

Say This, Not That: How to Encourage Someone with Mental Illness

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When you love someone with a mental illness, we often feel helpless. How can we best minister to a loved one? What is helpful? What isn't? This is an exploration of some of the things we can say and do (and not do!) to be a source of encouragement and strength.

As he went along, he saw a man blind from birth. His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" Jesus answered, "Neither this man nor his parents sinned, but this happened so that the works of God might be displayed in him" (John 9:2-3)

Our greatest need is not to know the REASON
it's to be in RELATIONSHIP

We can HELP
but we cannot HEAL

We might WOUND
but we cannot DESTROY

Not Helpful:

"We know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose."

Romans 8:28

Calm down!

Cheer up!

Jesus loves you.

This too shall pass.

Suck it up.

People are counting on you.

How are you?

Helpful:

Whoever sings songs to a heavy heart is like one who takes off a garment on a cold day, and like vinegar on soda.

Proverbs 25:20.

It will be okay again.

This is awful.

God is with you.

I'll be here for you.

You don't need to be strong.

You are not alone.

How are you doing *today*?

You are only responsible for:

1. ACTIONS

" There are no great acts, only small acts done with great love."

-Mother Teresa

2. WORDS

3. FEELINGS

4. BOUNDARIES

You are not responsible for someone else's:

1. FEELINGS

2. SOLUTIONS

3. RECOVERY

And behold, a lawyer stood up to put him to the test, saying, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" He said to him, "What is written in the Law? How do you read it?" And he answered, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself." And he said to him, "You have answered correctly; do this, and you will live."

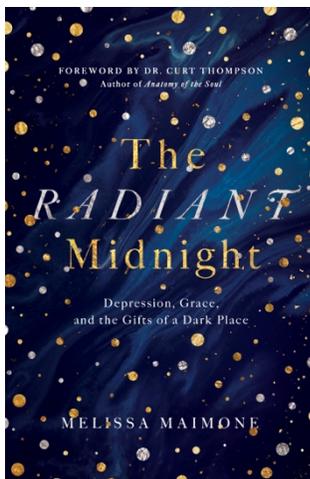
But he, desiring to justify himself, said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?" Jesus replied, "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and he fell among robbers, who stripped him and beat him and departed, leaving him half dead. Now by chance a priest was going down that road, and when he saw him he passed by on the other side. So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan, as he journeyed, came to where he was, and when he saw him, he had compassion. He went to him and bound up his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he set him on his own animal and brought him to an inn and took care of him. And the next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper, saying, 'Take care of him, and whatever more you spend, I will repay you when I come back.' Which of these three, do you think, proved to be a neighbor to the man who fell among the robbers?" He said, "The one who showed him mercy." And Jesus said to him, "You go, and do likewise." Luke 10:25-37

When a person is struggling, those who love them can offer:

1. COURAGE
2. CLARITY
3. PATIENCE
4. COMPASSION

“For years I thought my assignment or the Church's assignment was to articulate the Gospel and nothing more. Now I believe that if we don't support the verbal expression of the Gospel with physical demonstration of compassion, we are not imitating Jesus.”

– Max Lucado



Arriving April 2019: ***The Radiant Midnight: Depression, Grace, and the Gifts of a Dark Place*** by Melissa Maimone. Foreword by Dr. Curt Thompson, MD. Pre-Order a signed copy today at Melissa's table or at MelissaMaimone.com