

**Anxiety: Is about having a future state of mind, obsessed with what's happening in the future to the point of not being able to function in the present.**

- How can we identify?
  - Preoccupation with future states of mind.
  - Easily agitated.
  - Not eating.
  - Changes in behavior.
  - Changes in friends.
  - Physical signs of stress (tension).
  - Emotional, mental, but with physical manifestations.
  - Shutting down.
- Steps to take.
  - Get to the root of what's causing the anxiety.
    - Start with the whole family. It's a family issue, not just for the student who is anxious. This approach helps students to not feel singled out or targeted as the problem.
  - Breathing exercises.
    - Forces us to focus on the present.
    - In through nose, out through the mouth, holding for a predetermined amount of seconds.
    - One nostril at a time in and out (alternating).
- Journaling.
  - Is an external processing outlet.
  - No one else has to see it.
 

Note: Don't pressure your student about the future.
  - Parents can still have expectations.
  - Don't tie expectations to their identity.
- It's ok to get help.
  - Counselors, Pastors, Mentors, etc.
  - There's a stigma that comes from seeking mental health assistance, but when someone needs medical assistance for a physical ailment, there's no shame in that situation. This is just as vital and should carry no shame.
- Parents – Be involved!
  - Find the balance between being a helicopter parent and being detached.
  - Know your student's friends, online interactions, schedule, rhythms of daily life, etc.

Continued >



## Depression: Often has anxiety attached to it, but is distinctly different.

- A sense of hopelessness is the most succinct descriptor.
  - It impacts your worldview for not only yourself, but the world.
  - Two Causes
    - Internal: Genetics, hormones, chemical imbalance.
    - Situational: Loss of loved one, divorce, big move.
- The difference between being sad and being depressed.
  - It's okay to be sad.
  - Depression begins to go to a hopeless place.
- Persisting sadness does not necessarily equal depression.
  - Everyone takes a different amount of time to process situations.
  - Isolation, major personality shifts, etc. are better indicators than time.
- Steps.
  - If you believe your student is in danger, trust your gut and seek help immediately.
  - The same steps from anxiety can be effective here.
  - Listen more than you talk.
  - You can't talk someone out of depression.

- Support activities, engage the senses, express acceptance.
  - Encourage the process. Talk with your student. It can be healing and helpful. You're not going to drive them into further depression.
- Be open to where the depression is coming from, even if you're a factor.

## RESOURCES

- *Group's Emergency Response Handbook*
  - This resources covers multiple topics and is an important resource for parents dealing with crisis situations.
  - Available online, in the Brookwood Bookstore or through Student Ministry.

## RECOVERY GROUPS

- Celebrate Recovery (adults)
  - Thursday nights 5:45–8:15 pm
- The Landing (students in grades 7–12)
  - Thursday nights 5:45–8:15 pm