



Small Group Resources

Chapel Hill Uniting Church

“Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.”

Psalm 23

Week 1 Our Shepherd leads us through all seasons of life

- Read the opening meditation.
- **Watch the clip** Signs and symptoms of Depression:

<https://www.beyondblue.org.au/mental-health/depression>

- As you listen to this story, what do you notice?
- Read the Mental Health continuum, Healthy – Unsettled – Struggling – In Crisis – Healing – Healthy.
- Share about your mental health experience on this continuum.

Healthy

I feel capable and confident in my ability to handle daily pressures. I am thinking clearly and am hopeful about the future. I will maintain my healthy routines and stay connected with loved ones.

Unsettled

I haven't been myself lately. I feel irritable and am having trouble concentrating. I'm not quite sure why I'm feeling the way I am.

Feeling: Worried or restless, Irritable or frustrated, mood fluctuations.

Thoughts: Self-doubt, Confusion, Difficulty concentrating.

Connections: Difficulty connecting and/or engaging with others

Routines: Changes to sleep or diet, increased drug use, alcohol use or gambling

Functioning: Unmotivated, difficulty performing daily activities or tasks.

Struggling

My mood swings have been more frequent. I feel distressed and a growing sense of hopelessness. I've been withdrawing from the things I normally like to do and the people I am close with. I think I might need professional support.

Feeling: Emotional distress, Mood swings, Ongoing high or low mood

Thoughts: Hopelessness, Brain fog or racing thoughts.

Connections: Withdrawal from relationships.

Routines: Loss of usual routines, Engaging in destructive behaviour.

Functioning: Struggle to complete daily tasks, Loss of enjoyment in activities.

In crisis

I feel worthless and unable to control my negative thoughts. Daily tasks feel impossible. I need professional support immediately.

Feeling: Feeling worthless.

Thoughts: Unable to control negative thoughts

Connections: Isolating self

Routines: Lack of personal care

Functioning: Unable to complete daily tasks

Healing

My moods have been more stable and I'm thinking more clearly. I'm starting to feel like myself again. I'm becoming aware of the therapies that are working for me and I will continue to use them.

Healthy

I feel stronger and more resilient. I have a better understanding of myself and am better equipped to handle stress moving forward. I know what coping strategies work for me, and I will use them alongside practising self-care.

➤ **Watch the clip** Managing Mental Health:

<https://www.beyondblue.org.au/mental-health>

- As you consider the challenges of mental health, what do you do to manage your mental health?
- Read Psalm 23, What word or phrase captures you?
- What happens for you as you notice God as Shepherd alongside you?

Close in prayer

Opening Meditation (Based on Psalm 23)

God, my shepherd! I don't need a thing.

You have bedded me down in lush meadows,
you find me quiet pools to drink from.

True to your word, you let me catch my breath
and send me in the right direction.

Even when the way goes through Death Valley,
I'm not afraid when you walk at my side.

You make me feel secure.

You feed me right in front of my enemies.

You revive my drooping head; my cup brims with blessing.

Your beauty and love chase after me every day of my life.

I'm back home in the presence of God for the rest of my life.

Closing Prayer

Lord, I love your presence. As I look back upon the seasons of my life, I see the beauty of your fingerprints everywhere.

Faithfully you shepherd me beside still waters, along paths of righteousness, and through the dark places.

Let me feast upon the good things of your kingdom – peace, joy, hope, love, strength, and grace.

Anoint me with the oil of your Holy Spirit. Let it saturate me until every part of my body, soul and spirit is dripping with the fragrance of your presence.

Transform me from the inside out.

Amen.

Helpful resources

<https://www.beyondblue.org.au/>

<https://www.lifeline.org.au/>

<https://www.blackdoginstitute.org.au/>

<https://www.ruok.org.au/findhelp>

<https://headspace.org.au/headspace-centres/>