

5. What are some basic steps that one can take when anxiety hits? How should those around someone who's experiencing a moment of severe anxiety react, and **how can they assist?**

The WHO reports that “depression is a leading cause of disability around the world and contributes greatly to the global burden of disease. The effects of depression can dramatically affect a person’s ability to function and live a rewarding life.”

6. What are some common **symptoms of depression?**

If the symptoms of depression seem familiar, it's because they are cross-linked with many other issues and diseases. One area that is closely associated with depression is **substance abuse**. According to Psycom.net, “the relationship between the two disorders is bi-directional, meaning that people who misuse substances are more likely to suffer from depression, and vice versa.”

7. In what ways can an observer determine if an individual is suffering from depression, substance abuse, or both? How is the counsel Paul gave in 1 Corinthians 6:19—“Or do you not know that your body is the **temple of the Holy Spirit** who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own?”—relevant in light of what modern research shows us about drugs and alcohol?

8. What are some **self-help tips** for depression care?

In 2 Timothy 3:1-5, Paul gives Timothy a warning:

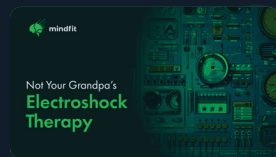
*“But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, **despisers of good**, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away!”*

This seems to be a fitting description of the world we live in today—full of violence and hate. For some in our society, “trauma” has become a bit of a byword, as they feel its overuse is lessening its effectiveness. Nevertheless, traumatic experiences and the damage they cause are very real, and they constitute one of the major mental health issues affecting people today.

9. In what ways has **increased trauma** changed the world we live in?



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The Prowling Lion

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Study Guide 2

The Prowling Lion

1 Peter 5:8 says, “Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.” **One of Satan’s nastiest and most successful attacks that “devours” the human race is to convince suffering people to take their own lives.**

The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that 703,000 people commit suicide each year—and the real number is certainly higher, due to underreporting and stigma. Among those aged 15 to 29, it’s the fourth leading cause of death.

1. What are some of the signs we should be aware of that indicate someone is contemplating suicide?

On social media, the pressure to act happy can be overwhelming. Sometimes, though, you’ll catch a glimpse of raw grief or despair. One recent post on Facebook pleaded for “prayers, cause I can’t do it no more, just so depressed, so alone, so broken, and nowhere to go!” This cry for help should **raise some flags**. An extreme feeling of helplessness is a dark and lonely place, and it can lead to acts of desperation—attempts to self-harm or end one’s life.

2. What are some **intervention** steps that can be taken when confronted with an individual who is exhibiting signs of self-harm or suicidal intentions? What about concerning statements that aren’t directly suicidal or threatening, but *could* indicate someone might be moving in that direction—how should we intervene in those instances?

In their Facebook post, the individual who reached out asked for prayers. It’s clear that they felt divine intervention could possibly help. And indeed, the Bible is filled with promises that speak to this reality.

1 Corinthians 10:13 reassures readers that God “**will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able [to bear]**, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape.” Deuteronomy 31:6 says to “be strong” and not fear because “the Lord your God . . . **will not leave you nor forsake you.**” And then there’s the beautiful promise of Isaiah 61:1, where Jesus proclaims His ministry: “[The Lord] has sent Me to **heal the broken-hearted**, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound.”

Notwithstanding such promises in Scripture, many times we need something much more tangible—**something physical to cling to.**

3. What can we learn from the part of the Creation story that we find in Genesis 2:18, 21, 22?

“And the Lord God said, ‘It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him.’ . . . And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall on Adam, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the

flesh in its place. Then the rib which the Lord God had taken from man He made into a woman, and He brought her to the man.”

The American Psychological Association defines anxiety as “an emotion characterized by feelings of tension, worried thoughts, and physical changes”—such as increased heart rate, sweating, trembling, or dizziness. **Fear** is defined as “an appropriate, present-oriented, and short-lived response to an identifiable and specific threat.” In contrast, **anxiety** is future-oriented, lasts longer, and responds to a diffuse threat, sometimes being “unreasonable or excessive towards current or future perceived threats.”

4. What are some ways that fear can be a positive reaction? How is fear related to our **fight/fight/freeze response**?

Anxiety, since it has a much broader, less defined trigger that’s not always determinable, poses a challenging dilemma for both the person experiencing it and those around the person.



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