thrive

living resilient and renewed.

Mental Health Grace Alliance

"The Grace Alliance"

Mental Health Grace Alliance is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization providing mental health support and recovery programs, support groups, training, and collaborative partnerships to impact mental health care.

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Anyone can recover.
Everyone has a role.

Various statistics reveal that 1 in 4 adults and 1 in 5 adolescents in a given year deal with a diagnosable mental illness. In the Church, the numbers are the same. Imagine about a quarter of our population and their families being affected by the impact of mental illness.

However, there is hope … through a whole health approach and professional care anyone can recover. It doesn't have to be lonely … everyone has a role. Learn to Thrive.

What is Thrive?

Thrive is designed to help anyone have great mental health recovery, which means having mental health strength, recovery, and resilience from any mental health difficulty or disorder. This workbook will help to deal with:

1. *Depression, anxiety, and panic.*
2. *Racing and negative thoughts … suicidal.*
3. *Mood stability (irritability, highs and lows).*
4. *Addictive habits.*
5. *Sleep and eating problems.*
6. *Relationships and isolation.*
7. *Disappointing church life and Christian faith.*
8. *Feeling life is hopeless and purposeless.*

Thrive will guide you through the process to have better:

1. ***Stress Reduction*** *– Developing effective stress-management.*
2. ***Healthy Thoughts*** *– Overcome racing and negative thoughts.*
3. ***Relief of Suffering*** *– Reduce the pain from depression, anxiety, addiction, and other negative challenges.*
4. ***Healthy Living*** *– New balanced lifestyle, easy and affordable.*
5. ***Community Life*** *– Create safe and authentic relationships.*
6. ***Life Purpose*** *– Regain hope and a sense of personal purpose.*
7. ***Love of God*** *– Faith with a sense of true rest, love, and grace.*
8. ***Life Renewal*** *– Resilient strength and a confident outlook.*

Mental illness recovery and hope?

Mental illness is …

> *"Genetic or circumstantial factors causing a disruption in the brain affecting a person's thoughts, moods, behaviors, and relationships. The severity of symptoms requires professional treatment, whole health (holistic) care, and life-giving community support."*

Mental illness affects the brain, which in turn affects your / their whole life … physically, mentally, spiritually, and relationally. As you learn about mental illness and how it affects someone's life, it is good to remember the balance between having a mental health disorder vs. the diagnosis becoming a personal full identity.

Friend … you are not the illness or disorder. Mental illness is part of the journey and God is not intimidated by it! You are a child of God, fully cherished, loved, and accepted by God … God longs to reveal His compassion and hope at every step of this journey.

There is hope!

Anyone can begin the journey for greater mental illness recovery. It is not impossible to see life renewed. Many people with debilitating mental illness have found incredible recovery and live full and meaningful lives.

Mental health or mental illness recovery **is** a strength-based and whole-health (holistic) process of change that focuses on rebuilding a sense of self-worth and purpose, self-management for symptom relief, life giving community support, and a pure and simple rest in Christ.

Mental illness recovery is mental health resilience and renewal of life.

By learning about mental illness, self-management, support, and other professional interventions you become more resilient with a high quality of life. Over time mental illness recovery has a **r**eduction of symptoms**,** even a reduction of frequency and intensity of episodes or cycles**.**

A whole health wellness and management approach.

Treatments that focus solely on a single aspect of one's being can bring only limited relief at best. A whole-health approach to care and treatment relieves physical and psychological distress (suffering) with medication, psychotherapy/counseling, healthy environment, and community support, while revealing love and limitless grace that is available through a personal relationship with Jesus.

Faith and Patience for a journey of hope not a quick fix.

Mental health resilience and renewal is not about achieving specific steps, it is a process that takes time. The Thrive workbook will give you specific topics that will lead toward your mental health resilience and life renewal … recovery. You are not trying to achieve a new level of perfection, rather a new journey of hope.

Think about this "recovery" in months and years, rather than days and weeks. This is not about getting mental illness fixed; you are rebuilding a new resilient strength and life renewal. Thus, this is not trying to achieve an expectation; there is grace for this, go as slow as, "one day at a time."

There are no easy answers, and there is no cookie-cutter set of action points that will be effective in every situation. Sometimes it may feel as if you are feeling your way in the dark, but this guide will reaffirm your steps are headed in the right direction. The best advice we can give you is to let grace be your guide as you walk towards greater mental health resiliency and life renewal … mental illness recovery.

Discovering Hope

"Surely there is a future hope for you, and your hope will not be cut off."

Proverbs 23:18

Purpose

Hope is knowing that better things will come despite challenges. It is not simply "wishing" that something bad or negative would somehow change. Hope is the engine that drives mental health recovery. The purpose of this session is to help you understand that true hope is grounded in the promises of God and the person of Jesus.

Goals

1. Using hope as a theme to create practical goals.

2. Developing a healthy outlook for a new strength-based perspective.

3. Establishing a renewed life and lifestyle.

Facts to Consider

- Hope means to **trust in a secure strength that provides foundation, structure, and security.** Hope also **means to anticipate with joy the arrival of something new and better.** When we have hope, it energizes and gives us strength to endure in a way that nothing else does (i.e., "faith and patience"). This will cause us to grow by recognizing our positive strengths and abilities, self-worth confidence, and a resilient grace to overcome (see Romans 5:3-5).

- Hope is a whole-health focus for whole lives; it is not only for our spiritual faith. Hope is a **firm assurance** regarding things that are unclear and unknown.

- Hope **energizes** people and gives them strength to endure in a way that nothing else does. People without hope become defeated, broken, and unable to cope with adversity. Hopeless people give up. Hope is positively **associated** with perceived ability and self-worth and negatively associated with symptoms of depression

- As a Christian, **hope is not a wishful thinking,** because hope arises from our life in Christ … Christ in us the hope of glory (Colossians 1:27). This confident hope fuels our faith in confidently knowing that we have received His grace to see better days realized (see Hebrews 11:1).

- **Faith and hope** are overlapping realities: hope is faith in the future tense. Hebrews 11:1 says, "*Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see."*

- Hope brings about a new process of change and it takes time. It is not a quick-fix of our problems, rather a new sense of confidence with a faith and patience that life will improve.

- We must be careful to not allow **circumstances** to build up or break down our hope. Circumstances change, God does not. Christian hope comes from the promises of God rooted in the work and the person of Christ.

Self-Evaluation: Discovering Hope

1. *How has your mental health condition or disorder affected your hope?*

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2. *What do you feel is the biggest challenge(s) preventing you from having long-lasting hope?*

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Self-Evaluation: Discovering Hope

3. How have you managed this far with little or no hope ... and why do you feel a need for change?

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4. How would having a clear hope affect you and your overall outlook on your life?

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Building Hope As Goals

Complete the **Building Whole Health Hope** exercise below by filling out the hopeful goals you would like to see in each area. Then, begin to work steadily towards the goal that you have identified. Remember, mental health strength and even recovery is not about how fast you progress toward your goals but about always moving forward; simply trying to be better than you were yesterday.

Use this list practically as your personal prayer request in your personal devotion times.

1. *What do you hope for in having a healthy lifestyle (physical needs)?*

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2. *What do you hope for in having a healthy mind & emotions?*

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Building Hope As Goals

3. What do you hope for in having a healthy faith?

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4. What do you hope for in having a healthy community (relationships):

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These are now your overall goals for each area of your life. Use these as prayer items and encouragement.

Grace Alliance Resources.

These topics and more are all found in our various workbooks including:

Family Grace Group Workbook (for spouses and families)

Living Grace Group Workbook (for peers with mental illness)

Living Hope Group (for peers with trauma/PTSD)

For more information, blogs and events visit us on Facebook and our website:

www.MentalHealthGraceAlliance.org