

Recommended Mental Health Resources for Clergy

*Adapted from a list by Carole J. Wills
National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Indianapolis, Faith Communities Education Project*

Shadow Voices: Finding Hope in Mental Illness

Video produced and distributed by Mennonite Media
www.shadowvoices.com/

This hour-long video "deals with stigma, recovery, and hope regarding mental illness." Ten people from many sectors of American life tell their stories while mental health experts and advocates add perspective and insights. Among the film's featured guests are U.S. First Lady Rosalyn Carter and former U.S. Surgeon General Dr. David Satcher. This film helps support families who have a mentally ill loved one and helps congregations know better how to relate to those living with mental illness.

Churches That Heal: Becoming a Church That Mends Broken Hearts and Restores Shattered Lives

(Book) Doug Murren, Author. West Monroe, LA: Howard Publishing, 1999.
www.howardpublishing.com/ProductCart/pc/viewPrd.asp?idcategory=&idproduct=213

Doug Murren knows both sides of the story—as a senior pastor of a large church that effectively ministered to hurting parishioners, from other less sensitive congregations, and as a respected Christian who lives with the unpredictable cycles of bipolar disorder. In this insightful book, he offers first-hand wisdom on why churches don't heal, what happens when churches don't heal, and creating a healing environment. Murren is a conservative Christian with strong allegiance to Christ Jesus, and a man who values the role of modern medical science for the treatment of severe mental illnesses and addiction.

National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)

www.nami.org

The National Alliance on Mental Illness is the nation's leading grass-roots advocacy non-profit organization solely dedicated to improving the lives of persons with severe mental illness—including schizophrenia, bipolar disorder (manic depressive illness), major depression, obsessive-compulsive disorder, and severe anxiety disorders. Its four pillars—education, advocacy, support, and research—give the National Alliance on Mental Illness a solid voice for the mentally ill and their families.

This organization has a host of channels through which you can receive educational materials and literature about symptoms, treatment, and services for specific mental illnesses. Also offered are links to state and local NAMI Web sites.

NAMI: FaithNet

faithnet.nami.org

NAMI FaithNet is an interfaith network composed of members and friends of NAMI all across the United States, providing information and resources for educational outreach to faith communities. Managed by NAMI National, NAMI FaithNet encourages local affiliates to share effective ideas and resources for congregational education and awareness.

It is designed to (1) facilitate the development of a supportive faith community environment for those with serious mental illness and their families, (2) emphasize the value of spirituality in the recovery process from mental illness and in the lives of caregivers, (3) educate clergy and congregations concerning the biological basis and characteristics of mental illness, and (4) encourage advocacy by the faith community to bring hope and help to those affected by mental illness. FaithNet's free e-mail network offers pertinent book reviews, regional meeting announcements, articles, letters, and other resource materials.

National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH)

www.nimh.nih.gov/

The National Institute of Mental Health offers a wide range of free brochures, fact sheets, reports, press releases, and other educational materials on mental illnesses, mental health issues, learning disabilities, eating disorders, suicide, and medications for mental disorders. Free booklets—on illnesses such as anxiety disorders, autism, bipolar disorder, depression, and schizophrenia—are available on the agency's Web site, and they are an economical way to supplement your library. Check out especially "For the Public" sections of the site. Having quick access to information on a particular mental disorder can help you more easily decide whether to refer a parishioner to a mental health professional. While it is often unrealistic to expect persons with mental disorders to read about their illnesses, the literature may be helpful to church leaders and families of the mentally ill.

Pathways to Promise (Organization)

www.pathways2promise.org/

An interfaith resource center promoting a caring ministry for people with mental illness and their families, Pathways to Promise offers liturgical and educational materials, program models, and networking information. These

resources are useful to clergy and lay leaders at all levels of congregational life—local, regional and national. The Pathways Web site helps congregational leaders understand 1) what to do when a person with mental illness or a family member comes for help or makes his or her presence known; 2) what programs supporting people with mental illness and their families can be developed in congregations; and 3) what agencies and organizations have helpful resources and referral information. Several of the worship planning materials, pamphlets, and bulletin inserts are available in Protestant, Jewish and Catholic versions.

The Soul in Distress: What Every Pastoral Counselor Should Know about Emotional and Mental Illness (Book) Richard W. Roukema, Author. New York: Haworth Press Inc., 1997.
www.haworthpressinc.com/store/product.asp?sku=1538

Recognizing the demands and complexities facing pastors who minister to troubled parishioners, Christian psychiatrist Richard Roukema brings a unique perspective, compassionate professionalism, and a wealth of information to this book. Addressing both the common concerns and the conflicts of religion and psychiatry, he examines the roles that each plays in the lives of persons with emotional and mental health problems. You will find thorough presentations on a variety of illnesses, as well as advice on practical ways clergy can help. Most importantly, *The Soul in Distress* is peppered with wise advice to clergy. It offers approaches to counseling, warnings about "getting in over your head," and suggestions for the pastor's own self-care.

Walking Through the Valley: Understanding and Emerging from Clergy Depression (Book) Robert Randall, Author. Nashville, Tenn: Abingdon Press, 1998.
www.amazon.com

While clergy are not immune to depression, "our grandiosity tends to keep us clergy from owning up to our depression or its possibility." So says Robert Randall, a pastor of the United Church of Christ and a clinical psychologist. But it's not only grandiosity that keeps clergy from seeking help; they may also fear being perceived as weak and losing the confidence of their congregation and superiors. And they may wonder, "Who will be in charge if I take time off?" With candor and wisdom, the book's introduction helps clergy own up to their own experiences with depression. Subsequent chapters invite readers to consider "diagnosing our depression," "determining how depressed we are," and exploring the "causes of our depression." Randall closes each chapter with down-to-earth recommendations for clergy. He also includes "renewal tasks" for clergy. Every minister or rabbi who has experienced

either temporary or chronic depression will benefit from Randall's encouragement, insights, and strategies for recovery.

Mental Health Ministries
www.mentalhealthministries.net

Rev. Susan Greg-Schroeder of the UMC California-Pacific Conference is a leader in mental health education and awareness, speaking out of her own life experiences in ministry and pastoral counseling. She has developed resources that educate clergy and congregations, and decrease stigma associated with serious mental illnesses in faith communities. Her Web page offers prayers, poems, meditations, and a description of ten videos, including the award-winning *Creating Caring Congregations*. Nine other videos with discussion guides are currently available.

Resurrecting the Person: Friendship and the Care of People with Mental Health Problems (Book) John Swinton, Author. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2000.
www.amazon.com

John Swinton confronts the notion that mental illness is not relevant to a faith community's mission. He states, "This is a book about radical friendship. It is a call to the church to rediscover its prophetic roots in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and to reclaim its identity as the friend and protector of the poor, the outcast, and the stranger." As a former psychiatric nurse and mental health chaplain, the author unfolds the manifold dimensions of poverty and stigma forced upon the mentally ill by both society and faith communities. With prophetic force, he advances a challenge to the church: solidarity and friendship with persons suffering from mental illness enables the church to embody Jesus' unconditional and liberating love.

No Longer Alone (Book and Video) John Toews and Eleanor Lowen, Authors. Scottdale, PA: Herald Press, 1995.
<http://www.mph.org/hp/books/nolonger.htm>

A book and two-part video set designed for the faith community, *No Longer Alone* forms an outstanding foundational study of mental health issues. The ten video sessions, capturing seminars presented by Christian psychiatrist John Toews, are an essential teaching aid to the book. Suitable for adult Christian education courses in small or large group gatherings.

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