

A person in a dark hoodie stands with their back to the camera on a wooden bridge. The bridge is wet and reflects the colors of a sunset sky, which is filled with soft pinks, oranges, and purples. The background shows a misty, forested landscape under a dark, overcast sky.

SERIOUS MENTAL ILLNESS IS NOT WHAT YOU THINK

SMALL STEPS
YOUR CHURCH CAN TAKE
TO PROVIDE GOSPEL HOPE
FOR FAMILIES AFFECTED
BY MENTAL ILLNESS.

Many families, some already in our churches, are quietly carrying the weight of serious mental illness. Conditions like schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, and severe depression affect thinking, perception, daily life, not just mood.

Caregivers often feel isolated, exhausted, and unsure where to turn. Many have searched for support in the church and found silence. But the church was never meant to look away from suffering.

A person is sitting on a long wooden pier that extends from the foreground into the distance, meeting the horizon. The sky is a soft, warm orange and pink, suggesting a sunset or sunrise. The water is calm and reflects the light of the sky. The pier is made of weathered wooden planks and has several vertical posts along its length.

A SILENT CRISIS IN THE CHURCH

WHY IS THE CHURCH AFRAID TO STEP IN?

Serious mental illness can feel overwhelming and unfamiliar. These are some possible reasons why caring churches are unsure how to respond when a family is facing schizophrenia, bipolar disorder or psychosis...

- 1 FEELING UNQUALIFIED
- 2 FEAR OF WORSENING THE SITUATION
- 3 NOT KNOWING WHAT TO LOOK FOR
- 4 LACK OF UNDERSTANDING
- 5 PRE-CONCEIVED IDEAS ABOUT SMI

MISTAKES THAT LEAVE



OVER-SPIRITUALIZE

Mental illness is treated as purely a **spiritual** problem.



- » You just need more faith.
- » Have you tried praying harder?
- » Maybe there is sin that needs to be addressed.

THE RESULT

Caregivers are misguided and misunderstood by the church. They carry the burden quietly and alone.

CAREGIVERS HELPLESS



OVER-MEDICALIZE

Faith is removed entirely.
Care becomes purely **clinical**.

- » This is something specialists should handle.
- » We wouldn't know what to do.
- » We aren't qualified to help



THE RESULT

Caregivers receive treatment resources, but little spiritual or relational support from their church community.

A GOSPEL CENTERED RESPONSE

We believe that:

- the brain can suffer illness
- medical care can be appropriate
- Christ is still the *ultimate* source of hope

START WHERE YOU ARE!

It is likely there are already people in your church caring for loved ones with SMI. You do not need to be a mental health professional to step into the suffering...

1

AWARENESS

- » Learn what SMI actually is
- » Read the SMI Primer
- » Invite training for your church
- » Talk openly about mental illness in church

2

WELCOME

- » Identify someone who can respond when families reach out
- » Crisis response awareness
- » A safe first conversation

3

RELATIONSHIP

- » Connect with families walking this road
- » Listen well to their stories
- » Enter in with love, not to fix
- » Point to Jesus for real hope

GOING FURTHER

If you feel called to go deeper, consider hosting a Caregiver Support Group meeting in your church. You already have almost everything you need, and we can supply the rest!

WHAT YOU NEED:

- a safe, welcoming space
- people willing to listen
- Scripture and prayer
- a simple guide to follow
- minimal training



LEARN ABOUT OUR CAREGIVER SUPPORT GROUP MEETING

Our Caregiver Support Group meeting format is simple and gospel-rooted. It is designed to be a safe place for caregivers to share their struggles and encourage each other to look to Christ for hope.

The curriculum is built from our own wrestling through questions that arise when caring for someone with SMI.

**NO DIAGNOSING. NO FIXING.
JUST LIFTING OUR EYES TO CHRIST.**

CAREGIVER SUPPORT GROUP MEETING

➤➤➤➤ **QUESTION** *Is my loved one's mental illness my fault?*

➤➤➤➤ **SCRIPTURE** *John 9:1-7*

➤➤➤➤ **DISCUSSION** *Have you ever struggled with this idea?*

➤➤➤➤ **OBSERVATION** *Gospel Truth*

➤➤➤➤ **HOPE** *Because of Jesus...*

➤➤➤➤ **PRAYER** *Prayer of lament and hope*



**TO SEE A FULL SAMPLE
OF THE DISCUSSION
GUIDE, SCAN BELOW!**

P82 wants to support what God may already be doing in your church. If you are thinking, “I don’t have time for another program,” or “I don’t have trained people for this,” we have built this model to be simple and easily integrated in your church.

LOW TIME COMMITMENT

- » 2x monthly meetings
- » Little prep work
- » Minimal training
- » Minimal time spent outside of the meeting

STRUCTURED/GUIDED

- » Pre-written discussion guides
- » All guides follow the same flow
- » Launch plan included

SUSTAINABLE

- » Led by church members
- » No special mental health qualifications necessary to lead the group
- » Pastor only needs to oversee

BUILT FOR HOPE

- » The meeting is gospel hope, not fixing the situation
- » It is not a bible study, it is gospel truth presented in a simple way that suffering people can resonate with

What might it look like for your church to take one step toward struggling families?

Whether your church takes small or giant steps to walk with families facing SMI, we are thankful for your desire to share the love of Christ with suffering people.

IF YOU WOULD LIKE MORE
INFORMATION ON THE
CAREGIVER SUPPORT GROUP,
SCAN BELOW!



IF YOU WOULD LIKE
MORE INFORMATION ON
OUR BELIEFS OR OTHER
SERVICES, SCAN BELOW!



P82 HOMES
PROJECT RESTORATION

Practical AND *Biblical* SUPPORT FOR FAMILIES
AFFECTED BY SERIOUS MENTAL ILLNESS

P82HOMES.ORG

