

DEPRESSION

Depression is a disease that can cripple anyone that succumbs to it. Many people fall into this trap unbeknownst to them. A variety of reasons makes a person depressed due to a loss of something precious or acts of violence. Here are a few questions for starters in helping your mentee deal with death.

- What are some things that make you sad?
- Would you know when someone is depressed?
- What would be for you in identifying the signs of depression?
- Do you know of someone who was, is, or coping with depression?

Mentor

Take a few minutes in talking about your knowledge of depression. May be you know of a friend, cousin, or acquaintance dealing with depression. This might be a good opportunity for you to research online in identifying signs of depression. Having the discussion with your mentee in this critical issue will give them insight of potential ways in dealing with this disease.

Biblical Foundation

- Deuteronomy 31:6, Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the LORD your God goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you. (TNIV)
- Ezra 10:4, Rise up; this matter is in your hands. We will support you, so take courage and do it. (TNIV)
- Psalms 46:1, God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. (TNIV)

Cultural values

Like many cultural groups depression has its foothold even in Alaska native culture. Many Alaska native groups had had ways in dealing with depression. For example, when a person

seems preoccupied, or not willing to partake in hunting activities, or being outdoors, many people ‘step’ in usually close family members in trying to uncover the issue. Usually talking with the person while working on seal, putting away fish, picking berries, or talking a walk in the tundra would be ways in helping a person cope with depression.

Potential activities

There is no concrete way in having your mentee do an activity in dealing with depression, but you can advise your mentee in reviewing the Biblical scriptures and allow the mentee to think through ways in which they would deal with the situation. Another way you can be prepared and share your understanding of depression is doing your own research online. By sharing the information would greatly help you mentee, because chances are they have no clue on signs of depression.

- Recognize (the signs)
- Confront (how would they cope and deal with the signs)
- Discuss (how they would discuss the situation with someone)
- Debrief (what aspects helped them deal with the situation)