

IT'S TIME

TO TAKE ACTION



**MENTAL ILLNESS
AWARENESS WEEK**
October 5-11, 2014



[Information received from National Alliance on Mental Illness - www.nami.org]

Oct. 5-11 is Mental Illness Awareness Week (MIAW). It is an important opportunity to learn the symptoms of major depression and other conditions. It's also an opportunity to engage in conversations about mental health care and help to end the silence and stigma that often exists.

One in four adults, and one in five children and teens experience serious emotional disorders each year. One-half of cases of chronic mental illness begin by the age of 14 and three-quarters by age 24. Unfortunately, there are long delays - sometimes decades - between the time symptoms first appear and when people get help.

Early identification and treatment can make a big difference for successful management of an illness and recovery. Yet only one-third of adults and less than one-half of children with mental illness receive treatment. One reason is that symptoms may not be immediately recognized. Another is that the stigma - and silence - surrounding mental illness can discourage many people from seeking help.

No one should have to confront mental illness alone. First, take the time to learn the symptoms of mental illness. Next, know where to find help in case it is ever needed. Start with your doctor, who can help you find a qualified mental health professional. If you don't have a doctor or are afraid to talk with them, talk to a trusted friend or to one of Fairmount's ministers - break the silence. There is help available - you need it, and you deserve it. ■

Clinical depression defined

The definition of clinical depression or a major depressive episode as recognized by most clinicians is as follows: "...a period of at least 2 weeks during which there is either depressed mood or the loss of interest or pleasure in nearly all activities" (APA, DSM-IV-TR, pg. 349, 2005). To further clarify this condition, one must experience at least five or more of the following symptoms for at least two weeks:

- Depressed mood most of the day, nearly every day, as indicated by either subjective report (e.g., feels sad or empty), or observation made by others (e.g., appears tearful). Note: In children and adolescents, can be irritable mood.
- Markedly diminished interest or pleasure in all, or almost all, activities most of the day, nearly every day (as indicated by either subjective account or observation made by others).
- Significant weight loss when not dieting or weight gain (e.g., a change of more than 5 percent of body weight in a month), or decrease or increase in appetite nearly every day. Note: In children, consider failure to make expected weight gains.

- Insomnia (can't sleep) or hypersomnia (can't get out of bed) nearly every day.
- Psychomotor agitation (unintentional and purposeless motions such as pacing or wringing of hands) or retardation (visible slowing of physical and emotional reactions) nearly every day (observable by others).
- Fatigue or loss of energy nearly every day.
- Feelings of worthlessness or excessive or inappropriate guilt (which may be delusional) nearly every day (not merely self-reproach or guilt about being sick).
- Diminished ability to think or concentrate, or indecisiveness nearly every day (either subjective or as observed by others).
- Recurrent thoughts of death (not just fear of dying), recurrent suicidal ideation without a specific plan, or suicide attempt or a specific plan for committing suicide (ibid., 356).

Note: Many clinicians feel that if one has only two or three of these characteristics for an extended period of time, they are still at risk for becoming seriously depressed and should seek help. [Source: <http://www.gci.org/CO/depression>]

Friends and Giants

By: **Bob Weirup**

I have a friend. He lost his wife, Amber, last week under the most difficult circumstances that I can imagine. I had the privilege of serving at Amber's remembrance service. My friend came in before the service and greeted me with a handshake and a big smile. He made me feel comfortable in a situation that could've been extremely uncomfortable for the both of us. Remarkable. I appreciate him for that and how difficult that had to be.

I have a couple of other friends. They lost their daughter, Amber, under equally difficult circumstances, as they were indeed the exact same circumstances. They both greeted me after morning church services with big hugs and smiles. Their strength and faith during a most difficult time is something that I can only aspire to emulate if or when tragedy might strike me. Their composure throughout the ordeal strikes me as, again, remarkable.

I have another friend. He's a first responder - his job is to help people when they are most in need - and he's had to deal with many tragic situations through his years of service that the rest of us can only imagine. He was called in to help with the aftermath of those same circumstances referenced above. To compound the tragedy of the situation, Amber was also a member of his family. His first and last instinct is to put others before himself. He doesn't allow himself to deal with his own feelings until this impossible situation has been dealt with and the others have been comforted. I find this phenomenal.

I have another friend. His job is to preach to us each week and help us find our way in a world that offers no easy paths. He was a friend of and on the same staff with Amber. His task this Sunday was to talk to a church full of people whose main inclination was to cry at the sorrow and grief of Amber's passing. I know that he shared this inclination. Yet, he managed to ease the grief a bit, bring a smile to those

who needed it most, and to eloquently deliver a positive and uplifting message when none would normally be found. He astounds me on a regular basis, and did again today.

I have another friend. He was asked to offer his talents as a singer at Amber's remembrance service. He, like the others, was also her friend, and he was truly worried about singing "Come To Jesus", one of Amber's favorite songs, in this most difficult service. I know this because I was standing beside him in those anxious minutes as he was preparing himself to go on stage. His poignant performance brought tears to many eyes, including my own, and when he finished, he hurried from the stage and burst into tears. How he kept that sorrow inside and delivered that touching song in such a beautiful manner is astonishing to me.

As for me, I'm lucky. I have lots of friends like this. I've had the honor of being on stage for quite a few performances at our church. Friends have come up after some performances and offered kind words and said how courageous I must be to be able to do that in front of all those people. I've even allowed myself to believe it once or twice. Right now, I don't feel so courageous. I saw courage today, and whatever I've done on stage pales in comparison.

My friends are remarkable, phenomenal, astonishing, astounding... I run out of descriptors. They all seem inadequate. From time to time people ask me about my church. Today, a new description occurred to me. Next time someone asks, I'll tell them I worship with and serve with a church of Giants. I hope to be one of them someday. ■



Amber Tanner Grissom
Dec. 9, 1975 - Oct. 2, 2014

Fairmount's ministerial staff has compiled a detailed list of local resources for those looking for Christian counselors and therapists. We will publish more information in a future edition of the Forecaster. Feel free to contact any member of the ministerial staff at any time.

digging deeper

By: Chris Branch



At the beginning of this year, I told you that the “One Word” I chose to focus on for this year was the word, “LIVE”. In **John 10:10**, Jesus says, “*The thief comes only to steal and*

kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.” I told you that I spent much of 2013 sitting on the couch waiting for Jesus to take me home. And I told you that living isn’t supposed to be trudging through the never-ending routine of daily life. Today, I’m telling you this - living is hard.

You may think that I’m talking about living the abundant life that Jesus wants for each of us. I am. But I’m also talking about just the physical act of staying alive - taking each breath, putting each foot in front of the other, getting out of bed each day. For many, these seemingly simple, natural tasks are harder than climbing Mt. Everest. October 5th-11th is Mental Illness Awareness Week. I’d like to share with you some details about one of the most prevalent and life-sapping mental illnesses in the US - clinical depression - and dispel some of the lies that can keep people, particularly Christians, who suffer from this disease from getting the help they so desperately need and deserve. Why do I feel qualified to share this with you? Let me be crystal clear - I am not a doctor or trained medical professional in any way, shape or form. What makes me feel qualified, and called, to share information about depression with you is that I suffer from it myself. **2 Corinthians 1:3-5**: “*Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God. For just as we share abundantly in the sufferings of Christ, so also our comfort abounds through Christ.*”

In 2012, the National Institute on Mental Health reported that approximately 16 million adults in the United States alone were diagnosed with clinical depression, also called major depression. This figure does not include those under age 18. Currently, the Center for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that 1 in 10 American adults suffer from this debilitating, cruel, often “invisible” disease. The National Alliance on Mental Illness describes clinical depression as “a mood state that goes well beyond temporarily feeling sad or blue. It is a serious medical illness that affects one’s thoughts, feelings, behavior, mood and physical health. Depression is a life-long condition in which periods of wellness alternate with recurrences of illness.” Clinical depression is a disease that thankfully has many treatment options. But there is no cure - it requires life-long treatment.

While it is not known what exactly causes clinical depression, it is important to know that it IS a medical disease. It is NOT a “feeling” or a “mood” that one can just “snap out of”. The Mayo Clinic offers a variety of factors that researchers believe may be involved, such as: *Biological differences* - people with depression appear to have physical changes in their brains; *Brain chemistry* - Neurotransmitters are naturally occurring brain chemicals that likely play a role in depression. When these chemicals are out of

balance, it may be associated with depressive symptoms; *Hormones* - Changes in the body’s balance of hormones may be involved in causing or triggering depression; *Inherited traits* - Depression is more common in people whose biological (blood) relatives also have this condition. Researchers are trying to find genes that may be involved in causing depression; *Life events* - Traumatic events such as the death or loss of a loved one, financial problems, high stress, or childhood trauma can trigger depression in some people.

Now that we know a little bit about what clinical depression is, let’s talk about some of what I like to call, the “**Lies Christians Believe**”. In **John 8:22**, Jesus doesn’t mince words when He tells us, “*He [Satan] was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies.*” If you are suffering from depression, please, I beg you - do not believe Satan’s lies. If you are not suffering from depression, please, I beg you - do not believe or spread Satan’s lies.

The Lies: Your inability to “get over it” means your faith is weak or that you are denying God’s sovereignty. If you just had a better relationship with Christ, you wouldn’t have a problem. Your sadness, anger, numbness, whatever it may be... is a conscious “choice” - you must “choose” to see the positive, be happy, react in a certain way... God will never give you more than you can handle. You have pulled away from God. God has pulled away from you. God will never forgive you. Things will never get better. **These are all LIES** - lies from the mouth of the murderer and the father of lies. There are many more lies - you know what they are - do not believe them.

The Truth: You are suffering from a medical illness and need to be medically treated - now. In His Word, God never said that, when we put our faith in Christ, life will be a happy little skip in the park and nothing - not even bad things - would get us down. What He does say is this: Be careful - remember the examples of the past - when you put your trust in Christ, you will be tempted and attacked by Satan and will feel like it’s more than you can bear - and I will be there to help you, because you can not handle it on your own (**John 10:10, 1 Corinthians 10:11-13**); The world hated and persecuted My Son, so expect that you will be hated and persecuted as well (**John 15:18-20**). He also says - I will never leave you (**Deuteronomy 31:6, Hebrews 13:5**); I love you - nothing can separate you from My love (**Romans 8:31-39**) - My love is everlasting (**Jeremiah 31:3**); You’ll experience things that you cannot control or handle on your own - that’s why My Son died for you (**1 Peter 3:18-22, Hebrews 7:25-27**) - that’s why I’ve given you My Spirit (**John 14:16-18**). God says, you are forgiven (**Isaiah 43:24-25, Romans 8:1-4**).

Lastly, Jesus - the Way the TRUTH and the LIFE - says, things are going to get better (**Revelation 21:1-5**). Believe Him - His words “are trustworthy and true”. ■

Article Sources to Visit for More Information:

National Alliance on Mental Illness - www.nami.org
The Mayo Clinic - www.mayoclinic.org



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P.O. Box 788
MECHANICSVILLE, VA 23111
PHONE: (804) 559-8070
FAX: (804) 559-8072
EMAIL:
INFO@FAIRMOUNTCHRISTIAN.ORG

The mission of Fairmount Christian Church:

To develop followers of Jesus who:

Love God,
Love People and
Introduce the world
to Christ



The Forecaster is
best viewed online @
fairmountchristian.org

Our Church: October 5, 2014

Manna Sunday Total

Thank you, Fairmount, for donating 2,075 pounds of food and toiletry items on Sunday, October 5th and exceeding our 1 ton monthly goal! ■



Wednesday Night Suppers Menu for October 8th

Turkey w/dressing, mashed potatoes, corn, rolls & assorted desserts
(children may choose the entrée or chicken nuggets w/fries)

Serve & Clean Up: Seekers Class

Sign up for dinner using the green supper cards in the pew or chair backs or call the office no later than noon on Monday.

Attendance & Giving

8:15 Worship Service: 124
Children's Worship: 4
9:30 Worship Service: 466
Children's Worship: 62
11:00 Traditional Worship: 190
Contemporary Worship: 154
Children's Worship: 82

Total: 1,082

Bible School: 608

Budget Requirements: \$37,923

Budget Receipts: \$39,496



Sermon Series Continues...

Your Church Staff:

Rick Raines - Senior Minister
Chris Santasiere - Associate Minister
Mike Langley - Associate Minister
Tracy Thomas - Worship/Music Minister
Mike Campbell - Youth Minister
Ashley Sears - Children's Director
Rose Williams - Early Childhood Director
Bob Massey - Business Administrator
Veronica Brewster - Office Manager
Jef Powell - Facilities & Grounds Manager
Barry Will - Technology Director
Debra Houston - Ministerial Administrative Assistant
Chris Branch - Administrative Assistant
Carolyn Holmes - Administrative Assistant
Lauren McCormick - Administrative Assistant