



**YOUR
MENTAL
HEALTH**

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YOUR MENTAL HEALTH

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CHAPTER ONE

What is mental Health?

Let's first start with the definition of health. According to WHO, "Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity."

When we talk about "Mental," it refers to the mind, emotions, intellect, etc. It's the part of the human being that one can't hold physically. This part of our being is very powerful. The acts one sees physically is as a result of what has been conceived in the mind be it good or bad.

According to the World Health Organization, mental health is said to be "a state of well being in which the individual recognizes his or her abilities, can cope with the normal stress of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community".

A person is said to have a stable mental health when;

First, they recognize their own abilities

This point is quite interesting because many don't know their abilities. They don't know their strengths/weaknesses, they are not self-aware. Whatever the

world throws at them, they just go with it. Whatever rules the society has set for them or instructions family members/ friends give them, though may hurt them, they still go with it anyways. That everyone is doing the same thing doesn't make it right. When you recognize your abilities, it becomes easy to build on your strength and work on your weakness.

Secondly, one with a stable mental health is able to cope with the normal stress of life.

Life is full of ups and downs, various levels of stress. This could be, at work, business, home, relationship with people, etc. Everywhere you look, you see stress. I didn't know there was stress at work till I started working in a particular organization. At first, it was really tough, I began transferring my aggression to people around (which is a very poor coping mechanism) then I finally asked God for help (this, I should have done in the beginning).

I took time to study myself, what annoys me? What makes me happy? With this, I was able to develop a coping strategy that has been working perfectly for me. Even though the stress is still there, it feels like nothing to me now. It's important to apply your positive coping mechanism in all areas of life.

People are different, what one person can easily walk away from, another doesn't have that chance this is why it's important to stick to what works for

you. When you don't function well under stress your level of productivity is limited and this brings me to the third point;

Are you productive and fruitful when you work?

There is nothing as sweet as enjoying the fruit of your labour. Unfortunately, there are people who work so hard but at the end of the day, have nothing to show for it. If one works and the only sign of productivity is the salary the person earns, that's not productive enough. It's important to add value to your life be it at your place of work, learn new things, invest, develop ideas, etc.

Learning is a lifelong process and one idea when put into practice can make you a pace setter. While it's fine to have jobs that pay salaries, it's more important to keep learning new things and channel your creativity to develop your purpose on earth.

The final point is, are you making a contribution in your community?

This is strongly linked to being productive, creative and knowing your abilities. Until one has established this, it will be hard to effectively make an impact in your community. The reason being that, you need to take care of yourself first to effectively take care of another person.

For you to be in health, not only do you have to be physically and spiritually sound, you also need to be mentally sound. When people have a stable mental

health, they are able to control their emotions in a way that has no harm towards themselves or people around them.

These four points which would be explained later in this book, have given ideas of what it means to have a stable mental health.

As some already know, we are a 3 in one being. We are spirits, we have a soul and we live in our bodies and this is the reason we are able to function the way we do on earth.

Believe it or not, we have spiritual beings on earth and the reason we can't see them is because we use our physical eyes. For a spirit to function like man, the body is needed and when we talk about mental health, the soul/mind is the major component affected even though the other two areas are also affected.

Now, to focus on our mental health means to focus on our soul/mind. The soul/mind is the place where we process ideas (both good & bad). It connects the spirit and the body.

As regards mental health, there are two categories of people. First, those who know that everything's not alright with them as regards their mental health. People in this category are able to access help because they have accepted their

situation and are looking out for help, they are not in denial. The other group don't believe anything is wrong with them even though their actions say otherwise as a result, getting at a solution becomes difficult.

Our Views

Dear friend, what are your views on mental health? Do you know anyone involved or are you the person involved? Are you ashamed to speak out because of how you may be perceived? I know in some parts of the world, men don't normally own up to what they are going through because they could be perceived as weak. This is unfortunate as it has driven a number of people to their early grave.

The way people visualize mental health in our society is horrible. So much stigma has been attached to it despite it being a major cause of death world-wide. It's being said that every 40 seconds, someone in the world commits suicide and suicide is a product of poor mental health.

Poor mental health could go unnoticed; in this case one is able to function normally in day to day life but once in a while could go off. If not handled early, can get worse.

In the clinical setting, poor mental health could be seen in people with depression, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, personality disorder, eating

disorders, etc. As much as these cases have a strong hereditary link i.e. one's parent/relative having a history of poor mental health, there is always an underlying traumatic factor. These factors could be in the area of academics, job, marriage, abusive relationship, rape, death of a loved one, jail, and the list goes on and on.

The way one person handles a traumatic process differs from the other. Some are still able to function properly while others may break down immediately. Poor mental health has no respect for personality, influence or affluence. Therefore, it is important we recognise it when it begins to set in and seek for help in the right place.

As I said earlier on, people react differently to stressors. While one may find a maladaptive or a better way of coping, some may shut that part of their life up like "nothing happened" another could have a mental breakdown.

You are not the only person going through that challenge/ stressful condition. Others have gone through the same and come out victorious, your own case will not be different.

Relax, everything is going to be fine.

Let see some cases scenarios

One who has been in a place where multiple killings took place. A military man who has been to war or is constantly at the war front, seeing people die. He's lost some very dear colleague in the war and he's just lucky to be alive. What do you think his perception of life will be?

He may be grateful to be alive and treasure every moment of it, he may see life as nothing, one minute his friends are here the next minute they are gone or it may be in between both options. How do you think his mental state will be? How do you think he will respond to people around him?

One who has been molested by a known/unknown individual. The way such a person will perceive life will be different unless they find a healthy way of coping with it.

A number of health workers are likely to develop a poor mental state when they see patients dying on a regular basis.

There are many examples of traumatic experiences that could lead to a poor mental health. Being aware that you have a mental health issue and reaching out for help in the appropriate place is the best way to start/ help yourself.

I would love to hear other examples you have regarding traumatic experiences and how they can be helped. You don't know whose life you would be saving. You can send the email to our website address seen in the last page of this book.

CHAPTER TWO

How to know one has a poor mental health

Welcome to the second chapter that has to do with knowing someone has a poor mental health.

In daily life, it is not easy to locate someone with poor mental health especially those with mild to moderate symptoms but this becomes possible when they have severe symptoms. Although it is still possible to treat such individuals in severe states, the earlier one presents to the hospital, the better the prognosis.

Another point I would like to add is, people use the term depression loosely. That one is going through a series of changes does not automatically mean the person is depressed. I remember at some point in my life, when God was taking me through a series of changes, I stopped frequent communication with people, had to cut out some sort of friendship and focused more on God and myself.

During this period, I received a lot of revelation on who I am and what I needed to accomplish on earth and at the same time went through various forms of trials. People at that time believed I was depressed. They felt I was this way because

all the people around me, my friends, colleagues etc. were getting married and I hadn't. This was not the case at all.

To digress a bit, Inorder find your purpose and fulfil destiny, a time will come when you will need to go through the phase of re-moulding. It's inevitable. Some things would need to be removed from your life and others added to your life in order to walk in purpose.

The thing about this is, people will see you as weird, boring, etc. all because you are not going in the same direction as the world is. This road could be very lonely, you may even see yourself standing alone but the end result is priceless.

Take a look at life, people singled out in their generations didn't do what every other person was doing at that time. They had to sacrifice a lot but their names still ring bells. No one hears much about those who follow the general population because they leave planet earth as general people.

Back to the topic,

A person who has experienced a sudden traumatic event, it is normal for them to go through the various phases of grief (denial, anger, bargaining, depression and acceptance) but when it gets longer than normal, then it becomes a problem.

This doesn't mean you won't get angry or have symptoms of depression once in

a while but once it gets longer than the expected time and worsens, something needs to be done.

Now, let me explain each of these stages in detail using the example of a young girl called Josephine who went through a traumatic experience.

Denial: The first time Josephine experienced this evil occurrence, she couldn't believe it actually happened. She didn't even want to think about it.

Some people stay in the denial phase for a very long time. They don't want to think or talk about it. They pretended like it didn't happen. This is risky. Unknowing to you, you are building up unhealthy emotions which will not only affect your mental and physical health but also harm people around you. If not handled early, one can totally break down. Some may also experience a personality change as a result of this. They want to leave who they are, the occurrence they had behind and become someone else entirely.

Anger: This is when someone starts asking the "Why" questions. Why me? Why did this happen to this and that person, what did the person do wrong? etc.

It is better to let out your anger in a controlled way (i.e. not hurting yourself/damaging properties or people around you) than to keep it inside like what the person in denial would do. When you let out toxic emotions, it gives

room for freshness. At this stage, it's also advised to talk with people you can trust regarding the issue

Bargaining: Here, one begins to say things like, if I do this, I will get better, if they do this and that, everything will return to normal. For someone who has been diagnosed with terminal cancer, the person could be like, if I'm given chemotherapy, there is a chance that I will get better, so no worries.

Depression: This is the point where such an individual feels numb. They no longer see anything wonderful about life. They don't feel like doing anything any more. All they can see is a dark cloud around them. Nothing excites them any more. This is the phase where friends/relatives begin to notice things becoming abnormal in the person's life. There is a possibility of such a person entertaining the idea of suicide. When a person gets to this level, it's important to take the person to the hospital for proper treatment.

Acceptance: This is the phase where one no longer fights the idea of what has happened but finally comes to terms with it.

The five stages of grief don't actually occur step wisely as I have highlighted here, one can come before the other.

The term mental health encompasses various health conditions with a number of them requiring the intervention of a Doctor/Psychiatrist, psychologist, etc.

Each of these conditions has its own signs and symptoms. Here I will be discussing symptoms common to most of them.

Before I start, I would like to list a few of these illnesses starting with depression, anxiety disorder, bipolar disorder, personality disorder, schizophrenia, to name a few. People having these will need to be managed by their doctors in order to prevent any form of harm.

The symptoms are as follows:

1. Not being excited about life: People have various expectations, not being able to meet such expectations gets them upset. At that moment, they may not be excited about things happening around them but with time, it changes. This is not the kind of excitement I'm referring to as regards mental health.

Not being excited in this instance takes a longer course/ duration. Also, the excitement is not just about a single thing but numerous things including life it's self.

Are there people like this? Yes, very well. You may have gone through such at some point in your life or going through it or you know someone in this position. It's very hard for them to be motivated or productive. People in this state prefer

to be alone. They think about how life has been unfair to them, all the negative things but leave out the positive things.

As a result of this feeling numb or “trying to exist in life” way of thinking, they become alcoholics, they start smoking, using drugs thereby killing themselves slowly. The product of their mental health also has a negative impact on their spiritual and physical health.

If care is not taken, such a person may become depressed as this is a prominent sign of depression.

Speaking to a trusted friend, seeing a doctor, psychologist will help in the long run.

2. Withdrawal: Here, there is a change in a person’s previous way of functioning. This individual will gradually slip away from friends and will become uneasily quiet compared to his/ her previous self. It’s quite easy to pick this in an extrovert. Although some may try to hide these feelings, a close friend will know that all is not well. Also, their level of productivity will decrease.

When we are alone, there is a tendency to think about all kinds of things both good and bad. One being distracted affects this process. Now imagine what being alone will do to someone with negative thoughts, suicidal thoughts are common.

The mind is very powerful, it's the place where thoughts are conceived while the body takes actions. Learning to control your thought/ channeling it in a positive direction will give you a huge advantage in life.

3. Decreased appetite: This is different from one who falls sick and doesn't have the appetite to eat. This is a prolonged symptom that starts after a traumatic event. Just like not being anxious about life, the same goes for eating. No food is appealing to them. They manage to eat a bit when forced to and this attitude results in them losing weight.

4. Weight loss, because they are not eating well.

5. Sometimes they might find it difficult to sleep at night while some others actually experience increased sleep.

6. Suicidal thoughts: When a person starts having thoughts about killing themselves, it is important that they seek medical help thereby preventing themselves from irreversible destruction.

Sometimes the notes and signals people leave on social media points to their mental health state, other times it's the way they speak about life.

Other symptoms specific to some mental health illnesses include;

Shortened sleep duration: The hours of sleep in a day is shortened, e.g. 2-4 hours and they feel very refreshed when they wake up.

- They are more talkative than their normal self.
- They eat a lot and as a result gain weight.
- They do so many things at a time and this makes them not to do well in projects or even complete projects.
- They could have an unbelievable amount of energy.

These are some of the symptoms we see in people with poor mental health, don't forget that most times the symptoms may not be as pronounced for people to recognise until they get out of hand.

There are some other groups of people who don't have the symptoms mentioned above but they see themselves as inferior, can't cope with the stress of life, have no idea what being productive means and every other mental health challenge one can think of. They also need to work on their mental health.

The next chapter on taking care of your mental health will give insight on how to handle it.

Why is it important to know when someone has a poor mental health?

- 1) It will save one from getting angry unnecessarily. People with poor mental health, especially those who developed a maladaptive way of coping could end up transferring their depression to others. (Sometimes they may not even know that the underlying cause is a past traumatic event). Sometimes these people could end up becoming manipulative, insensitive, impulsive, and have a negative attitude towards life. If someone ends up associating with them be it partnership, friendship, etc. it will all end up in anger and frustration.

This could be difficult because some people with mental health issues don't even believe that anything is wrong with them. How will you be able to find a solution when you don't even believe that there is a problem? Knowing/being aware that one's mental state is not alright, will make it easier to handle such a person with kindness despite the tantrum he/she may be throwing around.

2) By knowing/recognising these symptoms, you will be able to help someone.

3) Mental health is an aspect of health that people don't really like to talk about. It's been associated with so much stigma. Those with poor mental health need trusted people, people they can share their concerns with. They don't need to be experts; all they need to have are listening ears. That alone will play a major role in their healing process. These people are like you and me, precious souls that have wonderful destinies to fulfil. Their only mistake was having a stressor and handling the stressor they encountered differently.

Once they seek help and get liberated, they become better individuals and will be able to effectively help those in similar situations as they once were.

4) Not only will you be saving the person from themselves but also the people around them. I have witnessed someone with a mental breakdown. Not only was he a threat to himself, other people also felt the impact. Noticing this early, will be doing a lot of good.

Before concluding this chapter, I would love you to share other ways you think people with mental health challenges can be identified.

CHAPTER THREE

How to take care of Your Mental Health

From the last two chapters, we already know what mental health is and some symptoms that could be present. It is time to find out how you and I can take care of our mental health.

Even though mental health is all about the mind/soul, It is important to take care of your mental health both spiritually and physically.

Before I start, I would like to highlight some major points.

First and foremost, you and I came to this world alone and would leave alone. It's impossible for babies to be delivered at the same time even in multiple pregnancies, there are usually some seconds/ minutes apart. Each and everyone of us will stand before God to be judged for every good or evil thing we do on earth. At that time, there will be no opportunity to apportion blame to your spouse, parent or any other human being therefore, whatever decision you make in life, be ready for the consequence that follows.

Stop looking to people for approval, don't engage in wrong doings because of eye service or what people may say. At the end of the day, it comes back to you.

Secondly, aside from God who created you, no one knows you better than you know yourself. No one can take care of you better than you can take care of yourself (this excludes children). Therefore, love yourself, pamper yourself, don't be too hard on yourself, be kind to yourself. When you take care of yourself, you won't do things that will harm your body, soul and spirit.

If you've worked hard, then relax. Unfortunately, some don't believe that they have a right to peace of mind and happiness. They think having a hardship mentality is the normal way of life. Finding time to relax and breathe is not the same as being lazy.

Thirdly, whatever you are reaping now is a result of what was sown in previous times be it good or bad because whatever you sow, you will definitely reap. Some people call this karma. This rule can't be changed because God made it so. Whatever good or evil you do to people, the same will come back to you. It is possible to see an evil man flourishing, but it's only a matter of time before he starts to fall, he can't escape it. It is therefore safe to say, do good at all times.

The fourth point is, you are solely responsible for the outcome of your life. This is very true. I don't really know about other parts of the world but I know there are grown ups in their 30's, 40's who still expect their family members/ relatives

to take care of them, they get upset when they don't get the care they want. Whatever decision anyone makes in life be it good or bad, he/she should get ready for the results. On the day of reckoning, you will be all by yourself, take responsibility for your life.

You are unique in your own way, you are your own original. Stop wishing to be like this or that person rather develop the gifts that God has given you . This is what will bring sweetness around your life and make others want to be like you. You won't know how beautiful the gift God has given you is until you find it and then do something about it.

Cut away from people not going in the same direction as you are. Once you've chosen to live right and move in the right direction, you can't hang out with people going in the wrong direction if not, they can pull you back. Once they've seen you changed, they have the choice whether or not to follow you. You can also pray for them.

When you've made the choice to fulfill destiny, there are usually distractions and one needs to be focused to make it.

Stay around those who fear God and have fruits to that effect because the company you keep determines what accompanies you.

Careless about what people say about you be it good or bad because human beings are very unstable. They praise you this minute, the next minute they are cursing you. Following their actions and minding them will cause your mental health to go up (happy) and down (sad) and this is very destructive. Be indifferent about their praises and curses/abuses. Have it at the back of your mind that you are entitled to your opinion just as they are entitled to theirs and yours is superior.

Don't be kind to people just for the sake of what you may receive from them in future. Be kind to everyone both small, big , rich or poor, treat them equally. No human being is superior to the other regardless of their status or wealth. Don't expect anything in return from anyone you give to rather, look to your Heavenly Father to reward you abundantly.

Finally, you are important, you were not created by mistake (God doesn't make mistakes). You are beautiful/ handsome, you are loved. Your Heavenly Father, the creator of the universe loves you so much. He says you are the apple of His

eyes, He watches you. Don't settle for less. There are so many awesome things God says about you and this can be found in His Word (Bible) but you need to know Him first to have access to them all.

These are some of the points I would like you to have at the back of your mind. Meditate on them and be conscious about them. True words such as these help your mental health and life is all about how you make it for yourself.

Spiritual care of your mental health

A brief background about God and Man

The spirit is the most important part of our being. The spirit is the real you and can function well in eternity without the body. People who have had near death experience and had their spirit leave them can explain this better.

I am a Christian, a lover of Jesus and will further elaborate on mental health issues using this point of view.

Who is man? How did we come to be?

In the beginning of the world, the earth was without form, the spirit of God hovered around the waters. At each point in time before anything was formed, God declared the Word, he spoke it into existence. We can see this all through Genesis 1. In verse 26 of Genesis 1, we are told how man was created. In essence, God created man to look just like Himself. How did He do this? Job 33:4 says “The Spirit of God has made me; the breath of Almighty gives me life.”

Without the breath of the Almighty God, one can no longer function on earth. One is dead when the spirit man leaves him/her.

God is our creator, our maker, our Father. Our parents are just custodians to help guide us, the same way we are custodians to our children. For those without earthly parents or those having issues with their parents, your Heavenly Father never left you (Psalm 27:10). He still loves you and has His eyes on you regardless of what atrocity you may have committed. That’s why I can’t

overemphasize the importance of having a personal relationship with God. I am not talking about playing religion (because that's what is happening with a lot of people).

Another thing we should know about God is, He is not bound by time. His time is different from ours. There is a song that comes to my mind which says, "He created time, stepped out of time to control the time He created." That's just the summary of it all. God is a God of all possibilities. What man sees as a mountain, God doesn't see it as anything. I'm so passionate about people knowing who God is and having a personal relationship with Him because it will save them from a life of difficulties and uncertainties. I'm not saying this for saying sake but from experience. People who hold God tightly and never let go have seen something that others haven't seen. May God open your eyes to also see it, Amen.

There are two realms in life. The Spiritual and the Physical/earthly realm. For anything to take place physically, it has already occurred in the spirit i.e. the spiritual realm is faster than the physical realm. Just like there is good and evil in the physical realm, we also have good and evil forces in the spiritual realm. The

devil is a spirit, God is a Spirit, man is a spirit but he functions on earth because of his body.

This book explains ways of taking care of your mental health spiritually and physically. To have complete restoration, it's important to stick with the two.

Before I continue, let me share this testimony.

A man was diagnosed with bone marrow cancer. He was in the hospital and connected to a church program for the communion service. He didn't have the necessary things for communion so he used biscuit and fanta as the flesh and blood. He took it in Faith (Your faith is very important) and he was completely healed.

Now, bone marrow cancer has a survival rate of about 5 years. Possibly he would have started chemo/radiotherapy and this would have made him feel better and given him more time to live but it can never beat complete healing. Complete healing = God giving you another chance at life. The reason why people are not aware that they have been given another opportunity to live, especially those that are sick and have been condemned to die is either because they are ignorant of the fact or they don't believe in divine healing. As a result of

this they get cheated by the devil and end up paying double for what Jesus already paid for.

Medical science is wonderful, I thank God for it. In fact I tell people that if their faith is not up to the level of receiving their healing they should obey their doctors so they don't die trying although, it is important not to forgo the fact that there is a better alternative to this.

Now, every good thing we have/experience is from God. Whatever does not glorify God in us is not of God. James 1:17 says "Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows." Even though in our walk with God, He will allow us go through some tests/trials for us to develop and be positioned appropriately for our inheritance, we should be sensitive in the spirit to recognise when an attack is of the devil and use our spiritual weapons to war. These weapons can be seen in Ephesians 6:10-18.

How to take care of your mental health spiritually

A) Salvation: Every one believes in a higher power. Everyone knows that a force beyond our control is in existence. People believe in the Almighty, they believe in God but their perception of this God differs. People have the fear that

He can kill one at any time, some believe He is out to get them, some even attribute all the evil occurrences that take place on earth to Him. They say things like He could have done this, he could have stopped that from happening. They forget that man has a will power given to him by God and the devil is also on a mission to destroy mankind, he doesn't want to go down alone. Yes, you may have lost some things but God is the reason why you haven't lost it all. The good news is, God is a God of restoration.

You can't know God if you don't know His son Jesus Christ. Jesus is the way, the truth and the light; No one can come to the Father except through Jesus (John 14:6). I would like to state that we have God the Father, God the Son (Jesus) and God the Holy Spirit (who is our helper/guide and is with us on earth). The three are known as the trinity and were all present in the beginning, before the foundation of the world. How do I know this?

- 1) When God the father was speaking in Genesis 1, He kept saying let "US".
Meaning He was not alone.
- 2) Genesis 1:2 tells us that the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters when the earth was formless and empty.

3) The book of John explains the existence of God the Son (Jesus) in the foundation of the world. John 1:1-15 points to the perfect example of Jesus.

If you truly want to be saved, you need to know God and you can't know God without knowing and accepting Jesus.

Adam, who was the first man, had a wonderful relationship with God. When Adam and Eve disobeyed God in the garden of Eden, sin entered into the world and this brought a separation between God and man. Not only that, the dominion of the earth that was initially given to Adam was automatically transferred to the devil that deceived Eve.

Even till this moment, the devil is known as the god of this world. Someone may ask, why couldn't God take it back? Well, the gifts and callings of God are without repentance but God has a plan. God will destroy the devil once and forever when the time He leased out to man (Adam) to have dominion on earth expires. This is why the devil is doing all he can to get as many people as possible into his kingdom because he doesn't want to go down alone.

All through the old testament of the Bible, we see various ways and things man has done to make atonement for sins in order to receive God's blessings. God

gave instructions to Moses on what to do and how to go about it despite all this, man still fell short. killing and using the blood of animals didn't do the job.

God sent His only begotten son to be the sacrificial lamb instead of animals. Through the action of Jesus, His death, burial and resurrection, through the precious blood of Jesus that was shed for our sins we are now restored back to our formal estate/ dominion that we had with God but this time around, it's in Christ. This is why, whenever we want to exercise this authority against the powers of darkness, we do so in Christ Jesus. The devil still works to oppress people with the authority he stole but we have a superior authority in Jesus that the devil can't stand.

Jesus was sent to earth in the form of man, hated by the people around him; I remember when He told them that He was there even before Abraham was created, they wanted to stone Him, but that's the truth. His mission was to reconcile man back to God which He did through His death and resurrection. When He died after 3 days He rose again and finally ascended back to Heaven. The way Jesus ascended is the way He will descend and His coming back will be to take the Saints with Him. This is called the rapture. The account of Jesus can be seen in the Book of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.

Without Jesus you can't have access to God the Father of light & when you have light darkness disappear. The world is getting darker and darker and this will get worse but there is a way of escape which is in Jesus. Come to Jesus today (Salvation Prayer).

Once you've surrendered to God, it's important that you live a consecrated life, a righteous life well pleasing to God. Since you now know God, it will be possible to have access to a sound mind thereby making poor mental health a thing of the past.

B) Love: In the world full of darkness and hatred, love is the light that conquers anything at any time. Do you know that God is love? Yes, He is a God of justice but also a God of love.

If you want to live a triumphant life on earth, besides from salvation, the next key to have is love. Everything in the kingdom of God has love as it's foundation. How do I know this?

Firstly, the commandment God wrote by himself and gave to Moses has love as it's basis. It was summarized into two by Jesus in Matthew 22: 37-40. In essence, if you have the God kind of love, you won't be able to go against the commandment given to Moses by God.

Secondly, 1 Corinthians 13: 1-3 says that if you have all these wonderful prophetic gifts but have no love, it all amounts to nothing. This shows how important love is. Verse 4 shows us the attribute/ characteristics of the God kind of love. Verse 13 also shows love to be the greatest between faith, hope and love. In summary, one can say that love is the master key to a world of exploits.

In order for faith, hope, giving, prayer and fasting to work, love must be present and it's the Holy Spirit that shares this love abroad in our hearts (Romans 5: 5).

Therefore, we need to ask God to baptize us with the Spirit of love so we can be productive in life and make Heaven at the end of our journey on earth. When you have Jesus and the Spirit of love dwelling in you, then you have God dwelling in you.

When you have God dwelling in you, every contrary spirit including mental illness will vacate.

In Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, Jesus dealt with a number of these infirmities. Just as nature abhors vacuum, our being also abhors vacuum. It's either you are filled with the Spirit of God or have the devil and his agents in there. It can't be both at the same time as it's impossible to serve God and mammon.

When you love God and your neighbour as yourself as God commanded, you won't need to engage in so many prayers before you receive speedy answers to prayers. Let's discuss the 3 types of love

- 1) **Love God:** This means you love Him for who He is whether He does something for you or not. Loving God means loving righteousness and hating unrighteousness, wanting to please Him in every area of life, advancing His kingdom on earth through prayers, soul winning, giving towards kingdom projects, etc. You can't say that you love God (who you don't see) when you don't love your fellow man who you see.
- 2) **Love yourself:** before loving your neighbour, you would need to love yourself. It is impossible to hate yourself and show love to others. Therefore, love and value yourself. Treat yourself the way you want others to treat you but be disciplined.
- 3) **Love your neighbour:** Who is your neighbour? Your fellow human being on earth. The lady shopping at the grocery, the man who takes care of gardening in your yard. In summary, the people around you are your neighbours, be kind to all.

C) The Word: To take care of your mental health spiritually, studying the Word of God regularly should be a thing of joy, the Bible should be your favourite book.

There is deep revelation in the Word of God that transforms lives. It is the manual for living on earth and it's also the place where you can see the picture of what your future looks like. The Word of God shows you who you really are in Christ and this alone will help in your self development especially in the area of self-esteem which is vital to mental health. When you are in right standing with God and your faith is in place, you can use the name of Jesus and the Word of God to wage war against the enemy. The results are always positive.

Whenever we get ready to study the Word of God, it is important that we ask the Spirit of God (who is the custodian of God's Word) to open our eyes to behold wondrous things out of thy law (Psalm 119: 18). This enables us to see beyond the letters, it helps us see what God is saying to us per time. When you have an area of concern, take the Word of God in that area, reminding Him of His promise because God said we should put Him in remembrance (Isaiah 43: 26).

Finally, the Word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joint and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart (Hebrew 4: 12).

This verse is very powerful and has a lot of revelation to it especially for those in search of healing in the mind and body.

When you study the Word of God and see who He is through the scriptures, your life and mental health will take a new turn, it will begin gradually. The Word of God renews our minds and once this process starts, things gradually become better.

D) Faith: Now, faith is the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen (Hebrews 11:1). This means that you know and are 100% sure that even though you can't see the results of what you asked God for, it's already settled/ done. Without faith, it is impossible to please God. If one has faith as tiny as a mustard seed, one can move mountains (Matthew 17: 20). Those who were healed in the new testament, Jesus made it known to us that it was according to their faith.

Jesus, the son of God who was sent to earth by The Father couldn't really perform miracles in His own home town because of the people's unbelief, they were too familiar with Him.

Someone could say, "well since He is God, He should be able to heal them whether they have faith or not". Don't forget that God has given man the will

power to choose what he wants and what he doesn't. When you don't know what to choose, you ask God. This creates intimacy.

Faith is the spiritual hand that we use in receiving physical gifts be it healing, deliverance, breakthrough, etc. It bridges the gap between the physical and spiritual realm. The stronger/ longer your hand of faith is, the faster it becomes to receive these gifts therefore it's important that we learn to grow our faith.

Faith is really a mystery. It's not something we can understand with our natural minds but the proves are everywhere.

A woman who had her womb/ uterus removed as a result of some medical issues got pregnant and delivered a child, not surrogate but by herself. Now, how can this be explained? What science/ medicine can one use to explain this? Faith in God causes such miracles to happen.

Without faith, one can't receive all that God has promised, that is why we need to grow our faith. We can do this through meditating on the Word of God. If there is any area of concern to you, search the Word of God in that area, remind God of what He says and do what is written. For every promise God has given, there is always an instruction on what to do in the Word of God. Once your part is played in faith, you can be sure that God will bring it to Pass. Faith also grows by listening to anointed men/ women of God be it in person through tapes or books.

With faith, one is able to change the course of any occurrence taking place in the spiritual realm before it manifests physically because the spiritual realm is faster and superior to the physical realm.

E) Prayer: This is the way we communicate with God. When we make a request in prayer, it's important to do so according to His will (which can be seen in His Word) and in faith (1 John 5: 14, Mark 11: 24). Although at the time of asking, it may seem nothing is happening, patience is key. In a short while, you will see the manifestation.

There are various types of prayer, e.g petition, enquiry, intercession, supplication, warfare, thanksgiving, etc. All these have their benefits and are necessary at different times but the prayer for the kingdom of God should be at all times (Matthew 6: 9-15).

For prayers to be effectively answered, somethings have to be in place;

It should be heartfelt: This is vital, you don't need to take a particular posture or scream out loud before your prayer is answered. If the prayer is not from the heart, everything else is a waste of time. James 5: 16 says(AMPC);

“Confess to one another therefore your faults (your slips, your false steps, your offenses, your sins) and pray (also) for one another, that you may be healed and

restored (to a spiritual tone of mind and heart). **The earnest (heartfelt, continued) prayer of a righteous man makes tremendous power available (dynamic in its working)**".

Pray in the name of Jesus: As I wrote earlier, we can only have access to God through Jesus Christ. When we ask in the name of Jesus, He hears us (John 14: 14). It's like the signature on a document.

Faith: This is a vital content to prayer, it's with your faith that you receive things therefore, before you pray, while praying and after praying, believe that God has heard you.

The Word: Go with what the Word of God says in that area, reminding Him of His Word (1 John 5:14-15). God's Word is God's will.

Thanksgiving: In all things, give thanks for it is the will of God. Thank God for answering you even though you are yet to see results (Philippians 4: 6).

If one needs to generate more power, then fasting should be added (Matthew 17: 21). When you fast, your body/ flesh is subdued but your spirit man becomes sensitive to the things of the spirit and this makes receiving from God easy. It is important to study the Word of God and pray during the period of fasting if not could be regarded as a hunger strike.

F) Confession: We are not only to believe the Word of God but confess it with our mouth because we have whatsoever we say (Mark 11: 23). Words are powerful, the creation of the world started by speaking. God began speaking into existence and we are made in the very image and likeness of God. God has given us a mouth and a wisdom which the enemy cannot withstand (Luke 21: 15). It's therefore necessary that we use this to our advantage and confess positively. The Word of God also says that we should decree a thing, and it shall be established (Job 22: 28). Your words help in moulding your future. Keep speaking boldly until you see what you want fully delivered.

G) Kingdom service: This is about advancing the kingdom of God on earth. Matthew 6: 33 tells us more about this. What does it say? "But seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well". When you make advancing the kingdom of God your priority for living, other things will fall in line naturally.

There have been so many testimonies of how people focused on kingdom advancement endeavours e.g prayer, reaching out to the lost and they experienced a turnaround in the area they had been believing God for. This should not be surprising because the Word of God is true and abides forever.

Matthew 6: 33 and Exodus 23: 25- 26 gives a clear picture of what you are entitled to when you engage in kingdom service. All services have their rewards but soul winning (either on the prayer altar or reaching out to the lost) has both heavenly and earthly rewards.

H) Praise: This is a kingdom mystery you engage with when you don't know what else to do. A lifestyle of praise makes one experience breakthrough in all areas. why? God inhabits the praises of His people (Psalm 22:3). When God inhabits your praise, you become a carrier of divine presence. With divine presence, every barrier is cleared off your path. Let's see what God's presence does in Psalm 114 vs 4-7 (NIV);

“4) the mountains leaped like rams, the hills like lambs.

5) Why was it, sea, that you fled? Why, Jordan, did you turn back?

6) Why, mountains, did you leap like rams, you hills, like lambs?

7) Tremble, earth, at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the God of Jacob”.

This is what the presence of God does.

Praise is a very strong weapon that people are yet to get familiar with. It's what you engage with when nothing else works.

CHAPTER FOUR

People's Grievances against God.

I have heard people say, "why couldn't God stop this or do this". To answer these questions, I will like to start from the beginning i.e the creation of the first man, Adam.

Adam who was the son of God (directly) was the first man God created. God's initial plan for mankind was to enjoy life, have dominion on earth and take care of the things around hence the garden of Eden. This is what happens in Heaven, no sickness or sorrow unlike hell which is the opposite.

God gave mankind a number of years to reign on earth, as a result of the sin committed by Adam and Eve, the dominion of man on earth was transferred to the devil. If you notice, all through the book of Genesis, there was no place the devil was recognized in the creation of the earth let alone having dominion on earth but 2 Corinthians 4: 4 stated satan to be the god of this world.

2 Corinthians 4: 4(New Living Translation)- satan, who is the god of this world, has blinded the minds of those who don't believe. They are unable to see the

glorious light of the good news. They don't understand this message about the glory of Christ, who is the exact likeness of God.

Furthermore, why would the devil tempt Jesus in Matthew 4: 8-9 by telling Him that he will give Him all the kingdom of the world and their splendor if He bowed down and worshipped him? This just points to the fact that the devil is the god of this world and this authority was hijacked from Adam. Since God doesn't go back on His Word, Adam's period/ lease has to come to an end before the devil is dealt with appropriately and thrown into hell.

Now, for the time being, God in His infinite mercy had pity on man-kind and found a way to deliver man out of the hands of the devil through the ransom of Jesus His very own son.

Romans 5: 19 says, "for as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one man shall many be made righteous". Those who are believers in Christ, the dominion and authority that Adam lost to the devil, we've regained it in Christ. This is the reason why the devil fears those who know their rights in Christ and we always get remarkable results when we use the name and the blood of Jesus. These are weapons the devil can't stand against.

Those not in Christ are still slaves to the devil and have him ruling them. This is why we see so much wickedness and hatred in this world. Although we live in this wicked world, we are not of it.

Now, back to people's grievances against God. For us to understand how God works, there are some points to take note of;

- 1) Despite the fact that everything on earth and in Heaven belongs to God, there are still boundaries. God doesn't harass people like the devil does, He respects His Word, His covenants and the will power. God keeps His Word (Joshua 21: 45) and the gifts and callings of God are without repentance (Romans 11: 29). This is the reason why Adam's time must lease out before God can destroy the devil once and forever. When we see those who were once men of God still performing miracles despite the fact that they have backslidden, it's because of the gifts still at work in them and this is very risky. That one is performing signs and wonders does not necessarily mean that the person is a child of God.
- 2) Those who are children of God are under God's wings and protection. The devil has no right to harm them except for certain circumstances; a) If they sin without repentance (this automatically makes them leave God's protection), b) If God wants to test one's faithfulness like He tested Job.

Most times those who are sensitive to the leading of God receive the signal when God wants to try their faith. When you walk with God, you are aware of it, He prepares you before time. Just like God told Abraham His plan to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah, He is still the same yesterday, today and forever.

- 3) Sometimes God speaks to us i.e both believers and unbelievers. He warns us about unseen circumstances which could come in various forms including dreams, some people also call this intuition. Disobedience to His warnings has cost some their lives and despite this, people still end up blaming God for everything.
- 4) There are people who are unbelievers and people know this yet they managed to escape certain things that others were not fortunate to. In most cases, these people have/had relatives who prayed for them and had a covenant with God concerning them. God is too faithful to fail but His mercies should not be taken for granted. The grace He has given you will not last forever, it's therefore important to change your ways because you have no idea when you'll run short.

A man gave a testimony of how he went to hell. He saw all that was going on and was about to join when suddenly, he heard a voice saying that it is not his

time yet. He later realized the reason for escaping this terrible circumstance was because his mother had a covenant with God. She prayed for her children 3 times a day for many years that none of them will go to hell.

The testimony of another boy who was attacked by kidnappers. They shot at him several times but the bullet didn't go through. When the kidnappers left him alone, he heard a voice behind him saying that he was saved because of his mother. His mother happened to be a widow who always kept God's sanctuary (Church) clean. Prayer really works and God sees our labour.

5) As believers, some things may happen beyond our control. Despite praying and doing all the things we know to do. We may not get the answer we expect but never give up. Always remember that all things work together for good to them that love God (Romans 8: 28).

There is this testimony of a pastor whose son was sick. He prayed for his son's healing, other members joined him in prayer but later, the son died. The pastor was in deep sorrow after this happened until he had an encounter that changed his life. In that vision, he saw his son and Jesus beside him. He later found out that God actually answered the pastor's prayers of the son's healing but the boy wasn't willing to return to earth. God knows what is best for us.

Summary of having a stable mental health using spiritual means

- 1) Surrender to Jesus and become a child of light because darkness, including mental illness can't stand light.
- 2) Keep walking according to God's Word which is the light of the gospel. In order for your light to keep burning, it's important to keep fueling yourself with the Word of God.
- 3) Pray always, not only when you have a need. Use the weapon of prayer and fasting when you seem to be going through hard times. Prayer of enquiry is also important when you get confused about what decision to take.
- 4) Don't forget the weapon of love both for God and man, this is the master key to all other doors. When you spread love and joy to the people around you, it's only natural that it will come back to you.
- 5) Because all we see has its source in the spiritual realm, we need strong faith to make our spiritual blessings become a reality physically.
- 6) Keep working for God through kingdom service and He will remain faithful to you.

7) The weapon of praise brings God into our situation. It's what you engage with when you've tried all and nothing seems to be working. When you feel down, give God praise and take note of the changes that occur.

CHAPTER FIVE

Taking care of your mental health physically.

As earlier stated, in the development of a poor mental health, there is always a stressor/ traumatic event that is linked to it. Things to note about the stressor

-The stressor can be a one time event like the death of a loved one or something recurrent, e.g molestation, unemployment, war, etc.

-The level of stress differs.

-Also, the way people react to these stressors differ. What one person may take as nothing serious, another may drown in it.

How to take care of your mental health physically

Locate the stressor: As surprising as this may seem, a number of people are not aware that the reason they function poorly as regards their mental health is because of something that happened sometime ago. Others are aware of what happened, some even relive the experience daily. When people behave in a particular way e.g being negative about almost everything, hating a particular gender, etc. there is usually an occurrence that precipitates such. While some people don't need to go deep in search of the stressor, others need to go years back. As painful as the memory is, it is important to locate the stressor and be aware of it because this makes the healing process possible. Once the healing process of your mind begins, the dark areas become lighted.

Spend less time thinking about it: I believe you should be aware of the traumatic event but don't spend time thinking about it. Dwelling on such occurrences could cause sadness, anger and all forms of negative emotions not good for the mental health.

Some people may think this is selfish especially if it has to do with the loss of a loved one. That's not true, you have them in your heart and will always do. Reducing the amount of time you spend thinking about the stressor will do you a lot of good. Not only will you be helping yourself, but eventually you will be able to speak about the occurrence in a better light without hurting yourself.

All this takes a process. You can replace the time used in thinking about the situation by doing something fun and productive. It's only one who is alive and sane that can make things happen. Let me illustrate my point.

Person A can come from dwelling on the stressor, getting angry, damaging his/her mental health, channeling the negative energy to people around, having a bad perception about life and zero productive level. Person B can start from dwelling on the stressor, getting angry, damaging his/her mental health but then changes by choosing to do something about it, engaging a positive coping mechanism, becoming a pro at it, beginning to see the good in that bad situation. When he/she gets to this level, it will be possible to take advantage of the situation by using it to help others who are passing through similar situations. This results in a highly productive and happy life because whatever good you do to people will surely come back to you.

Person B is the best example to follow. For healing to take place, it's important to know what caused the change in your mental health and then look for a way out. Being aware of the stressor and choosing the best way forward rather than dwelling on the negative emotions will give you a happy ending.

Speak out: It's way better to speak out than to die in silence. look for someone who is trusted and speak with him/her. You may be surprised that what you are going through, someone close to you has gone through the same. The person who has already been there understands and will give better advice.

Sharing your deepest concern with a trusted person lessens your burden drastically. I've still not found the science behind this but it makes one feel lighter. The Emphasis is on a trusted person because some people should not know details about you. Not everyone who laughs with you has good intentions. Some may try to use it against you in the form of blackmail or go around announcing it to the world.

Whatever you do, speak to the right person, look for people that have gone through such, speak to your doctor, psychologist, it gets better when you do so. You don't know who has the right words/ solution to give if you don't speak out. I remember speaking to people who were going through difficult times in their lives, a little word, brighten them up and helped them see life in a better perspective.

I had a colleague who was facing some kind of difficulty especially in the place of work and this was affecting his health. Of all I said to him, one thing stood out, "in life you have to take care of yourself, God forbid anything happens, the

highest that will be done is one minute silence and after that, life moves on and the person's vacant position becomes replaced immediately". This was just the word he needed to hear.

You can also read books/ listen to recordings of people who had similar challenges and find out what they did.

Develop yourself: Know who you are. Low self-esteem is one factor that can make one develop a poor mental health. Self development is very important, not just for you, but people around you. If you don't value yourself, you can't value the people around you.

By working on yourself, you are indirectly engaging the stressor. Know your strength, weaknesses, what brings you joy, your purpose, your perception about life, what do you enjoy doing, etc.

When talking about self development, it comprises the spiritual, mental and physical development. All these must be present to attain the maximum result.

Spiritual development: Since man is principally a spirit, spiritual development is like the life wire to other forms of development. Once you get it right here, the remaining 2 areas i.e the mental and physical health will align easily.

How can I develop myself spiritually? By studying God's Word, seeing who He says you are in His Word. In order to see this, you will need the spirit of God to

open your eyes. If not, what you'll be reading are the letters of the Word which do no good. Reading the letters of God's Word is like reading a novel/ story book. It doesn't change/ add value to your life but when you have access to the spirit of God behind the Word, the supernatural takes place. This is when people actually see their desires fulfilled.

2 Corinthians 3: 6 (NIV)says;

“He has made us competent as ministers of a new covenant not of the letter but of the Spirit, for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life”. This is why it is important to ask the Holy Spirit to open your eyes to behold wondrous things out of thy law when you are about to study the Word of God (Psalm 119:18).

Other ways to develop yourself spiritually are, listening to anointed tapes and reading the books of men/ women of God, having a relationship with God and obeying what He says to you personally and in His Word.

Let me ask this question, do you know who you are? It's impossible to take good care of yourself if you don't know who you are.

For those still trying to figure out who they are, let me tell you who God (the one who made you) says you are;

- 1) You are not created by mistake regardless of what your parents tell you or the circumstance you find yourself in. With God, nothing is a mistake.

- 2) You have a great destiny to fulfill on earth. There is a reason why you were placed on earth and that reason isn't small at all (1 Corinthians 2:9-10).
- 3) Your earthly parents are custodians. The one who really owns you is God and He loves you so dearly. The good things others don't see about you, He sees it clearly and will reward you in due season (Psalm 27:10).
- 4) If you are in Christ Jesus, you are a king/queen and also have a joint inheritance in heaven with Jesus (Romans 8: 16- 18).
- 5) God calls you the salt of the earth Matthew 5:13- 16 (please search for the properties/ importance of salt).
- 6) You are the light of the World Matthew 5: 14, i.e a trail blazer, a path finder, a pace setter.
- 7) He says that anyone who touches you, touches the apple of His eyes (Zechariah 2: 8).

These are just a few among many others. To know more about what God thinks of you search the Bible.

Don't listen to what some random person says about you, after all they are entitled to their opinion but more importantly, you are entitled to yours and yours is what matters to you. If you see yourself this way, then you will value yourself better and until you value yourself, don't expect others to treat you well.

Despite all you may have gone through, you are important and highly valued but you need to see it.

A number of times, poor mental health has a link to low self esteem. A number of people with poor mental health also have low perception of themselves and they see life as nothing. The more you value yourself, the more you have the will to live above previous expectations. When you know your worth and are able to build your self-esteem back up, you get positive energy around you and this changes your perception about life. For those with persistent stressor, once you build yourself esteem, you will be able to develop a positive coping mechanism with ease.

Mental Development: Once the process of spiritual development starts, mental development becomes easy because when you see how God sees you, things change. You begin to value yourself and those negative thoughts are replaced with positive/ godly thoughts. It is also important to note that the Word of God not only feeds our spirit but also renews our mind. Once your mind is renewed, your reasoning becomes excellent and you will have control over your emotions.

Physical development: This means having a positive attitude towards life. Discipline yourself. Even Though your body wants to enjoy life, don't give it what it wants but what it needs. Don't be a slave to your flesh/ body, some have died and others in prison because of this. Set standards for yourself.

Once you find your self worth, then you can develop a positive coping strategy that works for you e.g

- Exercise daily/ weekly, depending on what works for you.
- Eat healthy, stay off smoking, alcohol and other things that may be injurious to your health
- Take time out to pamper yourself e.g, taking a vacation, taking time to meditate. In summary, take time to breath. The free and fresh air God has given us is not for nothing.
- Learn something new, e.g an instrument, a language, creativity, etc.
- This may be the time to write a book about the traumatic experience. You have no idea how many lives you will be helping out there.
- Find someone who is a fresh victim of what has happened to you and help them. There is usually this feeling of satisfaction and fulfillment when you are able to help someone. Not everything is about chasing money.
- If there is anything that brings back negative memories of the traumatic event, stay off it.

I remember in my place of work, there was this person that would always stress me out. At a point in time, it became a regular thing and I was not good at handling stress then. When I realized that this man was being used by the devil (whether he knew it or not), I cut off all forms of communications with him. I wasn't angry with him nor did I have any ill feeling towards him but I could see clearly what the devil was up to. The moment I took this step, wow, I felt so much better and wished I had done this earlier. When he left the organization due to personal reasons, I resumed communication with him because I had no issue with his person, the problem was with how he handled matters at work.

Please, it's important that we don't bear grudges against anyone. Doing so is a sin against God and lands people in hell. If something brings back negative memories or acts as a stressor in your life, it's okay to stay off/ cut it off (at least till you get your sanity back).

Locate your purpose: As I said earlier, we all have a reason for being here on earth and this is called purpose. This is where you find joy and fulfillment. When you are in your purpose, you are excited about what the future holds for you. I heard someone saying that finding purpose is a cure to loneliness, this is so true. Your purpose takes you to your wealthy place and helps you impact on generations with little stress/ effort.

If you've found your purpose, stay in it and don't get distracted. That is where your peace and safety lies.

How can you find your purpose? Ask God, spend time with Him, He is the one who created you and knows what you need to accomplish. I have a number of posts on purpose which you can access at oluchicrafts.com.

Once you've located your purpose, keep working in it and you'll begin to surprise yourself, mental health issues will become a thing of the past.

CHAPTER SIX

A lot of things are happening in life. Sometimes people will need to pinch themselves to make sure they are still alive. Going through an overwhelming situation is inevitable but handling it the right way is what brings peace of mind.

One thing to bear in mind is, whatever we are going through now, there are people who have gone through the same. There is nothing new under the sun.

Rather than feeling bad, pitying yourself, seeing yourself as a victim which does nothing but drains your energy and attracts negativity, why not turn it around and draw strength from it?

Yes, what has been done to you is horrible, holding these negative emotions and playing the victim card will do nothing more than putting you in bondage.

Release yourself, search for positive things, people with the right energy having it at the back of your mind that whatsoever a man sows, he will surely reap. If you are the type that likes mother nature, take time off to admire the environment surrounding you. Breathe, have a breath of fresh air. If this requires you changing your environment, do so because life is beautiful if you make it so for yourself.

One thing that has helped me function well as regards mental health is realizing the fact that I have a right to happiness and I am in the best position to take care

of myself. Nobody will do it better than myself. If I go through something stressful whether a new occurrence or past, I follow my normal routine/ positive coping mechanism.

This involves me taking time off that situation, spending more time with myself enjoying mother nature, learning something new, watching comedy movies, etc. In no time, positive energy begins to rise up within me and I begin to appreciate what I have.

When I get to this level, God then shows me ways of handling the disturbing situation. Positive energy will always attract good things while negative energy repels things including people.

It's children that play the victim card when something happens so that they can get the sympathy of others which honestly satisfies them at that stage of their lives. When an adult does this, it's quite different. Even though he/she may receive sympathy, it ends there and does no good for the victim. If such a person continues, he/she will begin to repel people around because it drains other people's energies.

If you have friends that have nothing good to offer, all they do is complain and complain, it's just natural to avoid such persons so they don't drain all your energy and leave you depressed. All you can do is keep praying for them.

Gossiping

People who go about gossiping, planting evil seeds in the heart of men to hate their fellow human beings don't go far in life, they are always left behind. One who is about his God-given purpose has no time for gossip and doesn't enjoy their company because time is of a major essence to him.

If you have a friend who is a gossip and you enjoy his company, in no time you will be like them. If you don't join their backward community, they may end up getting you depressed with their negative energy. How does this happen? A gossip will come with stories he may or may not have heard from a source laced with lies. If the gossip is about you, the tendency to get angry and keep malice is there. Tomorrow, he/ she will come with another story and this keeps piling up. It will get to the point where the person keeping company with a gossip will begin to feel down cast and wonder why he/ she is so hated among people which may not even be true. As a result of this, depression could set in. Also know that a gossip talks about everyone including you, his friend.

Stay far away from gossip and gossiping as much as you can.

When you are hated for doing the right thing

There are 2 groups of people

- 1) Those who do good and receive a massive amount of hatred from the world
- 2) Those who do bad and receive a huge amount of hatred from the world.

These 2 sets of people are very different. The people in the second category in most cases have their cups full. They've been enjoying the good things in this world despite their wickedness. Now time has come for them to pay in full and God is judging them outrightly.

Those in the first category have a very strong potential that the kingdom of darkness is so scared about. They have a major assignment that will destabilize the kingdom of darkness, so the devil is not happy about this. What he does is to turn people's mind against such good people, he makes them see their good as evil. These people have good intentions, they want to help humanity but the bad reward they receive gets them downcast.

If you are in this category, take courage. Always remember that God is your rewarder. When He rewards you, no man can match it up. Ignore their shenanigans rather, build yourself up to enjoy the persecution/ torture because it's only for a short while. if you are able to develop yourself to enjoy the

persecution, what people do or don't do for you will have no effect on you. This will give you peace of mind and all round rest.

When you are in category 1 and you work closely with God i.e you are born-again, your heavenly reward is huge and inevitable. This is one awesome thing to look forward to.

Having a relationship with God

When all hope is lost, will you still be standing? When you feel you've been working hard but have nothing to show for it, when you cry to God but you feel no one is answering you, who do you run to?

It is important to begin building a strong relationship with God so that when trials and tribulations come your way, you would be able to stay strong.

Some individuals, at the early stage of their lives, were Christians, they loved God and were on fire for Him but when challenges of life came tough on them, they turned their back on God, seeking help from other sources.

Any alternate source is from the devil no matter how well polished it looks.

The devil has got nothing, all he has was stolen and when Jesus went to hell and collected the key of death and hell from him.

He was stripped off all the power he had on man, he no longer has the power to kill any man who is in Christ Jesus only if one willingly donates themselves to him, in fact, he himself needs help.

The devil is in grave danger because his time is really running out, his judgment has been concluded and he does not want to go down alone.

Man is still lucky because his judgment has not been concluded as far as he is still alive. No matter where you are or what you are doing or have done, you still have a wonderful opportunity to revert to the side of Jesus before it becomes too late.

The devil has a major weapon of fear and doubt, he makes a situation look difficult and impossible. If one begins to fear, that person has willingly opened the door to the devil.

Sin also gives him free access to man's life. He cannot force himself into your life without you opening the door.

Challenges may come along the way, it's only a matter of time that all will disappear just keep your eyes focused on God. Build your faith, study the word of God, listen to tapes, read books related to that challenging area and as you get to know God more and more, it becomes easy for you to stand firm in difficult situations.

I remember growing up, I knew God but I didn't really have a relationship with Him. I didn't really believe miracles still happen because I hadn't experienced any. With time, I began to see some things around my life, I began reading Christian books and listening to tapes from strong men of God some of whom have passed on to glory and some are still standing strong.

I began to understand what the word of God says because I was actually poor with reading my Bible, there was always this feeling of tiredness around me whenever I picked up my Bible to read it.

Not only did I just read, but I also began putting all I had learned into practice and began to see amazing results. This led to me having a better relationship with God.

Do you know that it is possible to have a close relationship with God and He shows you a lot of things to come even some evil that the devil may have planned against someone close to you?

Once you do your part by praying through, you can be sure of victory. There are other times when you don't really know what is wrong and you feel a burden in your heart to pray about something, you can just pray in the Spirit.

Remember that "the Holy Spirit helps us in our weakness. For example, we don't know what God wants us to pray for. But the Holy Spirit prays for us with groanings that cannot be expressed in words." (Romans 8: 26, New Living Translation)

Having a serious relationship with God is very important if you want to have a sorrow-free or worry-free life. Also, a relationship with God requires growth just like any other relationship.

You start bit by bit then get to the point where you become highly sensitive to the things of the Spirit and you have all the fullness of God.

A serious relationship with God makes you more than a conqueror. When trials come your way, you will come out victorious because you know your God and those who do know their God shall be strong and do great exploits.

This is no myth or fiction but the truth, I wish people could just try to have a relationship with God, it's a very interesting journey.

CONCLUSION

Sure you have been blessed. Take time to read this book and put all you have learnt into practice to enjoy the full benefit of it. Always remember that you are very much loved by your Heavenly father.

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Remain Blessed.