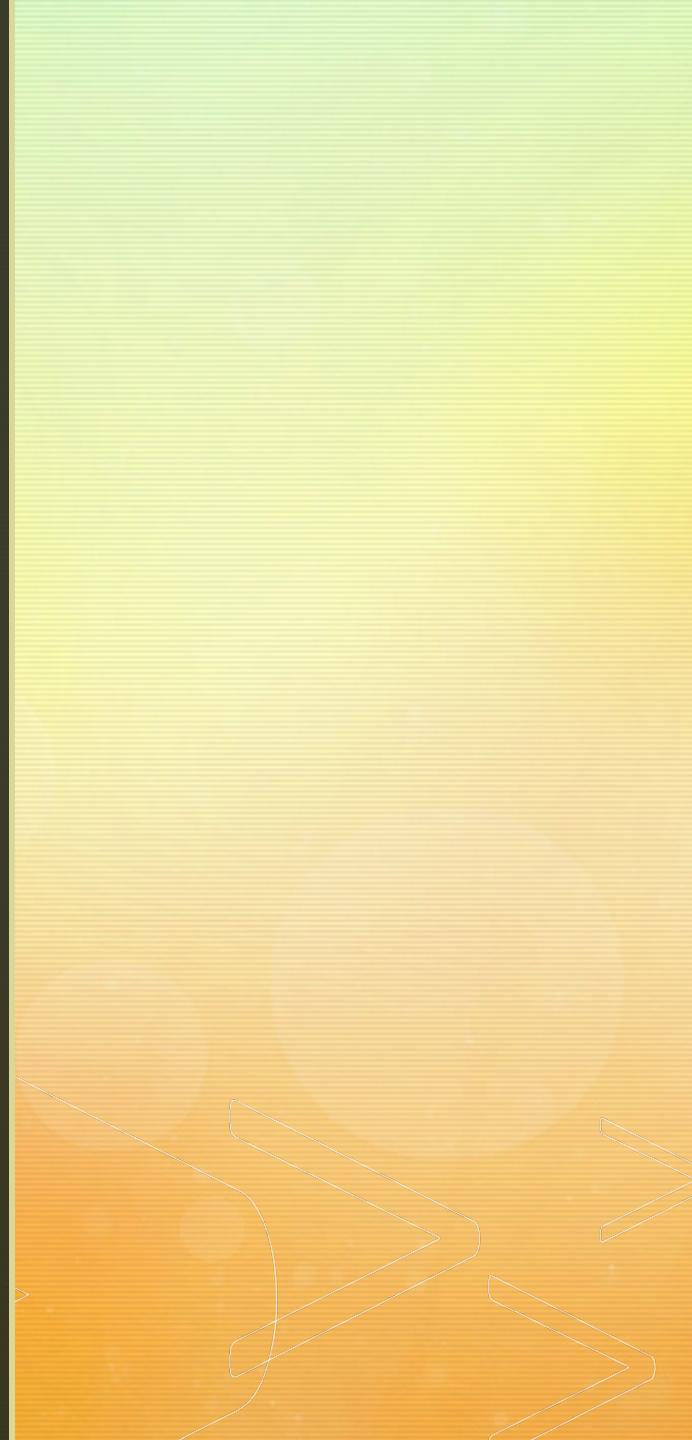


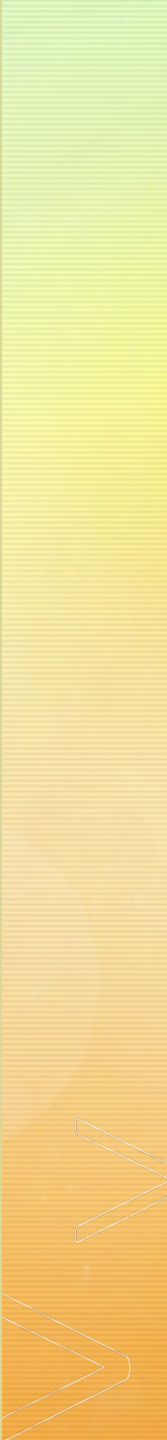
Sanctuary Course for Catholics

Session 3: Mental Illness





Psalm 42:6-7

- My soul is cast down within me; therefore, I remember you
 - From the land of Jordan and of Hermon from Mount Mizar.
 - Deep calls to deep at the thunder of your cataracts;
 - All your waves and your billows have gone over me.
- 



Session Overview

- In this session you will:
 - 1. Take a deeper look at the realities of mental illness.
 - 2. Explore positive and negative community responses to mental illness.
 - 3. Engage with the ‘tough questions’ that Catholics ask when faced with mental illness.



Review

- What is the difference between mental health and mental illness?



Psychological Perspective

- A mental disorder is a technical term for a particular type of mental illness.
- 1. Substance-related and addictive disorders refer to a negative pattern of behavior associated with the use of a substance.
- 2. Mood-related disorders involve the experience of emotions outside the normal range for extended periods of time.

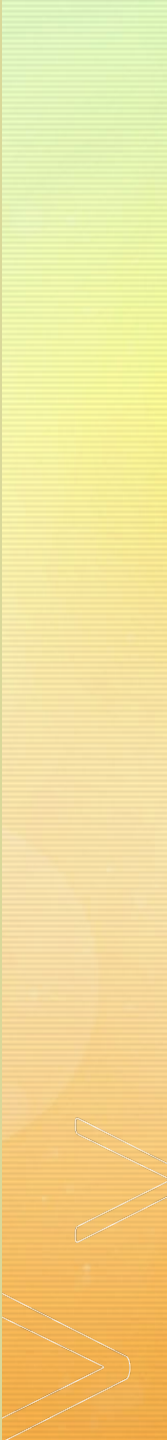


- 3. Anxiety-related disorders refer to an experience of excessive anxiety that disrupts daily life.
- Psychotic disorders refer to conditions where individuals lose touch with reality.
- The experience of mental illness varies widely. It is important to avoid making assumptions if you learn that someone has a mental illness. You can only discover the truth about a particular experience of mental illness by listening well to those with lived experience.





Video

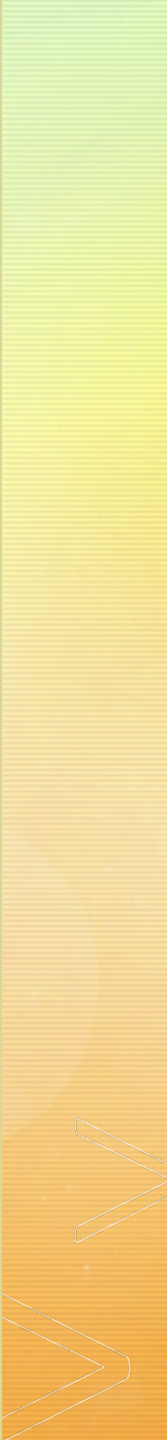
- We meet Hilary who lives with depression and has experienced postpartum depression.
 - How has Hilary's understanding of depression changed over time? What is the significance of this change ?
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▶ The Bio/Psycho/Social/Spiritual Model of Illness

- The experience of illness is more than just medical. It is psychological involving thoughts and feelings. It is social, impacting relationships. It is spiritual, the way we perceive God and engage in our faith is often profoundly affected by our mental health.
- Is this model helpful ? Can you think of a time when a physical injury led to suffering in other areas of your life ?

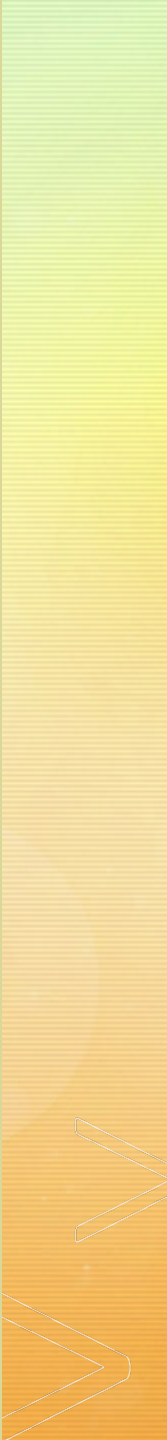


The Social Perspective

- We have seen how supportive relationships and communities can help someone who is struggling with mental health.
 - Negatively, community members can cause confusion and trauma by attempting to diagnose those who are suffering.
 - Communities may isolate individuals who are suffering from mental illness.
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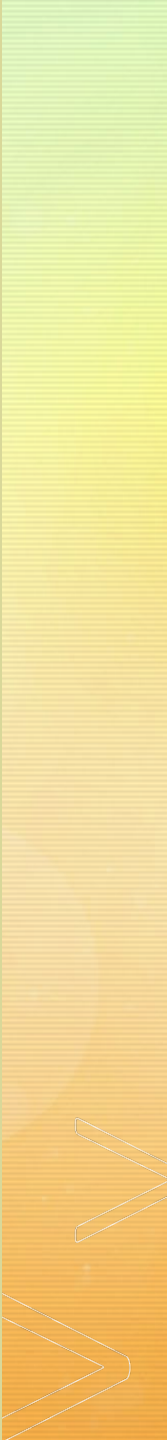


Social Isolation

- 1. Stigma – individuals with mental illness may be viewed negatively and be rejected by others due to the stigma of their diagnosis.
 - 2. The exhaustion of caregivers – caregivers often distance themselves from individuals with mental illness once the burden of care begins to negatively impact their own mental health.
 - 3. General social withdraw – People often withdrawal from relationships and social interactions.
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Theological Perspective

- 1. Can Catholics experience mental illness ?
 - 2. Is mental illness the result of spiritual phenomena or demonic activity ?
 - 3. Should Catholics take medication ?
 - 4. How do the New Testament promises of healing and redemption apply to individuals struggling with mental illness ?
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Discussion Question

- Have you ever wrestled with any of these questions personally ?



Journaling/Exercise

- 1. Think about a phrase or word that represents a burden that you are carrying at this moment.
- 2. Write the word or phrase in your journal
- 3. Spend time with the phrase and take a time of silent prayer.
- 4. Offer a prayer to God. It may be spontaneous, or you can use the following prayer.



- Eternal Father, through the Precious Blood of Jesus have mercy.
- Console us in our moment of need and tribulation. As you once consoled Job, Hannah and Tobias, in their afflictions.
- And Mary, Comforter of the Afflicted, pray and placate God for us.
- And obtain for us the grace for which we humbly pray.

▪ *Saint Benedict Joseph Labre.*