

Helping Churches Support Individuals and Families Affected by Mental Illness

The Mental Health Liaison and The First Year of Mental Health Ministry

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Key
Ministry

Objectives and Assumptions

- **Objective** Walk through what the first year of Mental Health Ministry might look like at your church
- **Assumption** The pastoral staff supports launching mental health ministry
- **Assumption** Church leadership has obtained any approvals needed to launch mental health ministry
- **Assumption** The Mental Health Liaison is in place



Mental Health Liaison's Role

The First 90 Days

- With staff and lay leadership, **create the ministry plan**
- **Make contacts** within church community to gain support for mental health ministry
- Make contacts within **mental health community** (local/state government, non-profits, medical professionals) to determine community resources and community mental health needs
- Determine **unmet mental health needs** in your church and community. Church needs assessment survey
- **Address objections** to mental health ministry



Mental Health Liaison's Role - After The First 90 Days

- Maintain **current information** on community mental health resources
- Prioritize and oversee **implementation** of mental health ministry plan
- **Recruit volunteers** for mental health initiatives
- Coordinate mental health **training**
- Point person for **mental health requests** and **objections**
- **Measure results** and refine the ministry plan

Cultural change vs “just another program”



Mental Health Ministry Plan Components

- Care/Prayer Team
- Church and community needs
- Communications
- Small group ministry
- Training

Take care of prayer and tangible needs first



Liaison's Typical Week

- From **Pastor** Two mental health **referrals**
- **Small group leaders** Meeting about mental health needs. Training scheduled
- **Local mental health board** Meeting scheduled with peer support team
- Church mental health **survey** Liaison reviews results, drafts ideas and questions for church leadership board meeting
- **Visiting family**, includes youth with high functioning autism Liaison gives Thursday evening **tour of the facility** and information about **youth ministry supports**
- Social media updates **Mental health ministry success testimony**



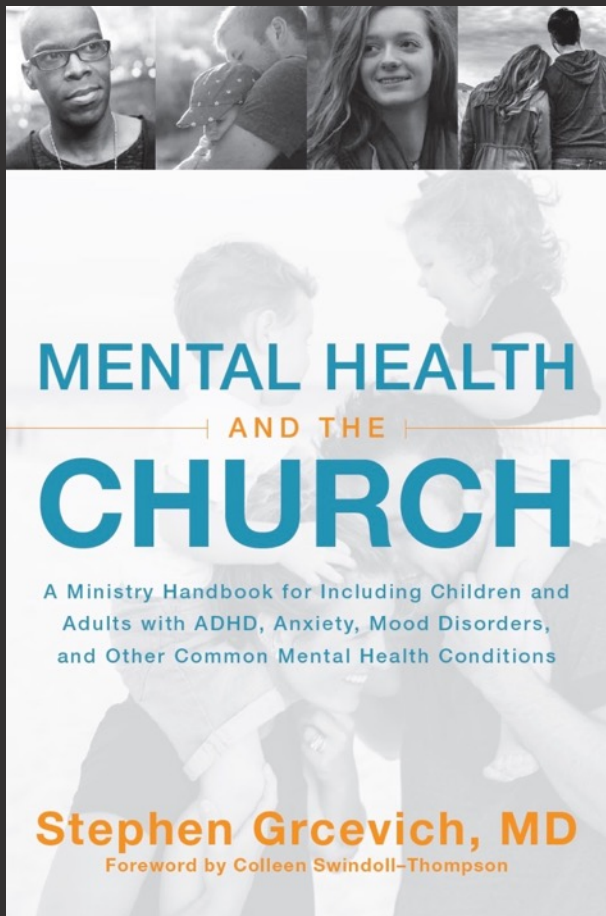
Addressing Objections

- Understand the source - often fear
- Answer factually about mental illness
- Scripture support, historical figures
- Value the dignity and image of God in every person
- Demonstrate the positive impact of mental health ministry on your church and community

Mental health issues are part of the human condition



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