

Let's Talk About Mental Health

The evidence is all around us—people of all ages are struggling with their mental health like never before. And not acknowledging the struggle isn't helping. So that's what we are going to do at The Hills—talk about mental health. We invite you to join us for a conversation that will be full of honesty, compassion, and hope...because Jesus is being invited too.

Week 8: Let's Talk About Anxiety

1. Anxiety is the most common mental health struggle in America. According to the Anxiety & Depression Association of America, nearly one in five adults over eighteen years old suffer from an anxiety disorder every year (and those numbers increased around 25% during the pandemic). Why do you think anxiety is so prevalent in our world today?
2. God gave our bodies nervous systems. That means **experiencing anxiety is not a sin. It's a signal.** It can be a signal that warns us from danger, or a pressure to perform that drives us to give our best. At the same time, Jesus tells us not to worry about tomorrow and warns against becoming weighed down by the anxieties of life. What do you think is the difference between healthy and unhealthy anxiety?
3. Have group members read aloud the following: **Genesis 15:1; Joshua 1:9, Isaiah 41:13; Psalm 23:4; Haggai 2:5; Mark 6:49-50.** In response to our anxiety, **God says He is with us.** Why do you think God keeps telling people He is with them? In what ways is that a comfort or encouragement for anxious times?
4. **Read 1 Peter 5:7 and Philippians 4:6-7.** In response to our struggle, **God says we can give Him our worries.** What does it mean to you to give your worries to God? Have you ever experienced an anxious time when God provided you with peace?
5. If you sense it's appropriate, ask group members where in their thought-life they long to experience the peace of God. Finish with a prayer for peace on behalf of the group.

Additional Help: *The GAD-7 Questionnaire is a helpful resource for anyone wondering, "How can I tell if my struggle with anxiety might need professional help?" It's a short set of questions that help gauge the severity of a person's anxiety.*

