



The Many Faces of Depression

One must learn to heal from a state of hopelessness to face off with depression.

Psalm 42:1-5 KJV

As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. [2] My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God? [3] My tears have been my meat day and night, while they continually say unto me, Where is thy God? [4] When I remember these things, I pour out my soul in me: for I had gone with the multitude, I went with them to the house of God, with the voice of joy and praise, with a multitude that kept holyday. [5] Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted in me? hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him for the help of his countenance.

“Depression has many faces because pain has many languages. Sometimes pain cries. Sometimes it gets angry. Sometimes it withdraws. Sometimes it goes numb. And sometimes it puts on its clothes, goes to work, leads everybody else—and says nothing.”

Depression does not always look like sadness. Sometimes the person who is depressed is still working, preaching, parenting, leading, laughing, and showing up. The struggle may be hidden behind functionality.

Depression can wear many faces:

- **The face of sadness** — persistent heaviness, tearfulness, emptiness.
- **The face of anger** — irritability, frustration, short temper, resentment.
- **The face of exhaustion** — “I’m tired” becomes more than physical fatigue.
- **The face of withdrawal** — avoiding people, conversations, activities, even people you love.
- **The face of numbness** — not necessarily hurting intensely but struggling to feel much of anything.
- **The face of grief** — mourning what was lost, what changed, or what may never be recovered.
- **The face of anxiety** — constant worry, dread, restlessness, or expecting something else to go wrong.
- **The face of rejection** — repeatedly interpreting circumstances through “I am unwanted,” “I am no longer valued,” or “I don’t matter.”
- **The face of shame** — turning painful experiences into conclusions about your worth.
- **The face of perfectionism** — continuing to achieve because stopping would force you to confront what you feel.
- **The face of isolation** — “Nobody understands, so I’ll carry this myself.”
- **The face of spiritual struggle** — difficulty praying, diminished desire for worship, or wondering, *“Where is God in this?”*
- **The face of functioning** — perhaps the most easily missed: you keep fulfilling responsibilities while privately deteriorating.



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Depression can be layered. Sometimes there isn't one reason a person feels depressed. There may be accumulated losses:

grief + disappointment + physical limitations + relational wounds + rejection + exhaustion + prolonged stress + uncertainty.

Eventually the soul may be saying, **"I have been carrying too much for too long."**

Instead of only asking, "Why am I depressed?" deeper questions might be:

What am I grieving?

What am I carrying?

What am I fearing?

What am I angry about?

What have I lost?

What am I struggling to accept?

What am I interpreting as rejection?

What changed that I have not emotionally adjusted to?

What have I been strong through but never actually processed?

And there is an important distinction: ***not every season of sadness or grief is clinical depression***, although grief, chronic stress, illness, medication effects, trauma, and other circumstances can overlap with or contribute to depression. Persistent symptoms—especially changes in sleep, appetite, concentration, motivation, pleasure, or functioning—deserve professional evaluation.

The next movement is **"Giving the Faces a Name"**. One must identify what they are actually grieving, carrying, fearing, and trying to understand. This has to be pursued through the work of Holy Spirit and prayer.

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