

Welcome to the radical Christian and mental health

David Goschnick

I'm not a doctor or psychologist I'm a family therapist worked in community mental for nearly 10 years

The bible has plenty of instances of mental health examples right from ancient times. It doesn't use the words psychosis or mental health but clearly and honestly describes them as part of human experience.

Examples in biblical record

- King Saul- borderline personality disorder
- Elijah- bipolar traits
- Job - compounded grief; Job 17:7 “My eyes have grown dim with grief; my whole frame is but a shadow”
- Nebuchadnezzar - narcissistic personality disorder with clinical depression
- Herod - narcissistic personality disorder with paranoid, anti-social traits
- Peter probably had post-traumatic stress disorder after he denied Christ
- King David pretended to be psychotic in 1 Samuel 21:13

So he pretended to be insane in their presence; and while he was in their hands he acted like a madman, making marks on the doors of the gate and letting saliva run down his beard.

Paul was accused of going mad by Festus in Acts 26:24

At this point Festus interrupted Paul's defense. “You are out of your mind, Paul!” he shouted. “Your great learning is driving you insane.”

Tragically 50 years ago people were locked away to contain or control them. There was shame stigma and fear.

In recent decades the focus has been on medicating, therapy.

People then try to hide their illness rather getting help they needed.

Causes of mental health issues are diverse - trauma, crisis, abuse, substance use, rigid unrealistic beliefs, organic, pre disposition.

We all have bad days and extreme experiences

But Mental health is for a prolonged period

Has a negative impact on health, relationships and lifestyle

It's a continuum at some point we cross a line.

Other societies - evil spirits, curses, special powers etc.

In our society - a psychiatrist determines diagnosis. To get to them you get a GP to write a referral.

Are the conditions treatable?

Yes but fragility or predisposition remains.

3 main groups of hundreds of conditions

- Neuroses - normal but great pressure. Distress.
- Psychoses- have a different reality , that can be terrifying and overwhelming. Weird
- Personality disorders- have a different rules, a different culture. Disturbing. Narcosis

Most common

Anxiety - huge issue in western culture - too many choices, pressures, not enough time to process, speed.

- John 14:1 Let not your heart be troubled. Believe in God, believe in me
- Philippians 4:6 Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.
- Mark 2:27 Then he said to them, “The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath.
- Trust God, simplify your life, build margins in life, self-care disciplines, pray.
- Isaiah 41:10 “So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you”

Depression - lotto ex

Psalm 42:11 “Why, my soul, are you downcast? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Saviour and my God.”

Psalm 23: 4, “Even though I walk

through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil,
for you are with me; your rod and your staff,
they comfort me”

God still on the throne. Exercise. Diet

5 Common Myths about mental health

1. Christians shouldn't have mental health concerns. Like saying shouldn't have broken leg or Alzheimer's
2. All mental health issues are spiritual in basis. Some might be
3. Prayer will solve all mental health. Rumination, intense
4. Medication won't help. Vitamins, herbal, diet
5. All mental health conditions are caused by demons

How do Christians help-

1. Do not judge.
 2. Show compassion and empathy.
 3. Guide toward getting professional help.
 4. Be a dealer of hope.
- 5 Be wise how

Psalm 139 I am fearfully and wonderfully made.

Matthew 26:11