

The logo consists of a dark blue teardrop shape with the text "IDMC" in a bold, white, sans-serif font above the word "MOVEMENT" in a smaller, white, sans-serif font.

IDMC
MOVEMENT

LIFE GROUP STUDY MATERIAL

EMOTIONAL HEALTH

**SESSION #1:
SCRATCHING BENEATH THE SURFACE**

SESSION #1

SCRATCHING BENEATH THE SURFACE

LESSON AIM

To help us move beyond surface-level coping by learning to process our emotions biblically, through honesty with God, reflection on His character, and a renewed trust anchored in the gospel.

VIDEO LESSON

Link to video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kDoNxaLP4RA>

SCRIPTURE READING

Psalms 13

1 How long, O LORD? Will you forget me forever?

How long will you hide your face from me?

2 How long must I take counsel in my soul

and have sorrow in my heart all the day?

How long shall my enemy be exalted over me?

3 Consider and answer me, O LORD my God;

light up my eyes, lest I sleep the sleep of death,

4 lest my enemy say, "I have prevailed over him,"

lest my foes rejoice because I am shaken.

5 But I have trusted in your steadfast love;

my heart shall rejoice in your salvation.

6 I will sing to the LORD,

because he has dealt bountifully with me.

Psalms 13 (ESV)

INTRODUCTION

In our journey toward emotional health, one of the biggest challenges is that we often deal only with what's on the surface. We focus on addressing symptoms—when we feel stress, anxiety, or overwhelm, our instinct is to find quick relief rather than understand the root cause. But the truth is, what lies beneath the surface is what truly shapes our emotional life. If we never go deeper, we can end up stuck in

repeating cycles without real breakthrough. True emotional health begins when we slow down, look within, and allow God to deal with what's happening at a deeper level.

This lesson introduces a biblical framework for nurturing emotional health through four key practices:

- Be Aware of Your Feelings
- Be Authentic with God
- Be Accountable to Others
- Be Anchored in the Gospel

These aren't quick fixes, but a pathway that helps us move from surface-level coping to genuine transformation, as we learn to process our emotions with God, in community, and through the truth of the gospel. In this lesson we will look at Psalm 13 to help us move beyond surface-level coping to how we can process our emotions biblically.

1. Recount Your Pain (Psalm 13:1–4)

David begins by honestly expressing what he feels before God. He repeatedly asks, "How long, O Lord?" revealing a deep sense of being forgotten, forsaken, and overwhelmed. He describes the inner turmoil of wrestling within his soul and carrying sorrow all day, even to the point of feeling like he is slipping into darkness. This shows us that emotional health starts with awareness and honesty. Instead of suppressing or minimizing our emotions, we are invited to bring our pain openly before God and process it truthfully in His presence.

2. Recall God's Character (Psalm 13:5–6)

In the midst of his distress, David shifts his focus from his situation to who God is. He reminds himself of God's steadfast love and salvation, anchoring his heart not in his feelings but in God's unchanging nature. Even though his circumstances have not yet changed, his perspective begins to shift as he reflects on God's faithfulness, goodness, and care. This teaches us that emotional stability is not found in our situation improving, but in remembering who God is in the middle of our situation.

3. Resolve to Trust God (Psalm 13:5–6)

After recounting his pain and recalling God's character, David makes a conscious decision to trust God. He declares, "I have trusted in your steadfast love" and chooses to rejoice and sing, even before his situation is resolved. This is a turning point where faith leads his emotions rather than the other way around. It

shows us that emotional health involves not just feeling and reflecting, but choosing to trust God, believing that He is at work, and responding with worship even in the midst of uncertainty.

In conclusion, emotional health is not just learning how to bring our pain to God, but also learning how to train our hearts to trust Him.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Instructions for group facilitators: Every group is different. You may modify the discussion questions to suit your group and you do not need to use all the questions in the group discussion.

Question 1: In Psalm 13, what emotions do you see David expressing? Which part of his struggle stands out most to you?

Question 2: Why do you think it's important that David is so honest with God instead of hiding how he feels?

Question 3: When you go through stress or overwhelm, do you tend to deal with the "symptoms" or the "root"? What does that usually look like in your life?

Question 4: Which of the four keys do you find most natural, and which one do you tend to avoid:

- Being aware of your feelings
- Being authentic with God
- Being accountable to others
- Being anchored in the gospel

Question 5: What would it look like for you to "recount your pain" honestly before God this week? What might be holding you back from doing that?

Question 6: David shifts from focusing on his situation to focusing on God. What helps (or could help) you make that shift in your own life?

Question 7: Looking at David's journey in Psalm 13, what is one specific step you sense God inviting you to take this week to move from "recounting your pain" toward "trusting Him"?

NEXT STEPS

Take time this week to slow down and reflect on what's happening beneath the surface of your emotions. Ask God to help you become aware of what you are truly feeling, and bring it honestly before Him in prayer. Consider which of the four keys you need to intentionally practise—whether that is opening up to God, inviting accountability, or anchoring yourself again in the gospel. Make space to not only process your pain, but also to remember God's goodness and give thanks. Do you know someone who could benefit from this lesson? Share what you have learned and invite them to join you for the next session.