Self-Care During Covid

Janelle Wilson, MFT

June 27, 2020

Janelle Wilson, MFT
A brief Introduction

Open in Prayer

Self-Care During Covid

- Presentation Flow
- Handouts
- Questions
  - Send to Pastor Linda in Private Chat
  - Open chat, click on downward arrow and choose

    Pastor Linda

    Questions will be anonymous and Linda will ask Janelle at the end of each segment.

Categories

Emotional
Mental
Social
Spiritual

Presentation Flow

1. Topic
2. Symptoms
3. Scripture Says…
4. Practical Solutions
5. Questions

Handouts

1. Anxiety Assessment
2. Depression Assessment
3. Automatic Negative Thoughts
4. Three Column Approach
5. Sleep Protocol
6. Practical Suggestions
7. Scriptures

Everyone responds differently To stressful situations

Temperament (Myers Briggs)

I (Introvert) - - - E (Extrovert)
N (Intuitive) - - - S (Sensing)
F (Feeling) - - - T (Thinking)
J (Judging) - - - P (Perceiving)

Live alone

Emotional Regulation

Prior Trauma

Emotional Challenges

1. Anxiety
2. Depression

Anxiety
Psychological Symptoms

- Feeling of apprehension or dread
- Feeling restless or irritable
- Feeling tense or agitated
- Anticipating the worst
- Hypervigilance

Anxiety
Physical Symptoms

- Rapid heartbeat
- Shortness of breath
- Headache
- Insomnia
- Nausea or upset stomach
- Frequent urination or diarrhea

Panic (Anxiety) Attack Symptoms

- Rapid or racing heartbeat
- Chest pain or discomfort
- Shortness of breath or feeling smothered
- Sweating
- Twitching, trembling or shaking
- Feelings of choking
- Feeling dizzy, unsteady, lightheaded or faint

Panic (Anxiety) Attack Symptoms

- Nausea or upset stomach
- Chills or heat sensations
- Fear of Dying
- Fear of losing control or “going crazy”
- Parasthesia (Numbness or tingling sensations)
- Derealization (feelings of unreality)
- Depersonalization (feeling detached from oneself, like watching self from above)

Panic (Anxiety) Attack Coping Strategies

- Change the dynamic by becoming “the Observer”
  - Time your symptoms to refocus your mind
  - Track them in spreadsheet or log
- Realize symptoms are a coping mechanism
- Address the negative thinking that might increase your stress

Anxiety
Scriptures

- 4 Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! 5 Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. 6 Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. 7 And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Phil. 4:4-7

Anxiety
Scriptures

"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light." Matt 11:28-30

Anxiety
Practical Solutions – short term

- Breathe Deeply
  - Ideally, exhale longer than you inhale
- Employ the 3-3-3 rule
  - Name three things you can see
  - Name three sounds you can hear
  - Move three parts of your body
- Stand or sit up straight
  - Signals the mind that things are ok

Anxiety
Practical Solutions – short term

- Get a reality check from a trusted friend if your thoughts are spiraling out of control
- Do something different
  - Stand up
  - Take a walk
  - Clean off your desk or counter
  - Focus your mind on something practical and quick to do

Anxiety
Practical Solutions – short term

- Watch a funny video
  - Laughter really is the best medicine
- Exercise
  - Burns up angst and agitation
- Avoid sugar, which worsens anxiety
  - Eat protein or drink water

Anxiety
Practical Solutions – short term

- Limit yourself to less than 30 minutes of news if the news increases your anxiety
- Make a list of everything you are avoiding and do them
- Focus on the silver lining in every situation to change your perspective and give you a bigger picture

Anxiety
Practical Solutions

- **Focus on the Present**
  - Matt 6:34 Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.
  - Peace resides in this moment, because we can only act in this moment.
  - Worrying about the future robs today of its joy

Anxiety
Practical Solutions

- Focus on the Present
  - Ask yourself
    - what's happening right now?
    - Am I safe?
    - What do I need to do right now?

- Adopt an "I'll cross that bridge when I'll get there" attitude. We can only act in the present. Plan, then let go of the future.

Anxiety
Practical Solutions

- Read the Automatic Negative Thought handout and choose one or two persistent thoughts to work on.

- Eliminate Catastrophizing thoughts (Worse case scenarios). They only increase anxiety.

- Make a plan of action to address the worse case scenario.

Anxiety
Practical Solutions

- Start a mediation practice
  - Cools the Amygdala
  - Helps us stay in the here and now

- Do the Anxiety Assessment in the handouts
  - If you have a majority of 4s and 5s, talk to your doctor to rule out a medical cause
  - Talk to a therapist or chaplain to create and carry out a plan of action for you

Anxiety
Practical Solutions

- Master your thoughts (ANTs Handout)
- Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things. Phil. 4:4-8

Depression

Symptoms

- Apathy
- Discontentment
- Guilt
- Hopelessness
- Loss of interest or pleasure in activities
- Mood swings
- Sadness

Depression

Symptoms

- Agitation
- Excessive crying
- Irritability
- Restlessness
- Social isolation

Depression

Symptoms

- Sleep issues, wakening too early, excess sleepiness or insomnia
- Excessive hunger, or loss of appetite
- Fatigue
- Lack of concentration
- Thoughts of suicide
- Rumination (focusing on the same thought over and over)

Depression Scripture

- The Lord himself goes before you and will be with you; he will never leave you or forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged. Deut. 31:8

- The Lord is near the brokenhearted and saves the crushed in spirit. Pa. 34:18

Depression
Practical Solutions

- Get a check up to rule out a medical problem
  - Some diseases look like depression
- Focus on small specific tasks to avoid getting overwhelmed
- Accept that you are not in a good space and be compassionate towards yourself.
  - Self judgment only makes it worse

Depression
Practical Solutions

- Involve all of your senses
  - Light candles with scents that invoke positive memories
- Play uplifting music
  - Favorite praise songs
  - Music that reminds you of fun times
- Change your pictures to make you smile
  - Funny or of good times or people you love
- Watch funny movies or videos

Depression
Practical Solutions

- Focus on Self Care
  - Get the proper amount of sleep
  - Exercise
    - gets the blood flowing
    - Increases positive chemicals in brain
  - Eat healthy
    - Even though you don’t feel like it
      - a diet of simple carbs and starches will only make you feel worse

Depression
Practical Solutions

- Focus on the most critical things
  - Ask others to help
  - Let everything else go.
- Focus on the Silver lining
  - Create a daily Gratitude practice that you do throughout the day to focus your thoughts on the positive
- Memorize scripture that you find uplifting
  - To focus your mind on positive things

Depression
Practical Solutions

- Read Automatic Negative Thoughts handout to learn how thoughts impact feelings
- Memorize the Serenity Prayer
  - "God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can and the wisdom to know the difference."
- Hang out with people you are close to
  - Even if you don't feel like it
  - Isolation makes depression worse

Mental Challenges

1. Overwhelmed

Overwhelmed
Symptoms

- Loss of Focus
  - Staring at screen or unable to pay attention
- Changes in eating patterns
  - Overeating or eating less
- Sleeping at strange times
- Numbness
- Change in social habits

Overwhelmed Symptoms

- Restlessness
- Overly Sensitive
- Forgetfulness
  - More than usual
- Unusual Cravings
- Headaches

Overwhelmed Scripture

- **Isaiah 43:1-2** But now thus says the Lord, he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel: “Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you.

Overwhelmed Scripture

- **Matthew 19:26** But Jesus looked at them and said, “With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.”

Overwhelmed
Practical Solutions

- Understand that we feel overwhelmed when we think we have to much to do and don’t have a good plan of action
- Plan an organized approach to obligations
- Pay attention to the things you have been avoiding; often they increase our stress in ways we aren’t aware

Overwhelmed
Practical Solutions

- Three Column Approach

Three Column Approach to feeling Overwhelmed

Fill out this column first Free Association of tasks	Do this column second	Do this column last

When all columns are filled out, plan a course of action. Delegate tasks first, to reduce your list. Then prioritize what is left, either by most important, easiest to do, etc. If you still feel overwhelmed, break your tasks down to the smallest detail.

List everything you have to do	Write down the Next Step	Can you delegate? If so, to whom?

Overwhelmed
Practical Solutions

- Ascertain why you are feeling stressed out
  - Pray and ask God to show you
  - Journal and see what comes up
  - Pay attention to your thoughts
  - Pay attention to your venting

- Notice your thoughts
  - Catastrophizing will increase stress
    - It’s rarely as bad as we think it is

Overwhelmed
Practical Solutions

- Deep Breathing to calm your self
- Yoga or stretching to get “out of your head” and into your body where you will feel more grounded and strong
- Let go of Perfectionism
  - Only adds anxiety
- Have realistic expectations of what you can do in the time you have
- Communicate if you can’t meet a commitment

Supporting Cast

Supportive Loved Ones Practical Solutions

Listen with empathy is the best gift you can give

Empathy is the ability to recognize, understand, and share the thoughts and feelings of another person, animal, or fictional character. Developing empathy is crucial for establishing relationships and behaving compassionately. (Psychology Today)

Supportive Loved Ones Practical Solutions

Avoid:

- Judging
- Minimizing
- Fixing

Ask how you can help

Ask what they need from you

Social Challenges

1. Chronic Loneliness

Chronic Loneliness
Symptoms

- Inability to connect with others on a deeper, more intimate level.
- No close or "best" friends.
- Overwhelming feeling of isolation regardless of where you are and who’s around.
- Negative feelings of self-doubt and self-worth.
- When you try to connect or reach out, it’s not reciprocated, and you feel not seen or heard.
- Exhaustion and burn out when trying to engage socially.
  Continued feelings of being drained can lead to other issues like sleep problems, a weakened immune system, poor diet, and more.

Situational Loneliness
Symptoms

- Feeling Disconnected from loved ones and friends
- Feeling depressed and low energy without people to talk to
- Most difficult for Extroverts who live alone
  - Especially those who are between jobs

Loneliness Scriptures

- Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of him, for the LORD your God goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you." Deut. 31:6
- Turn to me and be gracious to me, for I am lonely and afflicted. Psa. 25:16
- Ask and it shall be given, Seek and ye shall find, knock and the door shall be open unto you. Matt. 7:7

Loneliness
Practical Solutions

- Ask for what you need (No one can read your mind)
  - schedule as many “Zoom” conversations as you need to feel connected
  - Make a list of everyone you know and reach out to them
- If you are introverted, realize that it might not feel natural to initiate contact with others, but it is worth the discomfort.
- Porch conversations – Face-to-face conversations while physical distancing

Loneliness
Practical Solutions

- Realize that you are responsible for meeting your needs and work to make that happen.
- Keep busy doing things you love.
- Go for walks to see others out and about
- Think of ways you can support others

Spiritual

Strengthening our Faith

Weak Faith

Symptoms

- Forget that God is Omniscient (all powerful), Omnipresent (everywhere) and Sovereign (in control)
- Try to control situations rather than trust God's solution and timing
- So caught up in drama that you forget to pray
- Worry about things you have no control over
- Forget that the battle is spiritual and not personal

Strengthening our Faith Scriptures

- No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful: he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it. 1 Cor 10:13

Strengthening our Faith Scriptures

“I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world.” John 16:33

“Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing. “ James 1:2-4

Strengthening our faith
Practical Solutions

- Faith grows during tough times
  - Because we see God working more clearly when we get to the end of ourselves

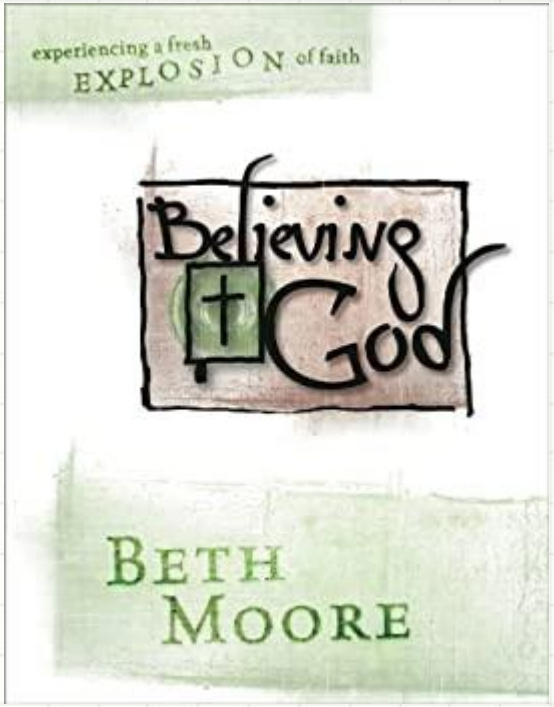
- The more tough times God sees us through, the more we experience that we can trust God and our faith grows.

"Hard times create strong men
Strong men create good times
Good times create weak men
And weak men create hard times"

G. Michael Hopf

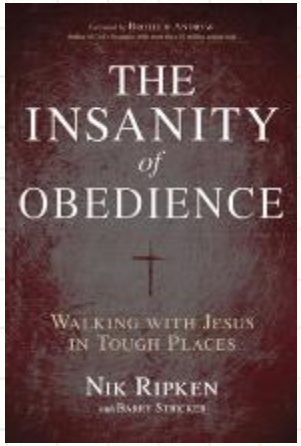
Strengthening Our Faith
Practical Solutions

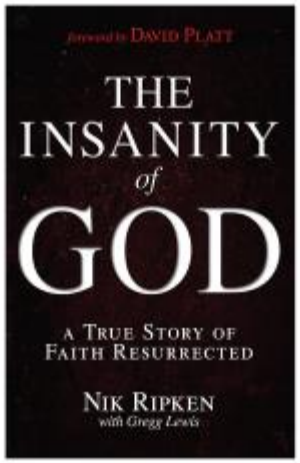
- Do a Bible Study
  - Believing God
    - Beth Moore
    - Can be done online with a Group of friends



Strengthening our faith
Practical Solutions

- Read the Old Testament to see how God worked then.
- Read autobiographies of missionaries and people of God to see how God worked in their lives.
- Read the Insanity of Obedience by Nik Ripkin
- Read the Insanity of God by Nik Ripkin





Strengthening Our Faith Practical Solutions

- Write your life story
  - Provides a goal
  - Family will enjoy reading
  - Notice the difficult situations you have come through
    - See how God has worked in your life
    - See how God has provided for you
    - See how God brought good people to help

Janelle Wilson, MFT

408-966-3312

www.janellewilson.com

janellewilsonlmft@gmail.com