



Counseling People with a Medical Illness

Additional Notes:

Introduction

Physical illness and the pain and suffering that often come with it are problems that all of us will eventually face. In counseling, we will be called upon to help people in the middle of their struggle. Our Lord cared deeply about the pain and problems that people faced and we should reflect that care in counseling. Our goal should be to offer comfort, encouragement and a plan to help the counselee deal with their trial in a way that honors God.

I. Preparing to help those with a _____ illness.

A. Those with physical illness and their loved ones _____ with many problems. John 11

1. They may be facing physical _____, loss of function, ability, the loss of life. (vv.1-3)
2. They may lose _____ or jobs. (v. 14)
3. Their illness may strain _____ with spouse, children, loved ones, and friends. (vv. 20, 32)
4. The illness may bring _____ distress. (vv. 32-35)
5. The losses and the suffering are _____ and very important to them. (vv. 38-40)
6. They will need someone who can show them the _____ of Christ in a patient quiet way. (vv. 22-26)
7. They need to know that God has a _____ and that He is in _____ of it. (vv. 4, 23, 39)

B. Some fundamental _____ to keep in mind.

1. While you do not need a physician's knowledge of the condition to help the counselee, you do need to be willing to listen long and carefully with a _____ attitude. Always give them the first 30 minutes.



2. The best _____ for information about the problem is the counselee.
3. Your interest is more in knowing what the counselee thinks he or she has and how they believe the illness will change their life.

C. The counselor's _____ to the illness.

1. The counselor's strength is in dealing with the illness from a biblical perspective rather than the medical perspective.
 - a. _____ the diagnosis and symptoms as a given.
 - b. Do not try to _____ or _____ the diagnosis.
 - c. Do not _____ other possible diagnoses or methods of diagnosis.
2. If there is no cure or relief, do not attempt to find or recommend an alternative.
3. Your _____ is to turn the attention from the pain and discomfort of the illness to what God is doing through it.

II. Principles to _____ and instruct those with a medical illness.

A. _____ your counselee's . . .

1. Medical Condition
 - a. Basic _____ about the condition.
 - b. How it was diagnosed.
 - c. The natural _____ of the condition.
 - d. The _____ of the condition on the counselee's lifestyle.
 - e. The counselee's thinking and _____ about the condition.
 - f. The _____ of relatives and friends of the counselee.
 - g. The _____ of medication.

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- h. How is the illness being _____ / managed?
- 1) Is the treatment effective?
 - 2) Potential complications from the use of the medications.
2. _____ condition.
- a. What is the counselee's personal relationship with the _____?
 - b. How does the person fit God into all of this?
 - c. What is his _____ of the authority of the Word?

B. Identify your counselee's _____.

1. Presenting issues.
2. Identify underlying _____ issues.

C. Give much biblical _____.

1. The hope is that there can be _____ when pain and suffering cannot be relieved.
2. Teach the _____ of God regarding His character and His good plans for His children.
3. Cast a _____ of what God can do through His Word and His Spirit in His people's lives.
4. Illustrate how victory is possible in the midst of human frailty and difficult circumstances.
5. Don't be _____ by counselee's behavior.
6. Use biblical terminology to describe problems.
7. Don't maximize or minimize the person's symptoms.

D. _____ involvement

1. Developing a meaningful _____ with another person in order to minister God's Word in his/her life.
2. Emphasize God's _____ in your life and theirs.



3. Look for ways to identify with their story.
4. Encourage them when they take steps of _____.

E. Processing the data and _____ the problem biblically.

1. Distinguish between occasions of _____ and occasions of sinning.
2. _____ appropriate medical care and treatment.
3. As the counseling process _____, help the counselee evaluate their struggle from the biblical reasons for sickness.
 - a. God's _____. John 9:1-3
 - b. _____ to the counselee. 2 Cor. 12:10
 - c. _____
4. Use the counselee's story as an opportunity to address issues of the outer and inner person.

F. Apply appropriate biblical _____.

1. _____ biblically about all aspects of the illness. 2 Cor. 10:5; Phil. 4:8
 - a. God cares about the suffering of his children and has a _____ for it. John 9
 - b. Illness and suffering are to be _____ in this life. 2 Tim. 3:12; I Peter 2:20, 4:13, 5:10
 - c. The illness and symptoms are under the control of a sovereign God. Proverbs 21:1; Job 2:21; I Chr. 29:12; I Cor. 10:13
 - d. God will not exceed a believer's _____ to handle the unpleasantness of the illness. I Cor. 10:13; Phil. 4: 13
 - e. God intends for the believer to have victory in the midst of the agony of the illness. I Cor. 15:57; Rom 8: 35-37
2. _____ for the reality of suffering.

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3. Definition of victory.
 - a. Victory is being _____ by biblical principles rather than the agony of the illness.
 - b. Not controlled by the constant _____ of relief from pain and suffering.
 - c. Controlled by what _____ is doing as a result of the condition.
 - d. Focuses on God's _____ for the discomfort more than the discomfort.
 - e. Provides a _____ when relief does not come.
4. _____ of God's grace. 2 Cor. 12:9-10; 2 Cor. 9:8
5. Instill an _____ of God's Word into counselee's heart so as to stimulate faith and obedience during illness.
6. Use compelling personal testimonies to teach truth.

G. Homework should _____ on biblical principles the counselee needs to apply rather than health issues.

1. We should encourage the counselee to follow basic principles of good health.
2. However, the main emphasis of your homework is application of biblical principles to the counselee's response to the illness and symptoms.

III. Victory for the individuals suffering with a medical illness.

A. May actually be _____ of the pain and suffering. Eph. 5:20

B. Biblical truth _____.

1. _____ to finish strong. 2 Cor. 12:8-10
2. God's _____ that controls the way you think and feel. Phil. 4:7



3. God's _____ expressed in your life. 1 Cor. 10:31

4. _____ that God is in control and what He allows is for your good. Deut. 8:16

C. A _____ of the counselee's relationship with God.

1. We do not _____ as those who have no hope.
1 Thess. 4:13

→ _____

2. In Phil. 1:23-25 _____ struggled with his desire to go to heaven or to stay here and minister.

3. One of the very important ministries to dying people is to keep them _____ of what will happen as they die.

4. Other than sudden death or if the Lord delays His return every person will die as a result of some illness.

5. Keep in mind the _____ end of this illness is to be the vehicle that God will use to bring a believer to Himself in Heaven.

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