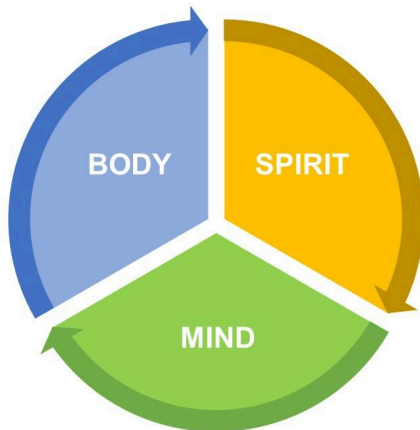


Pastoral training: Session 7

We are holistic beings: Body, mind and spirit

Key verse: Romans 12:1-2



As Christians we are not immune to poor mental health. At times we may even suffer more because we expect more of ourselves – we can beat ourselves up because our reality doesn't match the expectations of our faith. To assume that disorders that effect the brain and therefore our emotions, our thinking and our behaviour all have direct spiritual causes and solutions is to misunderstand the way we are made.

We must not however, fall into the trap of the other extreme – thinking that good pastoral care has no place in someone's mental health journey. If we only expect "the professionals" to care and treat people with mental health issues, without walking alongside them with love and acceptance, then we abandon people to a system that can only help them in part.

Questions

- How would you feel if your GP recommended that you or a family member take anti-depressants?
- What is your personal experience of mental illness? i.e. have either you or a close friend or family member struggled with their mental health?
- Is your church a safe place for people to express "unsafe feelings"
- What do you think good mental health looks like?