

# Mental Wellbeing Series



## Session Five: Mental Health and Church

In this session we will:

- think about mental health problems and who they affect
- explore examples of mental health problems in the Bible
- consider ways we can support people who are struggling with their mental health, individually and as a church

**Watch:** Watch the first section of [the video](#) where Helen recaps our mental health series and talks about mental health problems.

**Read:** Take it in turns to read the following verses aloud: Proverbs 18:14; Psalm 119:25; Job 7:16. In the Bible we see that mental health problems are not a new thing, and that they are often misunderstood and stigmatised.

**Reflect:** In Session One we looked at the 'mental wellbeing battery' and reflected on the level of our own mental health.

Which 'zone' do you think the people in these verses are in?

If you feel able to, think about times when you or someone close to you has been in the 'amber' or 'red' zone. How have your experiences or beliefs affected how you view mental health problems?

ILL	INJURED
Excessive anxiety	Increased anxiety/anger
Panic attacks	Pervasive sadness, tearfulness, hopelessness, worthlessness
Easily enraged, aggressive	Negative attitude
Depressed mood, numb	Difficulty concentrating
Cannot concentrate	Trouble making decisions
Inability to make decisions	Decreased performance, regularly missing work/classes/deadlines (& church?), or overworking
Cannot fall asleep/stay asleep	Restless, disturbed sleep
Constant fatigue, illness	Avoidance, social withdrawal
Absent from social events/work/classes (& church?)	Increased use of alcohol –hard to control
Suicidal thoughts/intent	Restrictive eating habits/weight control
Unusual sensory experiences (hearing or seeing things)	
Alcohol or other addictions	
Disordered eating habits/weight control	

(n.b. these categories are a rough guide, not a diagnostic tool)

**Watch:** Watch the second section of [the video](#), about mental health problems and church.

**Read:** Read Isaiah 61:1-3. As you listen, notice what strikes you – a word, a phrase, an image or a feeling.

**Activity:** Discuss the following questions and write responses on your Connect Group's Padlet board.

- What aspects of church might be especially challenging to someone experiencing things on the 'red' or 'amber' lists in the table above?
- What could we do to make church more welcoming and supportive for people who are struggling with these elements of their mental health?
- What can we do as individuals and as a church to support the mental health of the people around us?

**Reflect:** As we finish these 5 sessions on mental health and wellbeing, **What are the main things you will take away from the series? What changes have there been in your actions, thoughts or beliefs about mental health and wellbeing?**

If you missed any sessions, they are available [here](#).

Do you need to seek help with your mental health? Do you have questions about mental health and faith that weren't covered in these sessions? Recommended sources of support and additional resources are available [here](#).

### Pray:

Pray about anything that has come up during this session: for people in your group, people you know, or for the church.

### During the week:

- Add to your Connect Group's Padlet board.
- Seek support if you need to.