

my physical ability and mental acuity to find my own solution. I did not stop to think of the countless times my Heavenly Father has helped me in the past.

I'm so glad that I was not able to "evade" the presence of God that day. He sent 3 strong men to carry me (piggyback) off the mountain – Mike, Vitali, and Matt. They did not know me and they did not know each other, but they appeared one-by-one offering help. Amazingly, our little rescue caravan arrived at the parking lot before dark. Marlene and I arrived at the Johnson City Medical Center emergency room about 45 minutes later, where x-rays confirmed a fractured fibula.

I am grateful for a God who always remembers us even when we momentarily forget Him. He is able to meet our needs in unexpected ways; and on that day I experienced the truth of C.S. Lewis' words, along with the truth of Ephesians 3:20 (NKJV) – "God is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think..."

Reference

1. Lewis, C.S. (Clive Staples), 1898-1963. *Letters to Malcolm: chiefly on prayer*. New York, Harcourt, Brace & World [1964] (OCoLC)607889289



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Patient Health – It's Not Just Physical

By Luke Nesbitt

COVID-19 has revealed something that has been true in our society for a long time, but either we weren't open about it or we just didn't pay attention to it: mental health is a huge issue for so many people. While this isn't necessarily a new concept, I think the way we look at it definitely is. I've been encouraged this year to see celebrities, universities, and sports commentators addressing the mental health crisis in the US. According to the Hope for Depression Research Foundation, depression affects over 18 million adults in the US in any given year and accounts for \$23 billion in lost workdays each year. Every day, approximately 110 Americans take their own life, and roughly 3,500 people attempt to do so... which brings us to the question: what can we as Christian pharmacists do about it? To hopefully answer that, let me tell you a story.

I am a P3 student at the Medical University of South Carolina in Charleston. Starting in the spring, our Pharmacy program offered Mental Health First Aid

Certifications through the National Council for Mental Wellbeing. I didn't take the course in the spring, but I took it when it became available again in the fall -- only because one of my classmates encouraged me to do so. While the material we covered was incredibly insightful, I couldn't imagine a situation where I would actually use it.



Fast forward 2 weeks. As I walked out of our student health building, an older student grabbed me and begged me to sit down with her. She was in tears and she was shaking, so I sat down and asked her what's going on. Through our conversation, I learned that she was having a drug interaction between caffeine and her antidepressant, and she was on the phone with the Suicide Prevention Hotline. My recent training instantly kicked in and I asked what I could do for her and if she needed any outside resources. I asked her the hardest question you can ask someone: "Are you planning to kill yourself?" She said yes, which is the most heartbreaking thing I've ever heard. Somehow, the hotline she had been on hold with for over 7 minutes still had her on hold, so I finally took her inside the building and asked a nurse for help. I am thankful to say that she was able to speak to a counselor she knew.

I've talked to her since then, and she is so grateful for that help. When I think of how the Lord used my classmate to encourage me to

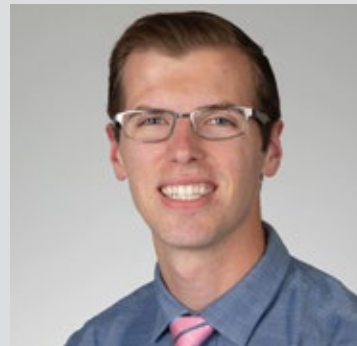
get trained so that I'd be prepared for when that girl needed me, I get shivers to this day. The point of this story is twofold: 1) any person, even those with the highest medical training, can have mental health issues; and 2) there are practical steps we can take to be prepared.

If you are reading this article and you are struggling with mental health issues yourself, there are phenomenal resources available to you. And please know this one simple truth: you are not alone! There are many others who struggle too; and more importantly, there are people who care and will take the time to help you. If you are not struggling, I strongly encourage you to take mental health crisis training so you can be prepared for a mental health emergency.

In school, we are learning to utilize the PHQ2 depression test questionnaire (<https://www.hiv.uw.edu/page/mental-health-screening/phq-2>) in every patient interview to screen for our patient's mental wellbeing. I believe this is an important initiative and I hope it becomes universal for all patient interviews.

Finally, I want to reflect on our biggest mission as Christians. We are called to go into the world, preach the Gospel (Mark 16:15) and love each other because we are all made in the image of God. Pharmacy is one path that we choose to live out this mission. While we may not always have an opportunity in these instances to pray or talk about our faith, the love and care we show for those with mental disorders – as well as our normalization of discussions around mental health – is still showing God's love. Medications and therapies can help stabilize brain chemistry, but the knowledge of God's grace and love for us works wonders we can't begin to imagine. I hope you will take these steps, be prepared, and wait expectantly... trusting that God will give us divine appointments to help others, if we are only willing!

"For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do." Ephesians 2:8-10 (NIV)



Luke Nesbitt is a 3rd Year pharmacy student at the Medical University of South Carolina in Charleston. He is the current President of their CPFI student organization. He grew up in Greenville, South Carolina and attended Clemson University for his undergraduate studies. His career goal is to one day work in an ambulatory care clinic. When he's not studying, Luke loves to be with his church/community group, explore Charleston, and go golfing.

Can I Really Use my Pharmacist License to Spread the Gospel Message? By Bryan Hammons

I was 45 years old and had a corporate job with absolutely zero patient interaction. Actually, the last role where I had patient interaction was in retail pharmacy 17 years prior. How could I possibly use my profession to spread the Gospel?

That was the challenge I faced in 2007, after going through a Bible study on Matthew chapter 28. Matthew 28:19 (NIV) says, *"Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."*

All nations. Yes, I could donate financially to organizations that work to share the Gospel around the globe. However, this Bible study challenged us to take our profession and use it as a vehicle for sharing the Gospel. Being a pharmacist is a profession that I felt was God-ordained in my life. No one in my family was in the medical profession; but in my high school years I sensed that pharmacy was right for me since it's in the healthcare field but requires less years of education than a physician.

So, I began to ask different people, "How do I use my profession of pharmacy to spread the Gospel?" Some

people didn't have any good ideas, while others said, "Don't try, just give money to Gospel organizations." Finally, someone asked, "Have you ever done a medical mission trip? It's a real thing, you should Google it."

Now, I had been on mission trips before. I traveled to China several years earlier, and I had served in my church's youth ministry by doing mission trips and camps with them. But medical mission trips? I had never heard of such a thing. So, I Googled "medical mission trips" and the first result I got was Global Health Outreach (GHO).

After some research I learned that GHO is the missions arm of the Christian Medical and Dental Association (CMDA). Wow – this sounded like the organization for me. After discussing it with my wife, we decided that a short-term medical mission trip was the right fit. I began to search their mission calendar for trips that would fit with my upcoming work schedule. I landed on two possibilities: Afghanistan and Moldova. After telling my wife about the options, she replied, "Congratulations! You're going to Moldova!"

GHO does a great job of describing the full scope of the trip, such as who they partner with locally, the logistics,