

The background of the page is a complex, light blue maze. A path of slightly darker blue lines winds through the maze, starting from the bottom left and leading towards the text. The maze consists of many interconnected rectangular and square paths of varying widths.

What Church Leaders
Are Saying

about

THEY SAY

An Increase in Diagnoses of Mental Illness

“Scholars tell us that in 2014 one in five of the U.S. population between the ages of 18 to 25 had a mental illness.¹ This reaches down to younger ages and causes overall anxieties and significant overload among mental health counselors. We are told that between 2008 and 2016, there was a 40 percent increase in college students being diagnosed or treated for depression, and a 70 percent increase in diagnosis of or treatment for anxiety.² Truly these are different times for your generation, and it is not surprising that you young marrieds look to Church leaders for help in doing what you need to do and teaching your children what you need to teach.”³

—President Dallin H. Oaks, First Counselor in the First Presidency

Mourning with Those That Mourn

“The best thing is: if you genuinely love the person, then you’re willing to sit there with them, and you’re willing to cry with them, and you’re willing to hold them. And you do that in concert with health care professionals and with ecclesiastical leaders, with friends and family support. In most cases people continue to have a burden, but the burden can be made lighter. And as that happens, joy can fill their soul again.”⁴

—Elder Dale G. Renlund of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

We Should Never Be Ashamed of a Mental Illness

“I wish to speak to those who suffer from some form of mental illness or emotional disorder, whether those afflictions be slight or severe, of brief duration or persistent over a lifetime. . . . These afflictions are some of the realities of mortal life, and there should be no more shame in acknowledging them than in acknowledging a battle with high blood pressure or the sudden appearance of a malignant tumor.”⁵

—Elder Jeffrey R. Holland
of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

The Savior Knows Our Pains

“Some are born with physical or mental disabilities that cause personal suffering for them and struggles for those who love and care for them. For many, the infirmity of depression is painful or permanently disabling. . . .

“. . . [The Savior] knows of our anguish, and He is there for us. . . . The healing and strengthening power of Jesus Christ and His Atonement is for all of us who will ask.”⁶

—President Dallin H. Oaks,
First Counselor in the First Presidency

Reaching Out with Love

“As disciples of Jesus Christ, we have made a covenant with God that we ‘are willing to bear one another’s burdens’ and ‘to mourn with those that mourn’ [Mosiah 18:8–9]. This may include becoming informed about emotional illnesses, finding resources that can help address these struggles, and ultimately bringing ourselves and others to Christ, who is the Master Healer. Even if we do not know how to relate to what others are going through, validating that their pain is real can be an important first step in finding understanding and healing. . . .

“Sadly, many who suffer from severe depression distance themselves from their fellow Saints because they feel they do not fit some imaginary mold. We can help them know and feel that they do indeed belong with us. It is important to recognize that depression is not the result of weakness, nor is it usually the result of sin [see John 9:1–7]. It “thrives in secrecy but shrinks in empathy” [Jane Clayson Johnson, *Silent Souls Weeping* (2018), 197]. Together, we can break through the clouds of isolation and stigma so the burden of shame is lifted and miracles of healing can occur.”⁷

—Reyna I. Aburto, Second Counselor
in the Relief Society General Presidency

Seek Professional Help When Needed

“If things continue to be debilitating, seek the advice of reputable people with certified training, professional skills, and good values. Be honest with them about your history and your struggles. Prayerfully and responsibly consider the counsel they give and the solutions they prescribe. If you had appendicitis, God would expect you to seek a priesthood blessing *and* get the best medical care available. So too with emotional disorders. Our Father in Heaven expects us to use *all* of the marvelous gifts He has provided in this glorious dispensation.”⁸

—Elder Jeffrey R. Holland
of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

Hope Is Found in the Savior

“From time to time our lives may seem to be touched by, or even wrapped in, darkness. Sometimes the night that surrounds us will appear oppressive, disheartening, and frightening.

“My heart grieves for the many sorrows some of you face, for the painful loneliness and wearisome fears you may be experiencing.

“Nevertheless, I bear witness that our living hope is in Christ Jesus! He is the true, pure, and powerful entrance to divine enlightenment.

“I testify that with Christ, darkness cannot succeed. Darkness will not gain victory over the light of Christ.”⁹

—Elder Dieter F. Uchtdorf
of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

The Master Healer

“When tragedies overtake us, when life hurts so much we can’t breathe, when we’ve taken a beating like the man on the road to Jericho and been left for dead, Jesus comes along and pours oil into our wounds, lifts us tenderly up, takes us to an inn, looks after us [see Luke 10:30–35]. To those of us in grief, He says, ‘I will . . . ease the burdens which are put upon your shoulders, that even you cannot feel them upon your backs, . . . that ye may know of a surety that I, the Lord God, do visit my people in their afflictions’ [Mosiah 24:14]. Christ heals wounds.”¹⁰

—Sharon Eubank, First Counselor in the Relief Society General Presidency

We as Saints Can Lift and Bless Each Other

“Months ago, we tragically lost a member of our ward to suicide. Our hearts have been heavy with the loss of our dear friend.

“The Sunday following this heartbreaking event, I attended my church meetings. It was so comforting to be with my ward family! During our Relief Society meeting, our inspired and insightful Relief Society president wisely used that hour as time for the sisters to share their thoughts and feelings about this loss. She decided that what the sisters of our ward needed that Sunday was to minister to each other in a beautifully personal way, instead of following the lesson plan. She turned our Relief Society meeting into a council that provided us an opportunity for comfort and healing.”¹¹

—Reyna I. Aburto, Second Counselor in the Relief Society General Presidency

We Can Be Made Perfect through Christ

“I bear witness of that day when loved ones whom we knew to have disabilities in mortality will stand before us glorified and grand, breathtakingly perfect in body and mind. What a thrilling moment that will be! I do not know whether we will be happier for ourselves that we have witnessed such a miracle or happier for them that they are fully perfect and finally ‘free at last.’ Until that hour when Christ’s consummate gift is evident to us all, may we live by faith, hold fast to hope, and show ‘compassion one of another’ [1 Peter 3:8].”¹²

—Elder Jeffrey R. Holland
of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

NOTES

1. See Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality, *Behavioral Health Trends in the United States: Results from the 2014 National Survey on Drug Use and Health* (2015), 28, samhsa.gov/data.
2. See Lisa Ann Jackson Thomson and Peter B. Gardner, “When the Light Goes Out,” *BYU Magazine*, Spring 2017, 24.
3. Dallin H. Oaks, “Young Marrieds Devotional” (address given at Los Angeles California Santa Monica Stake Center, Aug. 24, 2018).
4. Dale G. Renlund, “Suicide Prevention: Reaching Out to Help” (video), [youtube.com/watch?v=VmYG4Zm8tS8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VmYG4Zm8tS8).
5. Jeffrey R. Holland, “Like a Broken Vessel,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2013, 40.
6. Dallin H. Oaks, “Strengthened by the Atonement of Jesus Christ,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2015, 63, 64.
7. Reyna I. Aburto, “Thru Cloud and Sunshine, Lord, Abide with Me!” *Ensign*, Nov. 2019, 58.
8. Jeffrey R. Holland, “Like a Broken Vessel,” 41.
9. Dieter F. Uchtdorf, “The Hope of God’s Light,” *Ensign*, May 2013, 76–77.
10. Sharon Eubank, “Christ: The Light That Shines in Darkness,” *Ensign*, May 2019, 74.
11. Reyna I. Aburto, Facebook post, Feb. 16, 2019.
12. Jeffrey R. Holland, “Like a Broken Vessel,” 42.