

## Small Group Guidelines

1. Keep your sharing focused on your own thoughts and feelings. Limit your sharing to three to five minutes.
2. There will be NO cross talk. Cross talk is when two individuals engage in conversation, excluding all others. Each person is free to express his or her feelings without interruptions.
3. We are here to support one another, not “fix” one another.
4. Anonymity and confidentiality are basic requirements. What is shared in the group stays in the group. The only exception is when someone threatens to injure themselves or others.
5. Offensive language has no place in a Christ-centered recovery group.

### Accountability Team Phone Numbers

Sponsor: \_\_\_\_\_

Accountability Partners: \_\_\_\_\_

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## DEPRESSION

We meet every Friday night...  
6:00 – 7:00p.m. Dinner  
7:00 – 8:00p.m. Main Meeting  
8:00 – 9:00 p.m. Small Groups  
9:00 – 10:00 p.m. Connection Café

Real Life, Moscow Campus  
Eastside Marketplace Mall

For Celebrate Recovery – Moscow Info  
[www.CRMoscow.com](http://www.CRMoscow.com)

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For World Wide Information on CR  
[www.celebraterecovery.com](http://www.celebraterecovery.com)

R e c o v e r y I s s u e s

## The Problem

Millions of people face depression each year. We are not alone in our struggle. Many of us feel empty inside and life seems to slow down. Activities that used to bring us joy no longer feel good. Going places or doing normal activities seem to require super human strength. We wake up at night with highly repetitive and negative thinking. Sometimes, our biggest fear is being found out because of the stigma in our culture about depression. We use vast amounts of energy pretending everything is fine. Depression is not only about feeling sad, it's also about being devoid of all feelings. Some days we feel better than others but often depression has a tendency to get worse as time goes by. Our feelings can lead us to self-medicate, isolate, and even question the point of life.

There are different types of depression including major depression, bipolar disorder, chronic depression, postpartum depression, and seasonal affective disorder (SAD). Each one has different symptoms and has a distinct diagnosis.

There are many factors that can contribute to our depression, including anxiety, broken relationships, conflict, guilt, unrealistic expectations, financial problems, hormonal and chemical imbalances, loss, reactions to medications, illness, harmful thinking patterns, stress and our reactions to it, and more. A combination of any of these individual factors can contribute to the severity of what we feel.

In considering our depression symptoms, it is important to consider the length of time we have had these emotions, the severity of the emotions, as well as the number of factors contributing. Having multiple factors, feelings of deep sadness or a lack of feelings, over an extended period of time increases the need to seek help outside of ourselves. This can be one of the hardest things that we do, but it is a large step towards finding healing.

## The Process of Recovery

Recovery is a process and can take time. However, if you are having suicidal thoughts, it is essential that you reach out for help as soon as possible. Hope is possible.

One of the most important things we can do in finding freedom from depression is to stop isolating ourselves. The more we feel like isolating, the more important it is to reach out for help. We need to speak honestly with friends, family, or professionals. Celebrate Recovery is a great place to build new friendships.

We need to recognize that because depression is multi-faceted, the way out is also multi-faceted. Treatment should correspond to the issues. Medication can help some, but others might need a different approach. Finding relationships that are safe and where we can be emotionally authentic is central to healing for all kinds of depression. Learning to quiet our minds and simplify life can help. Exercise may seem impossible, but it can offer similar affects as medication. Keeping a mood journal can be comforting and insightful. A gratefulness journal is also important to keep our perspective balanced. These things can help us to realize we can overcome difficulties and encourage us in the dark days.

If our depression lasts for several weeks, is sever from the onset, or we experience several persisting factors, it is time to seek professional help. There is no shame in asking for help! Pastoral guidance can help us work through the problems we find in life. Professional counseling can help to give a new perspective and discover new options for treatments. Medical help is essential to determine if there are physical problems occurring. It is important to realize that medications can be helpful but are not a perfect science yet. If medications don't help or seem to worsen the problem we need to speak again with our medical provider immediately.

The most important thing is to not give up. Keep talking, keep seeking, and keep asking for help. Begin the process of recovery and working through the 12 steps to heal and start living the life God has planned for us. Use the tools of recovery: calling our accountability partners, journaling and reading the Bible.