



Session One: Introduction

Sanctuary Course for Catholics

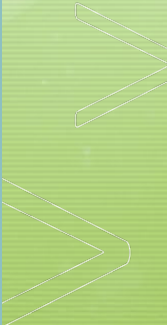


Why Participate in the Sanctuary Course for Catholics ?

- One in four people will be affected by mental health problems at some point in their lives through personal experience or through the diagnosis of a relative or friend.
- As Catholics, we want to discover the role of faith in mental health and hear what God, the Scriptures and the Church have to say in light of the unique challenges and experiences of mental health problems.



What is Sanctuary ?

- The mission is to raise mental health awareness within faith communities and providing theologically-sound educational resources and training to promote mental wellbeing.
 - Sanctuary hopes to see local parishes inspired and equipped to support members living with mental health problems.
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Discussion Question

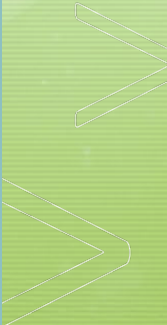
- What do you think of when you hear the term mental health ?



Psalm 42:1-2

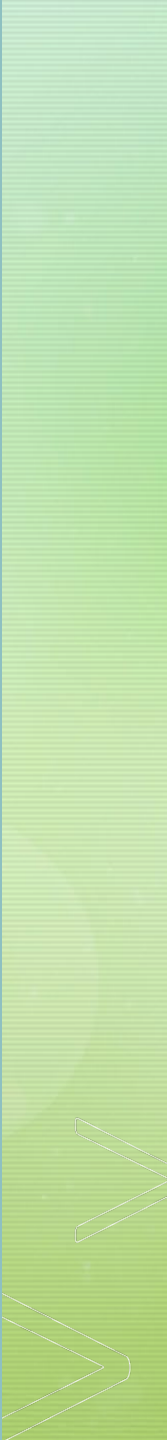
As the deer longs for flowing streams,
so my soul longs for you, O God.

My soul thirsts for God,
for the living God.





Session Overview

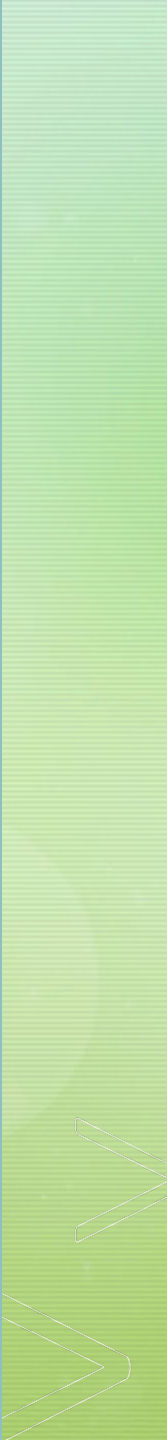
1. Explore the opportunity for faith communities to engage in the broader mental health conversation.
 2. Consider the psychological, social and theological components of mental health.
 3. Discuss the role that community plays in mental health support and recovery.
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Core Content

- We are called to demonstrate God's love through the way we care for those in need – individuals struggling with mental health problems represent a large population in need of care.
- Individuals with mental health problems will often seek help from spiritual leaders first.
- “It is important to stretch out a hand to the sick, to make them perceive the tenderness of God, to integrate them into a community of faith and life in which they can feel accepted, understood, supported, respected; in a word, in which they can love and be loved.” St. John Paul II

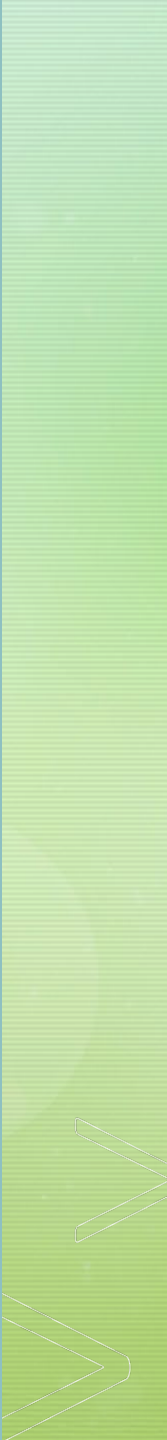


The Psychological Perspective

- Each session will contain a section that attempts to describe the personal, internal experience of individuals living with mental health problems.
 - Designed to help you grow in awareness of mental health problems, respond with empathy to those who are suffering and learn through listening to the stories of individuals who have lived experience.
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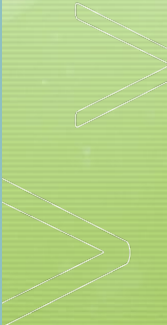


Film and Discussion Question

- We meet Matthew, who lives with generalized anxiety disorder (GAD) and primary obsessional OCD.
 - How does Matthew's story illustrate the importance of talking about mental health in our faith communities ?
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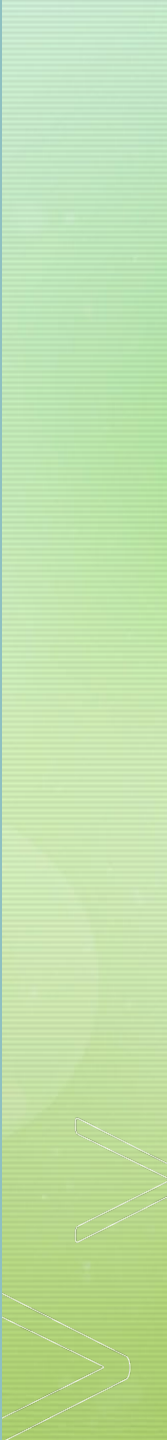


Social Perspective

- This section focuses on the ways that mental health affects not just individuals, but also relationships and faith communities.
 - Recent research suggests that meaningful relationships and supportive communities play a key role in recovery.
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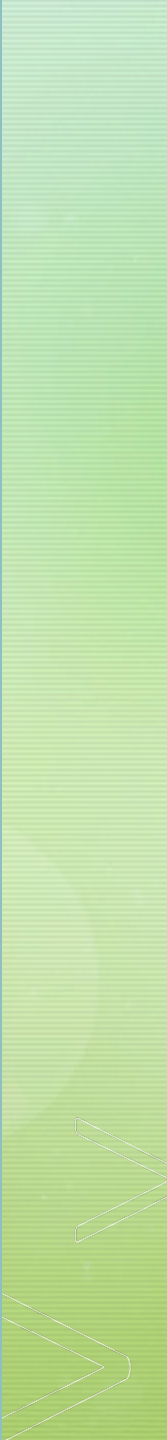


Theological Perspective

- The biblical themes of suffering, healing, hope and love will be considered as they relate to mental health problems.
 - The goal is to help you integrate faith and the journey of mental health.
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Topics Covered In The Course

- Mental health
 - Mental Illness
 - Stigma
 - Recovery
 - Companionship
 - Self-Care
 - The Church
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Listening Well

- Each member takes 2-3 minutes to share their reason for participating in the Sanctuary Course.
 - Listening guidelines
 - Be aware that listening wholly and attentively is a gift you offer to others.
 - Be aware of your body language. Show you communicate openness and a willingness to learn.
 - Listen not only to the words being spoken, but to the emotions being expressed.
 - Don't rush to come up with a response, slow down and focus on simply understanding
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Follow Up Questions

- After the speaker is done sharing, one person from the group asks 1 or 2 questions.
- Guidelines:
 - The best questions are simple, brief and to the point.
 - Avoid questions with right or wrong answers. Instead ask 'how', 'what', or 'why' questions.
 - Ask questions that help identify important feelings, images, concerns and hopes in their story.
 - Embrace moments of silence.