

## Depression

### Causes of Depression:

- Depression can be caused by many *life issues*, including anger; failure or rejection; family issues, such as divorce or abuse; fear; feelings of futility; lacking control over one's life; grief and loss; guilt or shame; loneliness or isolation; negative thinking; destructive misbeliefs; and stress.
- *Medical and biological factors* can also facilitate depression: inherited predisposition to depression, thyroid abnormalities, female hormone fluctuations, serotonin or norepinephrine irregularities, diabetes, B-12 or iron deficiencies, lack of sunlight or vitamin D, a recent stroke or heart attack, mitral valve prolapsed, some prescription drugs and recreational drugs.

### Action Steps

- 1. Watch physical health**
  - *Moderate exercise (if not contraindicated by your physician)*
  - *Medical examination*
  - *Better eating habits (less sugar)*
- 2. Get behind the scenes**
  - *Grieve past losses*
  - *Think honestly about what might be behind the depression*
  - *Keep a journal, or thought log.*
- 3. Begin clear thinking**
  - *Prepare a list of 10 things you like about yourself—three of them have to be physical characteristics.*
  - *Count your blessings*
  - *Challenge distorted thinking*
- 4. Get social support**
  - *Reconnect with family or friends who can help support you through this time of depression.*
  - *Join a group, club, activity, hobby (social isolation increases depression)*
  - *Become involved in a church*
- 5. Pay attention to spiritual issues**
  - *Do you have any unconfessed sin that is promoting the depression?*
  - *Do you need to forgive someone as a means of moving toward personal health?*