**“Someone who is down in the ditch can’t pull Himself up. He needs someone who is up there to actually raise him. It takes a heart of love to do that.”**

**“Depression is in our midst, we can’t shy away from that. There are a lot of people around us that are depressed. There are a lot of things all around happening that can lead to depression so we should understand that.”**

A couple weeks back, I was on Instagram and there was this boy that Had committed suicide. Before He died, He left a suicide video. What struck me most of everything He said was, He said He had nothing to live for and it had been an ongoing issue, He had tried to commit suicide previously and in this occasion, He thought: what was the point of living, what was the purpose of living? He had really gotten to the end of it like… there was really nothing to live for anymore.

This was a guy who had a business and seemed to be doing well. Still, he said he had nothing to live for. Many people would say that they desire his life but for him, in his eyes, he had nothing to live for.

That made me feel like depression is not a matter of one’s situation but how one perceives the situation.

**From a Doctor**

Common indicators of depression include:

Loss of interest in things one previously had interest in

Feeling hopeless

Constant moodiness

Constant tiredness

Inability to sleep

Weight loss or weight gain

Lack of appetite

Having suicidal thoughts

It was very interesting for me that weight loss or weight gain made it to that list because… generally, when one sees a person gaining weight, one tends to think, they are enjoying themselves, they are living life… meanwhile, it may be an issue of someone being depressed.

So maybe you know, this our attitude of you know, assuming about people and thinking a person is doing very well because they put on weight. We may not necessarily need to assume. Maybe sometimes, check on them. If it is a case of weight loss, maybe also, check on them.

A doctor had this to add: It’s very good that we don’t just jump into conclusion anytime we make comments to people or about people. About the way they look, about their health. Sometimes, our comments may actually worsen a depressive state. We need to be more sensitive when passing comments.

In a conversation with another doctor, He highlighted wrong ways that person resort to in a bid to cope with depression

Dissociating oneself from people who can help one

Picking up habits like smoking, drinking, drugs

Engaging in sexual activities

Withdrawing from society with the believe that one can deal with depression personally

**Our Position as Christians**

Stand from God’s point of view

Having high or low moments may occur but not to allow oneself be overwhelmed by activities that occur around us

Not to carry one’s burden alone. Allow Jesus, The Holyspirit who is our comforter to help one.

We remember Elijah who wanted his life to be taken away, Job also similarly. However, we can remember that in Elijah’s case, God had people whom He had prepared to support in the ministry. Elijah wasn’t actually alone as he was feeling. We must allow The Holyspirit to work in us.

We may be downcast but never allow ourselves be in a state of consistent depression.

We should always as Christians remember that we have a place of advantage which is God, God is the ultimate. As long as we have God, we have everything.

**When one is depressed, how do we come out of it. Doctors advised,**

When in a situation which one can’t handle, the first point of call is God, One who can handle the situation. A popular saying goes “What is good requires prayer, what is bad also needs prayer”. Prayer is relevant in the short and long term

Also, to talk about it in the short term and avoid bottling up things. It helps to relieve one of the burden and make one feel better

Avoid staying alone, meet with people, talk with people, don’t isolate oneself, pray often, talk to God more, believing that He can hear one’s prayer.

Have a network of good people around one. Avoid staying with toxic or other depressed people

In the long run, see a therapist if all other efforts don’t work

**In addition, our first line of defence really is to look up to God.**

Let the Word of God be one’s friend

That is when to hold on to God’s promises

Remember the good things God has done in the past, look back to one’s testimony, one’s victories. The problems may seem overwhelming but look back to testimonies

**As a community, What’s our response when we observe a person showing signs of depression**

* Relate with them, mix with them,get close to the person, understand, with a friendly approach, be sincere about it, willing to help.
* Ask pertinent questions, heart-to-heart questions that makes the person feel cared for
* We may advance into helping the person.
* Most importantly, get close to them, try to know what they are going through, speak with them, try to bring them out of the bottled up situation, let them express themselves and that way we may be able to help.
* Something that is key is, **to have love in one’s heart,** not be too focused on ourselves and our business but give people some of our attention. Let them know that they matter. Not with words but with actions.
* As friends, teachers, Pastors, spouse, let them know they are worth our time.
* Avoid stigmatization. This is not a time to condemn actions. It is a time to give words of hope, positive vibes.
* **“Someone who is down in the ditch can’t even pull Himself up. He needs someone who is up there to actually raise him. It takes a heart of love to do that.”**
* Also, keep them in mind. When you cannot help, you may know someone that could help. Ideas might come up while in conversation with other people.
* Be sensitive, in a bid to help, not to share information of a person with another one who will not handle the situation in a sensitive manner.
* Try to be careful with one’s speech so as not to worsen a situation
* We we can, create a community that helps those that are depressed. To help people come out of depression and lead a better life

**Last Words**

**Depression is in our midst, we can’t shy away from that. There are a lot of people around us that are depressed. There are a lot of things all around happening that can lead to depression so we should understand that.**

Also, understand that as Christians, we don’t have to bear burdens alone. There are lots of promises in the bible that solves all our problems.

For example, regarding economy, The Bible says that God will supply our needs according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

This makes our economy heaven based not earth based.

Understand that what is happening to one is not the worst thing that can happen to a person and with God, one can go through anything.

“**If you are depressed, remember that your breath is a gift of life. It may not feel that way but it is**.

*Also, lives depend on you, some lives have been assigned to you to be elevated through you. Seek ways to get out quickly from the downcast mode.*

**What gets you in an elevated mood? Is it Music, listen. Whatever it is, do it (**provided that it is legal and good, hopefully not drugs**)**.

*Talk to as many people as you can about it. Try to find a solution.*

**Depression tries to take the energy away from you but the faster you find a solution to the problem, the faster you come out of depression**.

*And try to have hope you know, smile, relate with people, talk with people, organize parties, spend time with other people.*

**Do what you love. Whatsoever thing you love and are interested in. Once you start doing what you love and are interested in, depression will not find a place within because your heart is already taken by what you love**”