes (5 hours) a week of moderate-intensity, or 75 minutes (1 hour and 15 minutes) to 150 minutes (2 hours and 30 minutes) a week of vigorous-intensity aerobic physical activity, or an equivalent combination of moderate - and vigorous-intensity aerobic activity. Preferably, aerobic activity should be spread throughout the week.”
  - “Adults should also do muscle-strengthening activities of moderate or greater intensity and that involve all major muscle groups on 2 or more days a week, as these activities provide additional health benefits.”<sup>8</sup>

### **Physical Activity Tips (from the Mayo Clinic)**<sup>9</sup>

1. Talk to your doctor or mental health professional for guidance and support
2. Identify what you already enjoy doing – sports? biking? walking the dog?
3. Set reasonable goals – start small and be realistic about what you can do  
*A journey of a thousand miles starts with a single step.*
4. Don’t think of it as a chore – it’s an opportunity be healthy and live fully
5. Analyze your barriers – how can you overcome them?
6. Prepare for setbacks and obstacles – and don’t let them stop you

<sup>7</sup> [https://www.cdc.gov/healthyweight/healthy\\_eating/index.html](https://www.cdc.gov/healthyweight/healthy_eating/index.html)

<sup>8</sup> [https://www.cdc.gov/healthyweight/physical\\_activity/index.html](https://www.cdc.gov/healthyweight/physical_activity/index.html)

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/depression/in-depth/depression-and-exercise/art-20046495>