



# Depression: Lifestyle Links for Beating the Blues

## Session Guide and Review Notes

### Depression: Lifestyle Links for Beating the Blues

**5 min Welcome and Introduction**

**PowerPoint Presentation: Short (10-15 min.) or Long (30 min.) version**

#### **Summary: Depression: Lifestyle Links for Beating the Blues**

- If you suffer from depression, you are not alone.
- Depression is about a loss of connections—in the brain, and in life.
- Even when people are prone to depression, there are many factors that are tunable and changeable.
- Positive lifestyle choices restore lost connections in the brain by encouraging:
  - ✓ New nerve cell growth
  - ✓ Increased connections between cells
  - ✓ Improved thinking and problem-solving
  - ✓ Always work with your doctor or healthcare provider as needed for symptoms of depression, anxiety, addictions, and medical, and mood disorders. Often other conditions exist that need attention and treatment.

#### **10 min Discussion Time 1: What are your thoughts?**

- ✓ How did depression “not win” in the lives of Abraham Lincoln and Winston Churchill?
- ✓ Discuss what type of choices lead “away” from depressive thinking.

#### **5 min Discussion Time 2: What is your story?**

- ✓ You or someone in the group may have a “delivered story.” Take a few minutes for you or a guest to share.

**5 min Freedom Journey:** Present the following thoughts for reflection prior to next discussion periods to encourage positive discussion for change.

- **Reflect:** Sleep, exercise, nutrition, and connections with others are part of God’s healing plan to protect us during times of trial and stress.
- **Recalculate:** Happy people who are overworked can develop depression. Body systems shut down for healing. Balanced living is key.
- **Reframe:** Recognizing a feeling is different than becoming its victim. Deciding to do right when your feelings don’t agree builds strength.
- **Remember:** Mind-body systems work together to build resiliency, stress protection, and strength—mental and physical.

**10 min Discussion Time 3: What have you learned?**

- ✓ What did you hear that deeply moved you?
- ✓ What did you learn that makes you stronger in your resolve?

**Lifestyle Links:** Lifestyle links for building physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual strength.

**Reboot and Rebound:** Daily choices build a better brain, body, and habits.

**Create a Lifestyle**

- Drink at least 8 glasses of water daily.
- Eat a healthy breakfast: whole grains, fresh fruit, and nuts.
- Focus on eating plenty of greens and crunchy fruits and vegetables twice a day.
- Go for a 10-minute walk several times each day, outside if possible.
- Create a “sleep routine.” Get to bed 10-15 minutes earlier than usual. Aim for 7-8 hours’ sleep.

**10 min Discussion Time 4: What will you do?**

- ✓ What is your reason for hope today?
- ✓ Which of the **Lifestyle Links** are your focus right now?
- ✓ What is your first step?

**5 min Group Promise, Affirmation, and Prayer to Close Session**

**Pray and Say:** Divine power and daily practice change the brain.

- **Prayer:** “Dear God, thank you that by your power and strength, I am Living Free!”
- **Promise:** “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.” Philippians 4:13.
- **Affirmation:** “Thank you God for my freedom journey to better physical, mental, and spiritual health!”
- **Encourage** participants to review their handout.
- **Close** with prayer.

**Handout:** 1. Balanced Living Tract: Depression: Lifestyle Links for Beating the Blues  
2. Build a Better Brain