



**WIC Interactive**

**11 Oct 2020**

**Mental Well Being – A Biblical  
Approach**

# What is mental health / well-being?



“Mental health is a state of well-being in which the individual realises his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community.”

**World Health Organization**

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# So what is mental illness?



“Mental illness is a diagnosable illness that affects a person’s thinking, emotional state and behaviour and disrupts a person’s ability to work or carry out daily activities and engage in satisfying personal relationships.”

**American Psychiatric  
Association**

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# True or False?

**1 in 5 Australians aged 16-85 has a mental illness in any year**

**TRUE**

**Most Australians with a common mental illness seek professional help**

**FALSE**

**In Australia almost one in two adults have experienced mental illness**

**TRUE**

**Mental illness is incurable.**

**FALSE**

**Christians are immune from mental illness.**

**FALSE**





## Examples of Mental ill-health

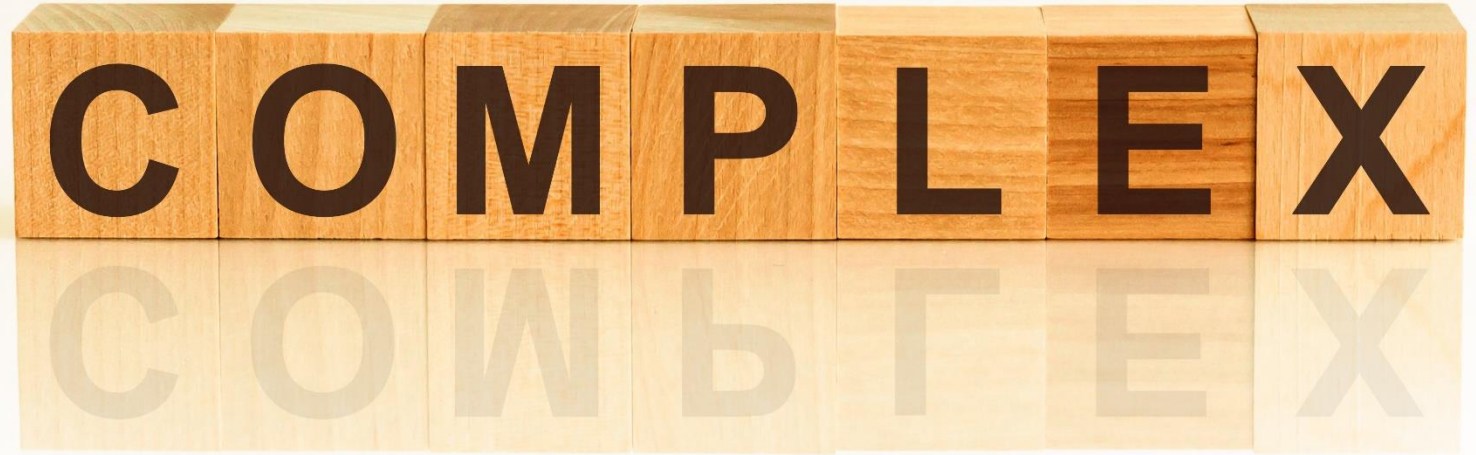
- **Anxiety** – experience of feelings of uneasiness, worry or fear. These feelings are heightened and ongoing for those experience an anxiety disorder.
- **Depression** – experience of feeling down, hopeless and sad all the time. There is a loss of interest in activities once enjoyed.
- **Bi-polar disorder** - a mental disorder characterised by extreme highs and lows in mood with periods of normal mood.
- **Schizophrenia**– a serious mental disorder where the person has trouble discerning what is real and what is imaginary. Delusions and hallucinations are a key characteristic for someone suffering this illness.



## Some possible causes / influences

- Chemical imbalances in the brain
- Inherited genetic predispositions
- Adverse life conditions and experiences
- Social isolation and loneliness
- Past or ongoing trauma
- Extreme and on-going stress
- Grief and Loss
- Drug abuse
- Possible viral infections and immune disorders
- Brain development issues in the womb
- Demonic oppression

**Mental  
well-being  
can be  
very...**



We need to be very careful of thinking that there is one solution or a quick fix for mental health issues. This thinking can often cause more harm than good.

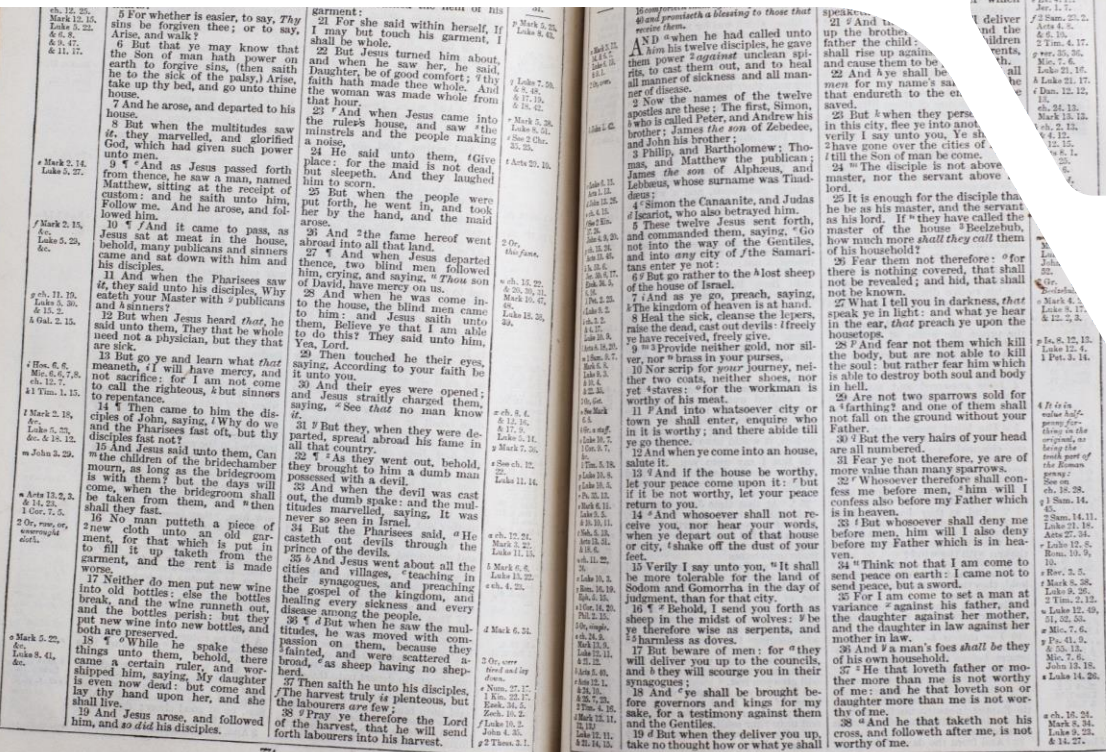


# What does the Bible have to say about mental illness / torment?

The authors and characters in Scripture are very real about their mental struggles.

They refused to pretend that they were happy and without mental torment.

So the first Biblical principle to mental well-being, is being real about the struggle.



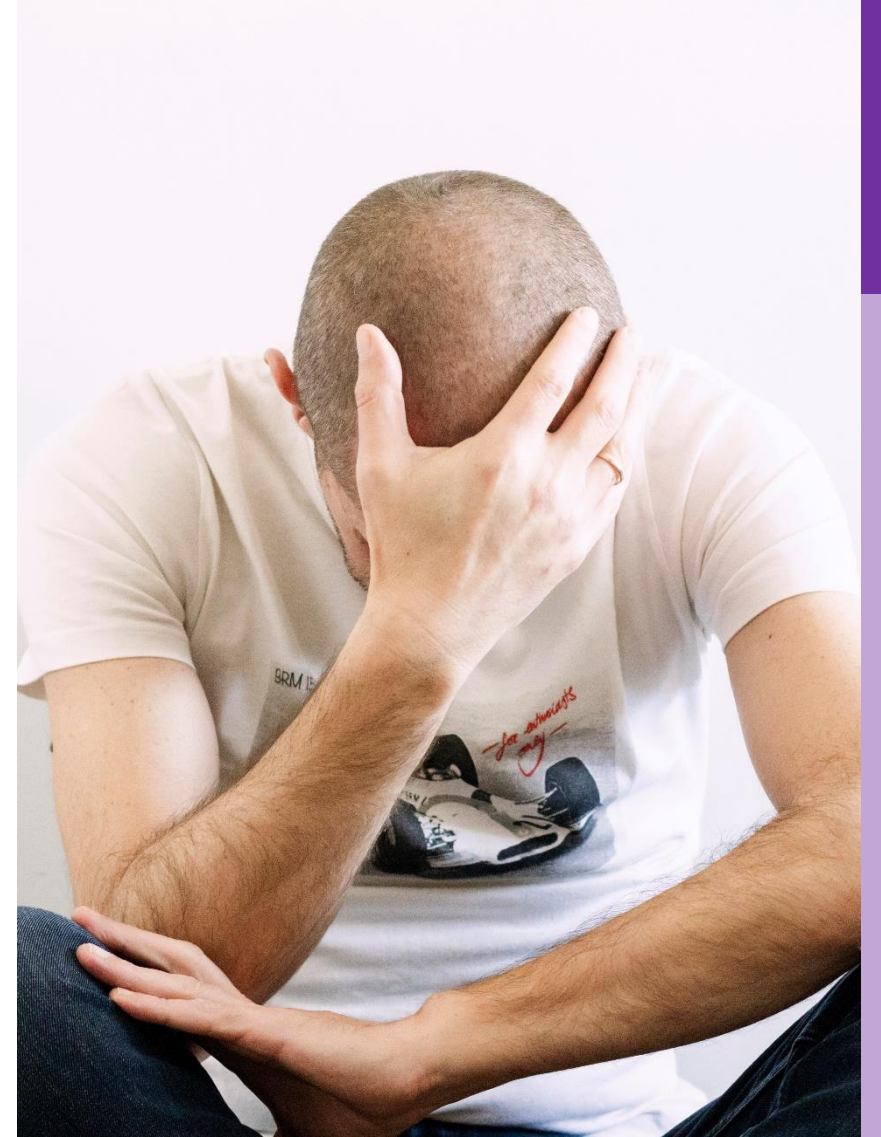


# Psalm 13

## 1) The honest expression of pain & anger

<sup>1</sup> How long, Lord? Will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me?

<sup>2</sup> How long must I wrestle with my thoughts and day after day have sorrow in my heart? How long will my enemy triumph over me?



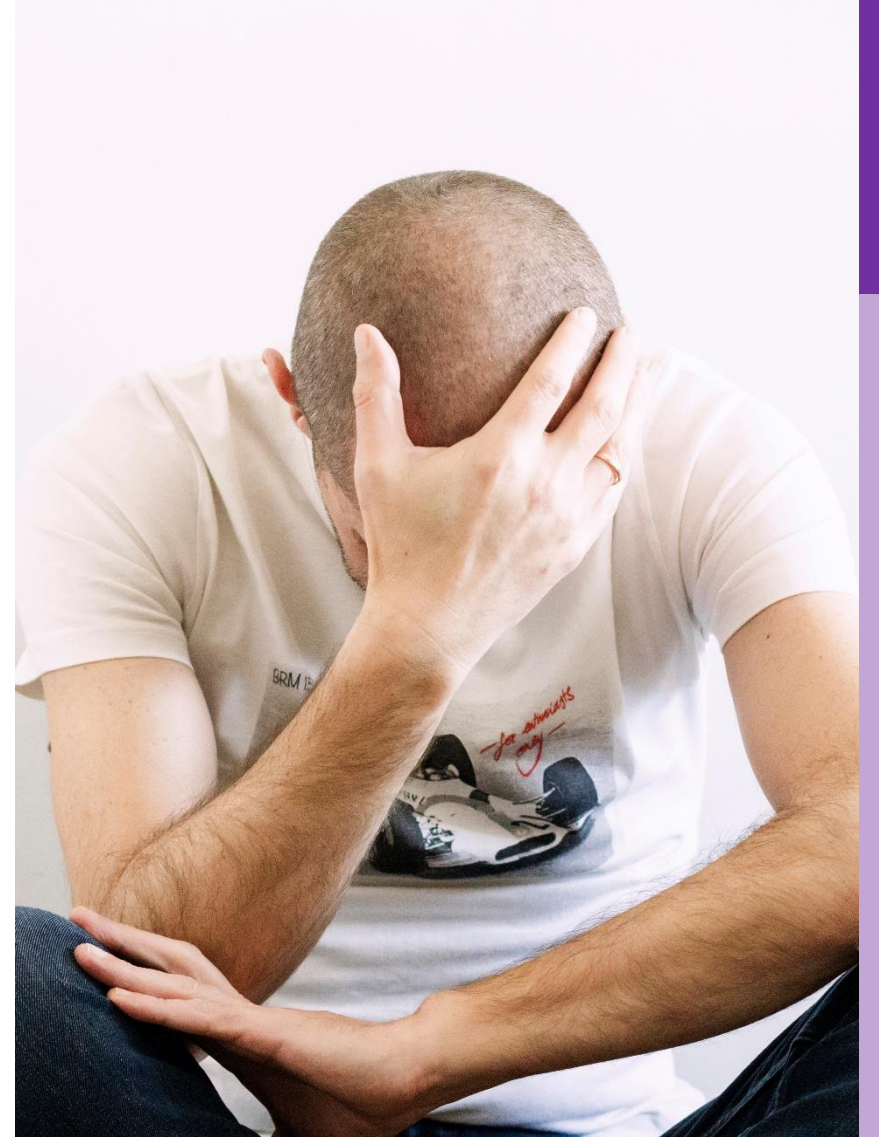
# Psalm 13

## 2) A request to remove the pain

<sup>3</sup> Look on me and answer, Lord my God.

Give light to my eyes, or I will sleep in death,

<sup>4</sup> and my enemy will say, “I have overcome him,” and my foes will rejoice when I fall.

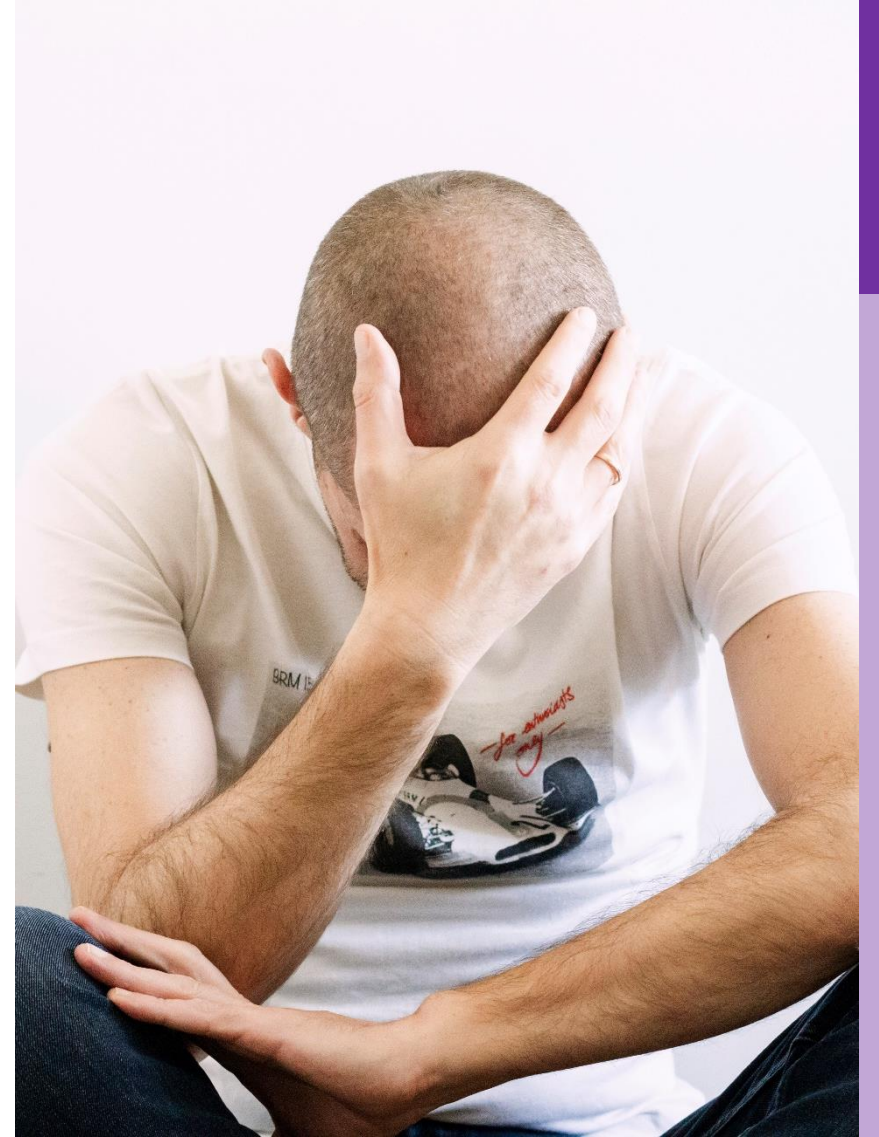


# Psalm 13


## 3) A determination to trust in God

<sup>5</sup> But I trust in your unfailing love; my heart rejoices in your salvation.

<sup>6</sup> I will sing the Lord's praise, for he has been good to me.





A photograph showing a person's hands holding a small, brown, leather-bound Bible. The words "HOLY BIBLE" are embossed on the cover. In the background, another person's hand is visible, pointing towards the Bible. The scene is lit with warm, soft light.

## The approach of the Biblical characters is to:

**1**

**Honestly share the mental torment**

**2**

**Request the removal of the torment**

**3**

**Trust God no matter what**

**To trust in God does not mean that we neglect...**



**The help, advice and care of mental health professionals and others.**

# We need to care for each other



“Carry each other’s burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.” (Galatians 6:2)

“Be devoted to one another in love. Honour one another above yourselves.” (Romans 12:10)

“Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.” (1 Thess 5:11 )

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## Ways to care

- **Connect** – keep in regular contact with those who are struggling. Aim to connect verbally and face-to-face as much as possible if that is welcomed.
- **Provide practical help** – ask the person or carers what they may need. Practical help can include, cooking meals, running errands, minding children.
- **Pray** - be sure to pray regularly for those who are struggling with mental health issues. Prayer is powerful and can achieve more than we can ever think or imagine.
- **Share** – the care of those suffering with others.
- **Be honest** – about your own struggles. This often frees others to share their struggles and brings the pain out of the darkness and into the light.

# Discussion Questions

1. Why do you think people may be afraid to share about their mental health struggles?
2. How can we encourage a culture of openness and honesty around mental health struggles?
3. What are some ways we might be able to care for those struggling with mental health issues?

