

ANXIETY & DEPRESSION

Salem Utah Woodland Hills Stake





ANXIETY

Anxiety can be normal in stressful situations such as public speaking or taking a test. Anxiety is considered normal and adaptive when it serves to improve peoples' functioning and/or wellbeing.

In contrast, **abnormal anxiety** is a chronic condition that impairs peoples' functioning and interferes with their well-being. Anxiety is only an indicator of underlying disease when feelings become excessive, all-consuming, and interfere with daily living. Intense, excessive, and persistent worry and fear about everyday situations.

DEPRESSION

Sadness is a human emotion that all people feel at certain times during their lives. Feeling sad is a natural reaction to situations that cause emotional upset or pain. There are varying degrees of sadness. But like other emotions, sadness is temporary and fades with time. In this way, sadness differs from depression. Depression is a mental health disorder characterized by persistently depressed mood or loss of interest in activities, causing significant impairment in daily life.



LET'S BE REALISTIC

Everyone has days when they feel sad, stressed, anxious, or overwhelmed by life's challenges. If you continue to struggle for several weeks or longer or your symptoms begin interfering with your daily life—at home, work, school, or in your relationships—**seek help**. Talk to someone you trust, such as a family member, friend, Relief Society president, bishop, or mental health professional. Addressing mental health concerns early and often is the most effective approach and can help prevent a crisis in the future.



WHAT SCIENCE IS SAYING

ANXIETY

About 1 in 5 adults had any anxiety disorder in the past year.

DEPRESSION

About 1 in 10 adults are diagnosed with depression

ANXIETY AND DEPRESSION

About 60% of those with anxiety will also have symptoms of depression and vice versa

UTAH

Antidepressant drugs are prescribed in Utah more often than any other state at a rate of nearly twice the National average.

UTAH HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

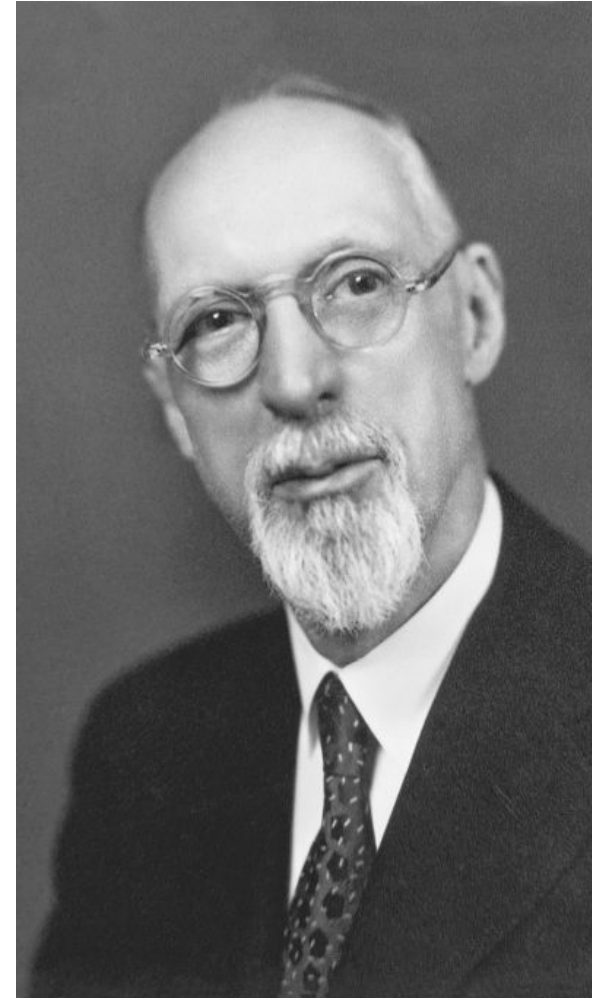
36.7% felt sad or hopeless.
22.3% seriously considered attempting suicide.
In 2020, suicide was the leading cause of death in Utahns ages 10-24



Elder Jeffrey R. Holland

BY THE WAY.....

Church leaders and church
members are not exempt
from Anxiety and Depression



President George Albert Smith

WHY ARE YOU HERE TODAY?

- As Leaders We All Need To Be Educated!
- Mission President Example
- Elder's Quorum Example
- Elder Holland Example

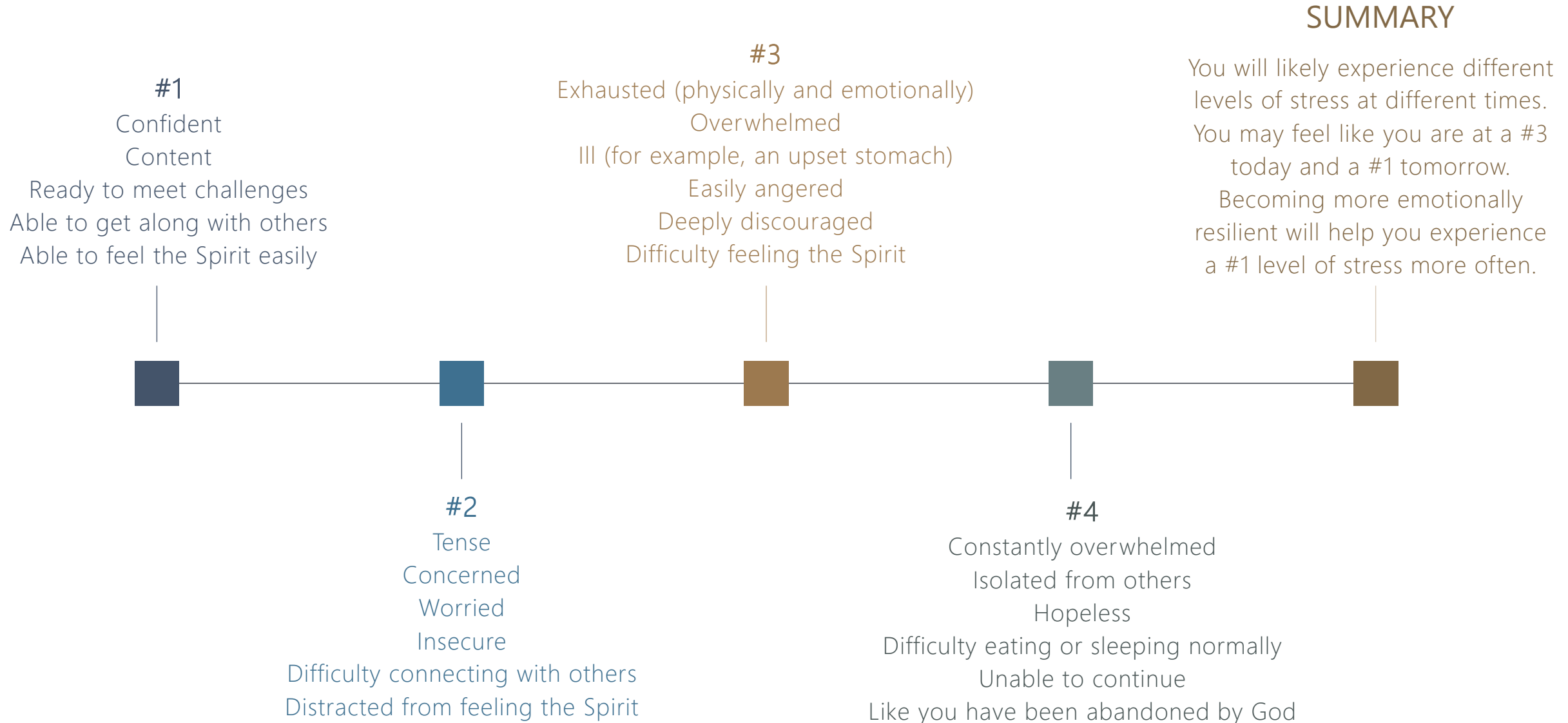
SELF HELP RESOURCES - 2

Elder Holland

“The Book of Mormon says Ammon and his brethren were depressed at a very difficult time, and so can the rest of us be. But today I am speaking of something more serious, of an affliction so severe that it significantly restricts a person’s ability to function fully, a crater in the mind so deep that no one can responsibly suggest it would surely go away if those victims would just square their shoulders and think more positively—though I am a vigorous advocate of square shoulders and positive thinking!”



SPECTRUM OF ANXIETY & DEPRESSION





SELF HELP RESOURCES

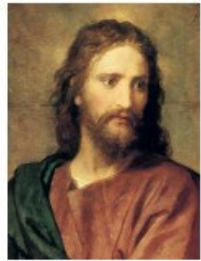
- Increased physical activity and exercise
- Adequate sleep; develop good sleep habits
- Eat healthy foods; stay away from processed food
- Practice gratitude in all things
- Utilizing breathing techniques, meditation and relaxation
- Find time for family activities and meals together
- Find a counselor that works well for you
- President Averett Idea

A man wearing a tan fishing hat with a rainbow trout logo, sunglasses, and a green jacket is smiling while holding a large rainbow trout. The fish is vibrant red and pink. The background features a calm lake, green trees, and snow-capped mountains under a cloudy sky.

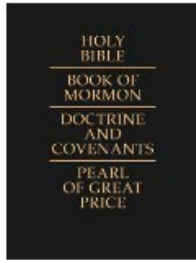
PRESIDENT AVERETT:

"Slow Down"

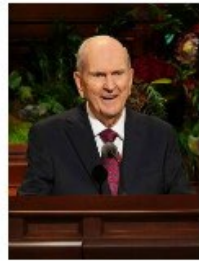
GOSPEL LIBRARY > LIFE HELP > MENTAL HEALTH



Jesus Christ



Scriptures



General Conference



Come, Follow Me



Music



Magazines



Books and Lessons



Church History



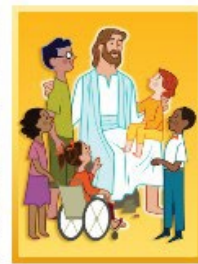
Gospel Topics



Handbooks and Callings



Videos and Images



Children



Youth



Adults



Life Help



Sharing the Gospel



Temple and Family History



Notes

"We invite you to diligently study and apply these principles and teach them to your family members. As you do so, your life will be blessed. You will learn how to act on your path toward greater self-reliance. You will be blessed with greater hope, peace, and progress."

The First Presidency

GOSPEL LIBRARY > LIFE HELP > MENTAL HEALTH

Self Reliance

Abuse

Addiction

Adoption

Death

Disabilities

Divorce

Education

Employment

English Learning

Family

Finances

Grief

Hope

Media Safety

Mental Health

Physical Health

Pornography

Pregnant and Single

Preparedness

Same-Sex Attraction

Single-Parent Families

Suicide

Transgender



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General Principles



Help for Me



Help for Parents and Families



Help for Someone Else: Leaders



Where to Learn More

General Principals

- Need help? Talk now.
- "Like a Broken Vessel"
- Accept that healing may come in stages.
- Know that mental health challenges have many contributing factors.
- Focus on becoming like the Savior rather than simply accomplishing tasks.
- Receive the Savior's divine empathy.
- Seek to mourn with those who mourn.

“Like a Broken Vessel”



- **Watch your words.** Your language can change perceptions. Avoid potentially harmful or negative phrases, and choose words that are more descriptive of what you observe. Visit the American Psychiatric Association to learn more.
- **Be a friend.** Listen patiently and without judgment when others share their concerns. Help them locate professional resources if they need additional support. Visit [HelpGuide.org](https://www.helpguide.org) or Active Minds to learn more.
- **Practice self-care.** The limitations of mortality may require us to slow down and restore our strength at certain times (see Mosiah 4:27). It is not selfish to take time for yourself. Visit [Mind.org](https://www.mind.org) or watch a TED Talk on the importance of self-care to learn more.

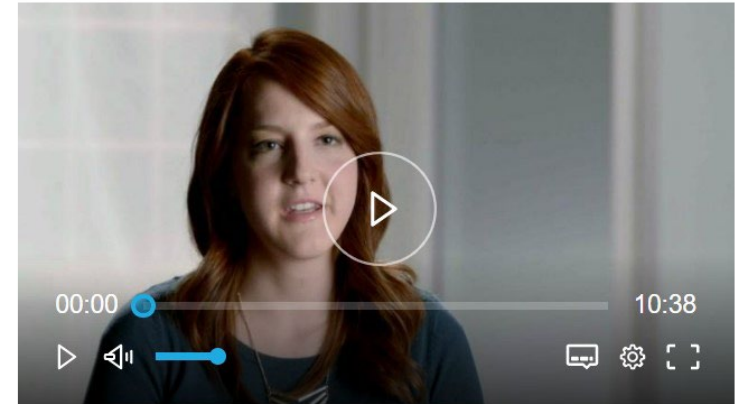


Why doesn't God just take this away from me or heal me?

Alan felt that positive religious habits could “fix” anxiety and depression.



Jesslyn thought that her depression was a result of sin.



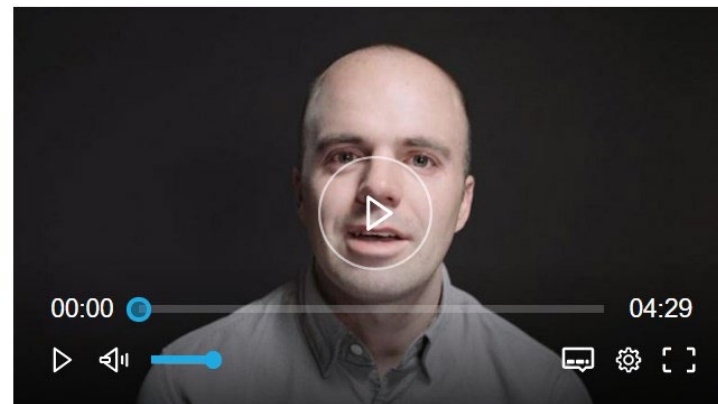


I went on a mission and came home because of mental health issues. How should I view my mission?

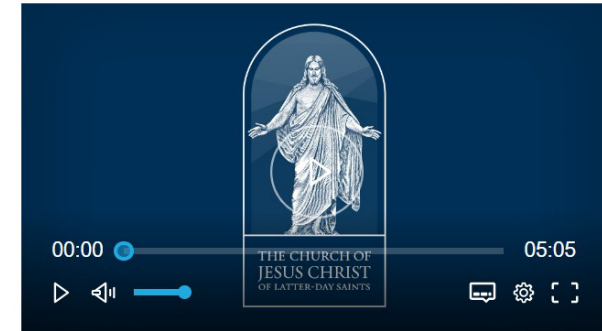
Elder Jeffrey R. Holland has a message for missionaries who returned home early for mental health reasons.



When Jake entered the missionary training center, he was hit with a wave of doubt and depression.



When Cole experienced crippling anxiety for the first time, he was nearly 20 years old and didn't know how to cope with it. With the help of loved ones and professionals, he found peace.



Church and Community Resources

(Some of the resources listed below are not created, maintained, or controlled by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints but are provided as additional resources.)

- For stake presidents, bishops, and branch presidents: "Missionaries Who Return Home Early," Counseling Resources, [ChurchofJesusChrist.org](https://www.ChurchofJesusChrist.org)
- Destiny Yarbro, "Catching the Vision: All Missions Bring Souls to Christ," *Ensign*, Aug. 2015, 24–27
- Jenny Rollins, "Dealing with Coming Home Early," *Ensign*, July 2016, 14–17
- Brittany Romanello Casco, "Returning Home Early from My Mission," *Ensign*, Dec. 2015, 18–21
- James Perry, "What This Mission President Would Like Every Early Returned Missionary to Know," *Meridian Magazine*, July 27, 2015
- Aaron Olsen, "When a Missionary Returns Early," *LDS Living*, Aug. 5, 2014
- Sadie Williams, "6 Lies Early Returned Missionaries Tell Themselves," *Deseret News*, May 18, 2015

GOSPEL LIBRARY > LIFE HELP > MENTAL HEALTH > GENERAL PRINCIPALS > HELP FOR SOMEONE ELSE - LEADERS



I am not a mental health professional, but I want to help. What can I do?



How can I help individuals, including those working through mental health challenges, feel welcomed and included at church?



How can I help as a leader in my ward or stake?



How can I better understand what to avoid saying or doing?

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Self Reliance

Abuse
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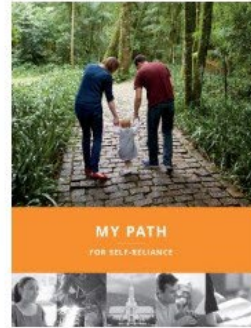


Transgender

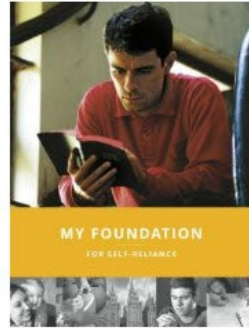
GOSPEL LIBRARY > LIFE HELP > MENTAL HEALTH > SELF RELIANCE



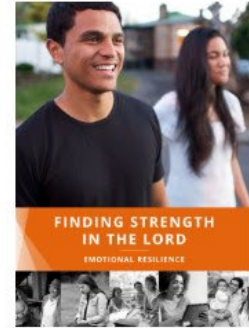
Self-Reliance Videos



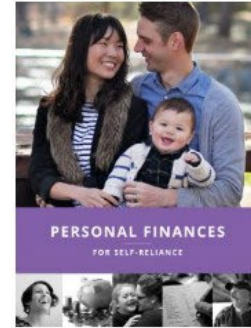
My Path for Self-Reliance



My Foundation for Self-Reliance



Finding Strength in the Lord: Emotional Resilience



Personal Finances for Self-Reliance



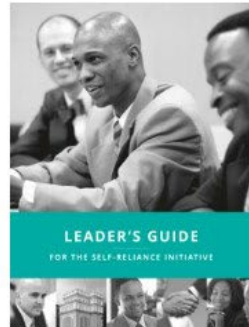
Education for Better Work for Self-Reliance



Find a Better Job for Self-Reliance



Starting and Growing My Business for Self-Reliance



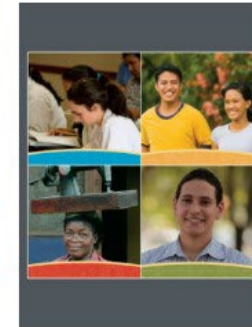
Leader's Guide for the Self-Reliance Initiative



Facilitating Groups for Self-Reliance



Perpetual Education Fund



Previous Editions

GOSPEL LIBRARY > LIFE HELP > MENTAL HEALTH > SELF RELIANCE > FINDING STRENGTH IN THE LORD: EMOTIONAL RESILIENCE



1
**Building Emotional
Strength in the Lord**



2
**Healthy Thinking
Patterns**



3
**Our Bodies and
Emotions**



4
**Managing Stress and
Anxiety**



5
**Understanding Sadness
and Depression**



6
Overcoming Anger



7
**Managing Addictive
Behaviors**



8
**Building Healthy
Relationships**



9
**Providing Strength to
Others**



10
**Moving Forward with
Faith**



4
Managing Stress and Anxiety

Understanding Levels of Stress

STRESS LEVELS		
If You Feel . . .		What to Do
Green	Confident Content Ready to meet challenges Able to get along with others Able to feel the Spirit easily	This is the level people desire to be in, but it is normal to fluctuate. Keep going. In the green level, you are handling the everyday stresses of family, work, learning, and progressing in a healthy way.
Yellow	Tense Concerned Worried Insecure Difficulty connecting with others Distracted from feeling the Spirit	It is normal to spend some time at the yellow level. Be kind to yourself as you cope with the challenges of life. Participate in relaxing activities, such as the ones suggested in this chapter, to help increase your ability to manage stress.
Orange	Exhausted (physically and emotionally) Overwhelmed Ill (for example, an upset stomach) Easily angered Deeply discouraged Difficulty feeling the Spirit	No one enjoys being at the orange level of stress, but this doesn't have to be permanent. Engage in relaxing activities, and remember good experiences. If you stay at the orange level for more than a few days or feel overwhelmed, ask for help.
Red	Constantly overwhelmed Isolated from others Hopeless Difficulty eating or sleeping normally Unable to continue Like you have been abandoned by God	If you are at this level, ask for help. If you are able to, consider taking a break or doing something that helps you emotionally until you can meet with a health care professional.

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4

Managing Stress and Anxiety

1. **Talk with God.** Know that He understands. Imagine Him sitting close to you, listening and offering support.
2. **Ponder.** Reflect on times you've felt blessed by the Lord and seen His hand and mercy in your life. "Be still, and know that I am God" ([Psalm 46:10](#)).
3. **Look at your expectations.** Sometimes our greatest worries and stress come when life doesn't turn out the way we hoped or planned. We can learn from our stressful experiences. "All these things shall give thee experience and shall be for thy good. ... Therefore, hold on thy way" ([Doctrine and Covenants 122:7, 9](#)).

4. **Take a short break.** Take several slow, deep breaths, stretch, and relax physically. When your body and mind are calm again, you will be able to think more clearly. Take a walk, get some food or a drink, or just sit and think for a few minutes.
5. **Be aware of when you're stressed.** Sometimes you may not realize you're stressed. You may experience difficulty sleeping, get angry easily, feel depressed, or have low energy. Check in with yourself at least once a day to see how you are doing.
6. **Focus on gratitude.** Notice what is around you. Focus for a few minutes on what is right, good, and positive about yourself and the world. Start a gratitude journal, and write at least five specific things you are grateful for each day.
7. **Be active.** We have been given a body and a world to enjoy. Make a plan to use your body to get out and enjoy these gifts. Even a few minutes of walking can help boost your mood and reduce stress.
8. **Limit technology use.** Using social media, computers, and TVs, especially at the start and end of the day, can increase feelings of anxiety or stress. Try starting and ending your day without phones or computers. Go a day or week without social media or TV and see how you feel.
9. **Be kind to yourself.** Talk to yourself with the same kind, comforting words you would use with a loved one. Thoughts of helplessness, hopelessness, or harsh condemnation are not from God and cause more stress and anxiety.

10. **Help someone else.** Refocus your energy by serving someone else. Our ultimate goal is to love others like Christ did, even when we are struggling. Christ gave us an example of this love when He forgave His persecutors and made sure His mother would be cared for even as He suffered on the cross. As hard as it can be, we can get better perspective on our lives when we stop and think of others and look for ways to help.
11. **Try a relaxing activity.** Everyone relaxes in different ways. Maybe you enjoy painting, listening to music, reading a book, or being outside. When you are stressed or anxious, take time to remember what brings you joy and calms you. Make time to do those things, even if you think you are too busy.
12. **Stay connected with friends and family.** Being with those who love and support you can help reduce stress. You were made for connection. There is no shame in sharing what you're going through. Help your friends and family understand what you are experiencing.
13. **Take it one step at a time.** You can ask yourself, "What is the most important thing I can be doing right now?" Your answer might be something like "All I need to do right now is wait for my bus" or "All I have to do right now is clean the dishes." Decide what must get done now and what can wait. Learn to not feel guilty for saying "no" to something that can wait.
14. **Practice mindfulness.** Use the exercises in the previous activity and at the end of this chapter to practice being present. Find ways to remind yourself to be more present throughout the day.



5

Understanding Sadness and Depression

Seven Symptoms of Depression

1. Constantly feeling sad, helpless, hopeless, or worthless
2. Little energy and motivation
3. Change in appetite and weight loss or gain
4. Trouble falling asleep, staying asleep, or waking up
5. Loss of interest in activities that used to be enjoyable
6. Difficulty concentrating, remembering, or making decisions
7. Thoughts about death and suicide*

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Less Helpful

"I know exactly how you feel."

Even if we have been through something very similar, it is always better to ask questions and listen to how the person feels.

"Just have faith; everything will work out."

Of course we should have faith, but that doesn't change whether something is painful or not. It's important to be present with the person.

"At least you ..."

When we start sentences with "at least," we minimize what the person has been through.

"God has a plan."

This can sound like we are trying to quickly solve the problem instead of really listening and loving.

"They're in a better place."

Saying this doesn't make the person miss his or her loved one any less.

More Helpful

"I don't know what to say right now, but I'm so glad you told me."

"Tell me about what you're feeling right now."

"I care about you."

"I'm here for you."

"It's OK to feel this way."

FOCUS ON THE SAVIOR

