

Care Tips

All of these tips are predicated on the hope of a personal relationship with Jesus.

If you haven't already, begin with **placing your faith in Jesus Christ**.

Personal Care:

1. **Chew on truth**, literally put it on your doorposts or wherever you will encounter it, marinate in it, and let it affect you.
 - Look to truths such as:
 - God is not One who abandons His children. He has promised to be near, even when it doesn't feel like it, and He is faithful to keep His promises. Jesus is the fullness of proof that this is the case.
 - He knows our fragility and remembers we are but dust (Psalm 103:14). In His compassion, He does not crush us or look coldly upon our situation. Instead, His affection is immense, and He draws near.
2. **Get a medical exam**. Particularly, with regard to depression, underlying issues may be at play, and it is in no way more spiritual to ignore those challenges or to leave them untreated. God has made the body in certain

ways, and sometimes medical interventions comprise one of the helps He offers to us.

3. **Get godly counsel and refuse to withdraw from community with other believers.** Isolation breeds hopelessness. Though time alone will be a necessity in the process of suffering, most of us tend to withdraw in ways that tend to be destructive rather than helpful.

NOTE: Of course, people are imperfect and will sometimes say and do things that are unhelpful or even hurtful. In such times, a healthy graciousness for others and ourselves will be essential to navigating what comes.

Caring for Others:

1. Avoid -

- **Judging.**
- **Quickly offering solutions or your diagnosis of the problem.**
- **Making the person your project.** Your presence, and, thereby, the presence of Jesus in you, is far more helpful to the person. He alone brings healing and hope. Invariably, you and I can't fix what's wrong in the majority of these situations.

2. Do -

- **Be present and listen.** It's ok to not have words. Often, it's better to remain silent, offer a hug, or merely sit with the person suffering, rather than offering cliches, poorly timed "encouragement," or obtuse statements made to fill the silence or grapple with the tears.
- **Pray for and with the person.**
- **Be slow to speak but reassure with the truth (ask the Spirit for help to know when to speak and what to say).** We must gently assure others that there is hope and purpose even in the midst of their pain. God has not abandoned them. Jesus is a Great High Priest who intercedes for them. Ultimately, He is drawing them closer to Himself. That's good news for anyone lost in the maze of doubt, pain, grief, and uncertainty that accompanies depression and suffering.
- **Be patient and willing to longsuffer.** Ultimately, as we care for others, we must do so fully conscious of their spiritual fragility, just as the Lord does.
- **Be gracious with yourself.** You will screw it up, and Jesus is more than capable of covering over our mistakes in His power and His love.