

Tough Times – There is Hope



We often face stress or difficulties in life. For example, in our family, money problems, illness, a new baby...

These difficulties can have an effect on our bodies. We may experience headaches, tiredness, pain, difficulty sleeping, reduced appetite, palpitations, breathing trouble or even difficulty in carrying out everyday tasks. These are NORMAL effects on the body when we face difficulties, but they can be hard to cope with and very worrying. Some of us feel anxious often, even when there is no obvious reason. These feelings of anxiety may become too much and really affect our lives.

Sometimes we have times of sadness or feeling hopeless. We may cry often and feel no joy in life. This usually passes after time, but sometimes it can be so bad that we can't live normally. This is what we call depression. Sometimes the sadness becomes so bad that we feel we'd be better off dead or even have thoughts of suicide.

You are experiencing some of these problems now. You may have been told that you are suffering from depression and/or anxiety. We have written this leaflet to help you and your family during this difficult time of your life.

Reassurance

Don't feel guilty – anxiety and depression are not a punishment. We can all become ill this way. You are not abnormal. This is a common illness which usually gets better with time and support.

Be assured that God cares. He knows all about us and understands all our problems. For those who turn to him, He is with us always, He is our comforter, loving father and friend. He brings strength to the weak, hope to the hopeless and He brings life-giving faith to the lost. Life is hard but God is good.

The gospel of Hope

You may feel like there is no hope. But in Jesus, the Son of God, there is hope, whatever is going on in our lives.

However, because he was sinless, the grave could not hold him and he rose from the dead for us. He conquered sin and death. He is alive!

*"In this world you will have sorrow, but take heart I have overcome the world"
John 16:33"*

Hope for the future

Through faith in Jesus, the Son of God, and what He has done for us, we have the hope of eternal life forever in a place where there will be no more sorrow and tears.

Hope right now

*"Come to me, all of you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest."
Matthew 11:28*

Not only can we have the hope of eternity, but we can have hope right now. Because of what Jesus accomplished, we can be adopted into the family of God. This means that when life is hard, we can have free and complete access to God. We can come to him and know that he hears us, that he cares, and that he will help us. We can rest assured that his love for us is not dependent on what we do but on what Jesus has already done. Romans 8:38-39

God does not promise a problem free life BUT he does promise us immense hope if we accept Jesus as our friend. We have hope of friendship, love, peace, blessing and acceptance. We have hope of eternity with him.

If you do not know Jesus yet, then you can pray to God to say sorry for trying to live without Him and ask for forgiveness because of what Jesus has done for you. We are promised that if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from every kind of wrong.

Kijabe OPD Patient Information

What else can you do? Practice steps to recovery

You can't do this alone - Talk to friends and family; spend time with others who care for you and love you – they can support and help you get better if they know. They can walk with you through this season of difficulty. They can pray for you.

- Talk to God – ask for help, healing and comfort. Remember he understands our suffering and pain. There is not one tear we have shed that he does not understand. Whatever the trial, however dark the valley, we can bring our complaints to God, in faith, trusting His wisdom and goodness. The steadfast love of the Lord never fails. We can trust Him.
- Feelings of anxiety (such as palpitations, breathlessness, chest pain and dizziness) can be very scary but this is a normal reaction to stress and it is not dangerous. During episodes such as this, try to breathe slowly and tell yourself that it is not dangerous. Friends or family can reassure you during these episodes too.
- Identify stressors or practical problems in life and look for ways to reduce pressure.
- Eat well, try to maintain a good pattern of sleep and make sure you have times of rest and relaxation. Exercise is really important and can be especially helpful if outside in a nice place, for example, going for a walk in the countryside.
- Speak to your doctor – he/she can check your health and see if you need medication to help at this difficult time. Sometimes medication is helpful but not always. Regular appointments with your doctor are often helpful – make sure you come to follow up appointments.
- Avoid alcohol and sleeping pills as these can make things worse.
- Try and change negative thought patterns. Examine your negative thoughts and see if they're right or not. You may need a friend to help you do this. If the negative thought is not true then think of positive alternatives to this thought and remind yourself of this when your thinking becomes negative again.
- Thoughts of suicide are very serious and dangerous. You must speak to your doctor about this. You need special help to through this. It is possible to get better.
- If you are a Christian, speak to your pastor, keep reading your Bible if you can and maintain Christian fellowship. You may find listening to Christian songs or hymns very helpful. Ask Jesus to give you the strength to look to Him in all that you do.
- If you can, find ways of helping others. As you serve others, you will often receive blessing.

Remember that you can get better from this. You can have hope again. This is our prayer for you:

*"May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him,
so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit"*

Romans 15:13

**If you're experiencing severe symptoms, please come
to Kijabe Hospital straight away (open 24h a day)
or ring this toll-free number: 0800 220 000**