

LEADING SAINTS

Anxiety Management Using Gospel Principles | An Interview with David Morgan

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Everyone I want to let you know about an upcoming virtual conference that you gotta check out in an effort to bring more thoughtful dialog to the topic of mental health in the latter day. Saint context the leading saints team has put together the mentally healthy saints virtual summit we have interviewed twenty plus individuals with expertise or real life experience related to so many mental health topics including anxiety depression eating disorders. Adhd and even scrupulously we will discuss all these topics as they relate to the latter day saint faith experience and how we can all come together to better minister to those who struggle with mental health. It's free to attend. Virtually he kind of join us for more details on the topics that we will cover during the summit and register for free text the word lead to four seven four seven four seven or visit leading saints dot org slash mental health again. Text the word lead to four seven. Four seven four seven or visit leading saints dot org slash mental health. My name is Jason Bigham. I'm the bishop of Riba Award in Brigham City, Utah and I support leading saints. Since the day I started listening to help me connect with resources and information that I never would have found otherwise so semi grateful for the things that Curtis put together for us. Hey everyone welcome. Back to the leading saints podcast. My name is Kurt Franken is to have you here. And if you're leading saints. I know I know if you're not new this part that you always have to skip over. Hang with me here because this is exciting. You need to know if your new that leading saints is a five zero one. C three nonprofit organization dedicated helping latter day saints be better prepared to lead and we do that through content creation. One like this podcast. We have newsletter. We have a website leading saints dot org tons of articles live events virtual events podcasts. Make sure you subscribe to all the above and don't miss any fantastic information now. You may know. Maybe I put a bumper. The beginning of of this podcast. I assume I did about the upcoming virtual summit called mentally healthy saints and this is where we do a deep dive into mental health in the context of being a latter day saint and even in the context of leading latter day

saints better mental health and so we've interviewed twenty plus authors experts. Phd's personal every individuals who've had their own struggle with with mental health and soc- what we could learn and i had the opportunity of interviewing dr. David morgan who's a psychologist up in washington and a phenomenal concept that you should consider ponder over and then we had a great a great question answer session at the end and so attention to the six gospel centered approaches to anxiety and how we can better help people understand and mitigate their own in their life. Now this is done a little bit different since it's a virtual. Some tried something different. This round where i gave the presenter forty five minutes to present unpack that the concepts of their presentation than at the end. It's more of an interview style. So i'd love to share this with it. Jump in and you get a taste of what the mentally healthy saints. Virtual summit will be like that you can sign up for it leading saints dot org slash mental health and his for free. So don't miss it. So here's my interview with dr david morgan today. Have the opportunity to talk with or we get the opportunity to learn from. Dr david morgan. How're you david wonderful. Thanks for having me. I'm excited to learn from you. And you know we haven't had much history or connection before this presentation. And and but i've been hearing good things about what you do and perspective you share. And so what brought you to this point. And what intrigued you about maybe presenting around these topics to audience. Well i just. I've always loved the kind of the intersection between the gospel of jesus christ in mental health. I'll talk about that a little bit in my presentation. But i've been a licensed psychologist for twenty years and a member of the church. Jesus christ of latter day saints that whole time as well and what i've just noticed is that there's so many just principles of the gospel that can help us improve our mental health and i think it's becoming even more critical now Some people are talking about the next pandemic being a mental health pandemic or the people that haven't coped as well with covid. Nineteen that these issues are going to start to come to the forefront. So i just think it's important to get good and accurate information out there about how we can manage these things and from gospel perspective as well. Yeah love it will. Let's jump into it and also back and take some notes at the end here. Okay so thanks again. I'm so glad to be here and be part this.

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This virtual mental health summit. This is amazing. I mean this is part of the with covid nineteen. That's been a drag. i mean. Let's not mince words but there are so many good things that are going to come of it and these types of things are some of the good things that come of that just this last week i was in provo. I was invited to speak at the women's conference which is all virtual this year. And so i went to the broadcasting studio recorded my remarks and so that's going to be i mean typically they can get you know a few thousand people there on campus but this has the potential this woman conference to reach tens of thousands and just like this presentation as well so thanks to kurt for putting it together for all the work that he does and and and i appreciate the opportunity to be here as well as i mentioned kind of in my discussion with him. I'm a licensed collagen. I got my bachelors masters and phd at byu and provo utah and it was a great blessing because it enabled me to learn the gospel. Jesus christ at the same time. I was learning about psychology. And what i found in the year. Since then is that. They're just

there's so many ways in which the interface in so many ways in which they overlap and when i read the scriptures i i just see aspects of say how you can manage anxiety. That's how you can manage depression. That's how you can increase self esteem or or improve relationships and so i love being able to share that with others. Not so we're going to talk about. Today's anxiety management using gospel principles. Let me show you to the slide here so already told you about me so we don't need to know any more about that but let's look at the scripture. This is a scripture. That's always intrigued. Me from the book of mormon because it's so out a place This is alma chapter. Forty six is a captain moroni title liberty. So that's like the bulk of the chapter and then you get this strange little scripture right at the end of it and it says And there were some who died with fevers which is some seasons of the year were very frequent in the land but not so much with fevers because of the qualities of the many plants and roots which god had prepared to remove the cause of diseases to which men were subject by the nature of the climate totally out of left field. Mormon makes this commentary. And i think it's one of the few scriptures in the book of mormon that actually references kind of like a health or physical health issues and remedies for that and so but it makes sense right because pharmaceuticals weren't going to be widely available until many centuries from them and so have my father said hey. Let's prepare some ways. That people can still be healthy that they can be healed from things that just exists. You know that probably existed in the garden of eden or or just growing plants in the world after that so when i read that scripture. I think wouldn't. He have done the same mental health. Would or would have said. Hey sorry guys. You're gonna have to wait until the mid eighteen hundreds till sigmund freud comes around and then you're going to be able to have some good tools to deal with mental health and apologies ginny psychoanalyst out there. I don't think that sigmund freud had great tools mental health. So basically you have to wait till the nineteen seventies until we get some really good tools to manage mental health. Of course not. He says i'm gonna give you those tools from the very beginning and they're in scripture and that's where we can find them and so As we talk about principles to manage anxiety today it's going to be a combination is going to be true principles that are founded in research and good psychological practice but that are also found in the scriptures as well. Those same principles are found Maybe couched a little bit differently but the same truths are found in scripture. And i think basically what we've got is we've got. The principles of psychology are simply gospel. Truth that have been revealed to smart women and men over the years who have studied psychology. And then they've been couched in psychological terms than all. Truth comes from the same source. It doesn't matter whether it's chemistry or physics truth or psychology truth or medicine truth at all comes our heavenly father so those are things we'll talk about today and i'm i'm grateful to be able to talk about that. So let's look at six principals today and these are things that you can use for yourself if you struggle with anxiety if you are a leader of people and you find that they have a lot of anxiety. These are things that you can use to better understand them. Some people don't have anxiety and they don't really get it but this might help you understand it a little bit better so the principles applied to both. I was just talking with a stick release. It president in texas the other day and she was saying that in her work with the sisters her stake that almost every single sister is either struggling with a mental health issue or has kind of a first degree association with someone who is struggling with the mental health issue. And if you're listening to this i would imagine that it's probably similar either the principles we talk about today. Either you are feeling them or are the not the principles but the the anxiety symptoms. We talk

about your feeling them now or you felt them in the past or you know someone who is currently feeling them. Respect them in the past. They're very germane to us today. So let's get onto the first one here and it seems kind of silly but it's don't worry about having having anxiety.

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Anxiety is a very natural experience and it is. It's biologically driven and some anxiety is actually good for us. There's actually a model if you imagine a curve like this parabola it. It's called the yorkies dodson model of performance of stress performance and so at one end where the anxiety is very low. It says that there's hardly any motivation to do anything as stress and anxiety increases which is an optimal point so this moderate amount of stress and anxiety is tends to be good for performance. So if you're getting ready to go play a piano solo or something like that if you have no motivation to do it it's probably going to be crummy if you have too much anxiety to do it. Then you might stumble but if you have just that right amount of anxiety than it's good it's like me right now. I mean. I'm i enjoy public speaking but i'm a little bit nervous right now. Not overly nervous but that moderate amount of anxiety is can help improve my performance. So that's fine. I'm anxiety is is good woman. Did the energy boosts as well biologically. It's kind of that fight or flight sort of thing. I don't know if you saw was probably a year ago. It was some guy in provo canyon in utah. And this cougar. Or mountain lion comes out of nowhere and his And keeps threatening him. And i can tell you not having ever been in a situation like that. But having had extreme anxiety at that dimes at times that guy was probably freaking out and that anxiety is going to enable him to run faster to run longer. Climb quicker anything like that. And it's the body's natural defense against that sort of a predators or fearful situations. The problem is that we don't usually run into those and sometimes we get that same amount of anxiety by walking into a crowded grocery store. Now there is nothing inherently dangerous about a crowded grocery store but some people have the exact same emotional experience walking into that store as that fellow did being chased by a mountain lion and because the mind doesn't really know the difference in those situations are experiences are the same and when that anxiety becomes chronic than it becomes problematic. Because it's never designed is designed to be kind of the short term burst of energy that help us and then it subsides again but when our foot on the pedal for days weeks months and years it tends to really wear us out. So that's where we have to learn to manage that. When i say don't worry about having anxiety when i mean is what i also means that. It's okay to have weakness. It's okay to have challenges in our lives. if you say. We'll the morgan. That's fine but i. I do have anxiety all the time and i can't walk into a crowded grocery store without having a panic attack. I'm here to tell you that's okay. It's part of the plan either. Twelve twenty seven morona is commenting about his weakness in the lord says i given to men weakness that they may be humble and i think that's true i think many of our chronic challenges including mental health issues are part of that process for heavenly father to teach us to be humble abbas reach out to him. When everything's fine we usually don't reach out for help. We say. I got this. No problem and i'm and i'm going to be fine when the going gets tough. That's dropped to our knees and seventy father. Please help me. I kind of think that he keeps the flame turned on most of the time. Sometimes it's than others. But i think he does that on purpose so that we will be humble

and that we will go to him so oftentimes Anxiety or any other mental health issue is quite frankly gift from heavenly father. It's a way for us to to learn to grow and to learn to trust him so even just thinking about it that way might think. Okay well. I have anxiety. But i don't need to be freaking out about the fact that i have anxiety because my anxiety is a gift. It's a test from heavenly father. The other thing is that sometimes we just need something to push against elderberry. Many years ago talked about a situation where friend bought a four wheel drive truck to get up in the snow to cut some wood and as soon as he gets up there it's stuck and all four tires or spending and he's thinking great. What do i do so he says i'm here. I'm as well get the would so it cuts the would loads of the truck. Dan when he starts the truck again. He's able to go because the extra weight of the would if him enough traction to keep going and he said that sometimes you need that extra load in life in order to keep going to give traction move forward. So i when i say don't worry about having anxiety that's what i mean. This is something that can be to your benefit. Something that can help you grow and so if you say. Hey that's just me. I having zayed's issues just the way it is. There's nothing wrong with me. i'm not broken. I'm not flawed or cursed or anything like that. It's just my situation and it gives me an opportunity to improve. So that's principle number one is not to worry about the fact. You might have anxiety a number two to understand diagnosis diagnostic labels. Google is amazing. And it's wonderful. It's been kind of a nightmare for mental health professionals like myself because everybody google's their symptoms and they come in and they say have already diagnosed myself.

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And i'm asking you please. If you're watching this don't do that. That's our job just like if you had a physical health issue you wouldn't have. I suppose you google lead but let us be the final determination on if anything is wrong with you because sometimes they're not diagnoses. Mental health diagnoses are formalized in a big book called the diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders. It's currently in its fifth edition and basically everything that could possibly go wrong with your mental health wise and but those the purpose of those diagnoses is for mental health professionals to be able to communicate kind of distinctly with one another. So if i read a report from another psychologist and she says that this person has diagnosis one. Two and three. That gives me a wealth of information by just those three lists of things. Because then i have a pretty good idea of what this person is going through what struggles they have. And what direction treatment might take now. These diagnostic labels. They change from time to time and they are politically motivated. There is a group of psychiatrists who make the final decision on this and believe me. There are a lot of influences that come onto this committee and some diagnoses. Make it in some don't and again. There's there's politics involved so it's not really bad. The final word on things. It's a fluid type of situation for example. Most of you might be familiar with the diagnosis called. Ptsd it's post traumatic stress disorder. And it's kind of an adverse and maladaptive reaction to serious trauma that diagnosis has also been called. Shell shock soldiers heart combat fatigue war neurosis and post traumatic stress syndrome. So that exact. Same collection of symptoms over the past seventy years has had a one two three four five six different names and it changes and the next iteration of the dsm. Maybe they change it again. Who knows so. That label doesn't necessarily it certainly doesn't define you and it can

change from time to time. The other thing is that some things are considered pathological at one time and knock considered pathological another time. Some dykes their new diagnoses and their diagnosis. That no longer exist anymore as society evolves and opinions change. We decide that some things are not evidence of mental health issues and some things are so and the reason i mentioned this is that sometimes what happens is that people will come to me. And they'll say i have these issues. I have these diagnoses and oftentimes. They have a list of diagnoses like six or seven diagnoses. Sometimes more and and i say good heavens added you get so many diagnoses well a lot of times they. It's like a collection and they say why was diagnosed with this. When i was six. And this one i was fourteen and this when i was twenty six in this one i was thirty seven and they still think that all those things are wrong with them. Most of the time they're not those things are not still wrong. It's just like if someone asked about your physical health. You wouldn't say well beckon eighty six. I had a cold. And then in ninety two i had Whatever strep throat for three weeks or something like that wouldn't list. That would probably just list of things that are going on now and mental health is the same way. Most mental health diagnoses are not permanent. And that's something that's very important to remember if you go into a psychologist and you'll get diagnosed with generalized anxiety disorder since we're talking about anxiety at does not mean that you will always have generalized anxiety disorder. It can change. It can go away it can turn into something else. It can go into remission all sorts of things so kind of be careful about those diagnostic labels and certainly don't presume. They are permanent that they're gonna last forever. Like i said the nature of most mental health diagnoses is that they are temporary. Sometimes they can last for a long time but if we presume that they are permanent and i think that adds an extra weight to it that is unnecessary and adds an extra burden that is unnecessary surgeries. Couple things to remember about that number one. Don't self diagnose number two when you are looking if you do have mental health issues. And you want an accurate diagnosis. Get an expert diagnosis primary care. Physicians are wonderful wonderful for any number of things. They're not particularly sophisticated at making mental fag. Sees yet that's where most people get their diagnoses from. So if you really think that you've got a significant issue and you wind appropriate treatment for it go to a licensed or credential mental health professionals that could be a a master's level or a doctor level person if they're licensed that's better just because that shows they've been through some sort of rigor and and the state that they live in says that they're qualified to do this. And then once you get that diagnosis worked towards and understand. That is not necessarily permanent so so. Be careful about diagnosis and diagnostic. Labels are right number. Three is to realize the power of your thoughts. There are a number of different causes of anxiety but in almost every case. Our thoughts play a significant role in how we feel. The same event can illicit two very different responses.

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Depending upon our situation for example takes skydiving. So if you can't wait to go skydiving you're going to get up in the plane and you're going to jump out of it and it's going to be fantastic and you'll put it on instagram facebook. Say what a great time you had if you are being coerced into doing that and it's the last thing you wanna do. Then you're gonna be terrified by that

experience the exact same experience but depending on how you perceive it. It affects the way that you feel about it. A great example from scripture is when the savior is on the boat on the sea of galilee with his disciples. So if you're a member there out there and apparently it's been a long day because the saviors asleep is even got a pillow and he's up in a part of the ship and he is asleep while the storm starts and it's not uncommon for significant storms to come in very suddenly on the sea of galilee and this storm is so significant that the disciples think that they might die. I'm sure that it probably progressed. And intensity and they're probably thinking what should we do and they're doing the best they can bailing water and and do what. They can't secure the ship. The savior is asleep. The whole time and i'm sure they debated whether they should wake him or not because they think they're going to die. That is a very significant a significant belief which is going to lead to a lot of anxiety. So what do they do. They finally wake him up and he kind of rebukes them for being of little faith in and command the storm to cease immediately at ceases. It says there was a great calm. I think that's i can't imagine experiencing that they were probably astonished at that and but the thing to think about is. Why was the savior able to sleep when the apostles were having such significant anxiety. They're both in the same storm. They're both having the exact same objective experience that they're having a very very different subject of experience and it has to do with what they believed in what they perceived about the event deposits out. They were going to die naturally leads to much anxiety. If i think i'm gonna die. I'm going to have a lot of anxiety as well. Probably a savior knew he wasn't going to die. You know there wasn't any chance he was going to die. And that he had ultimate control over all the waves and the wind so of course he's able to sleep. He has no anxiety because of what he believed about the situation. Most of the time in our lives we experienced those types of storms and we can't control many of the events that happen to us. There's just stuff that happens. There's so many factors involved in our lives that have to do with what we experience that trying to control. The storm's is just a really bad strategy. Because you can't you can't control everything that happens at around you. What you can't control is the way you think about what happens around you so as we develop greater mindfulness about our thoughts then i think that is helpful because then we start to say okay. Was that thought. True is accurate. And if it's not then. What can i do to change it and if you have ever been involved in any sort of counseling that is usually a major focus at that is called cognitive behavioral therapy. And it's an analysis of the way we think about things which then influences the way we feel about things and if we can change the way we think then we will necessarily change the way we feel one of the most important things that we need to do in analyzing our thoughts is to make sure that they are lined up with truth if we believe things that are untrue then our emotional experiences are going to be distressing when they don't necessarily have to be so we need to believe what is true and so what we can do as you as you start to analyze your thoughts and for example going back to the idea of having a panic attack in the grocery store will the thought associated with that is. If i go into a crowded room i might die. I might panic. I might collapse those sorts of things and these catastrophic sorts of potential outcomes. The truth is you're not gonna die in a crowded grocery store. You're going to be very uncomfortable. That's the truth that's different than thinking you're going to die and the truth is you could probably get through that too. You'd be very very uncomfortable in the process but you could get through it as opposed to. There's no way i can do this. You see how just starting to modify those beliefs and making them a little closer to truth affects what you might be able to do in that situation. There's

an amazing talk. It was a byu devotional two thousand eighteen. By laurence lawrence equal bridge of the seventy. It's called stand forever. I highly recommend it if you haven't read it if you just type in stand forever. Byu devotional probably be the first length that comes up is what elder corporate said. People said you should be true to your beliefs while that is true. You be better than what you know. Most of his act based on our beliefs especially what we believed to be in our self interest. The problem is we are sometimes wrong. Someone may believe in god and that pornography is wrong and yet still click on a site wrongly believing that he will be happier if he does or that he can't help but not click or it isn't hurting anyone else. And that's not all that bad. He is just wrong sometimes. You may believe it is wrong to lie and yet lie on occasion wrongly believing he will be better off if the truth is not known he is just wrong.

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Someone may believe and even know that. Jesus is the christ and still deny him not once but three times because of the mistaken belief. You'll be better off appeasing the crowd. Peter wasn't evil. I'm not sure he was even weak. He was just wrong when you act badly. You may think you are bad when in truth you're usually you are just wrong. The challenge is not so much closing. The gap between our actions and our beliefs rather the challenge is closing the gap between our beliefs. And the truth. That is the challenge. I love that final statement. They're closing the gap between our beliefs. And the truth and our corporate is absolutely right most the time when we behave we are behaving consistent with what we think is right even when our behavior is bad. There's a part of us that think. Maybe it's okay to do that. Behavior right now so aligning. Your beliefs with truth is critical. And that's that third point is just realizing how might how influential your thoughts are and taking the time to look at them. Analyze them and make sure that they are consistent with true principles okay. Slide number ups next principle is anxiety. Management involves confronting anxiety. And this is a this is kind of a tricky situation because most of the time when we have anxiety. The last thing we want to do is to do the thing that makes us anxious. But that's the only way that it really gets better. I was thinking about this and it's kind of like learning to swim. You could study books on swimming. You could observe people swimming. You can learn all the theory and all the technique with never getting in the water. You're not going to be able to swim until you actually get in the water at some point and all that theory and study and observation is not going to teach you to swim until you actually get in the water and start to do that in practice. The exact same thing applies to anxiety until you do the things that make you anxious. You're really never going to overcome them. And the problem it goes back to the power of our thoughts and we have these very kind of catastrophic potential futures that we think about and we go. These terrible things are going to happen if i do this thing. Well the truth is those things are probably going to happen. But until you do the thing that you think is going to cause this catastrophic future then you're never going to know and part of the problem is that as perpetually avoid that situation then it just becomes this completely unknowable. Noble thing and we just presume that were right. We think if i do this thing this terrible terrible thing is going to result. And the more we avoid doing the thing the more that reinforces the what we think is the truth at this thing. This terrible thing will result which is not true when i have worked with people who have had anxiety and encourage them to do the

things that make them anxious when they do them they almost always say the exact same thing they say. That wasn't as bad as i thought it was going to be. Now they didn't enjoy it so don't get me wrong. It's not like they're saying that's fantastic. I can't believe i. I'm not shopping. And crowded stores all the time but they say it wasn't as bad as i thought it was going to be and that is and that is just a really important thing to To understand sometimes we just we let our minds run wild with these anxious thoughts and we have to rein those in and say. Hey that's not necessarily true. And until i do it. I'm not going to know one of the things. That reminds me again of an example years ago i was the executive secretary in our ward and so is my responsibility to get people to say the prayers for sacra meeting and i had arranged a few days in advance for someone to say opening prayer and about ten minutes before the meeting. I get a text and the person. I am sick. I'm not going to be there and you get someone else. Well at one of the problems with having a psychologist for an executive secretary is that i knew the people in the ward and i knew the ones that had anxiety and there was one particular woman good friend of mine and she had a lot of anxiety and she did not want to give the opening prayer. She was on kind of list of people who would typically say no when asked one of the things she didn't like was being asked so far in advance can she'd worry about the whole time and so and she had arrived at church early that day and i went up to. I said hey i got an opportunity for you. And it's a miracle the personnel supposed to say the opening prayer. He's not here today and he's sick and so i need someone to do it so now i haven't asked you to say the opening prayer and you only have like nine minutes to freak out about it because church starts at nine minutes. I said will you do that. And she kind of looked at me and said okay. I'll do it and as you said. Can i write it down. I said of. I don't care what you do. I'm just up there and say prayer. And so she. She went up there and she said a prayer with perfectly fine. I could tell she was terrified and then she came back afterwards and she said that wasn't as bad as i thought it was going to be an so. It's just another one of just an example of how we need to do those things that create being zaidi now. You don't have to do it all at once. You don't have to go out and do the most terrifying thing that you can think of to begin if you're just learning to swim your first time. Swimming doesn't have to be dropped out of a helicopter into open water in the ocean.

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And go from there. You start by putting your face in the water and blowing bubbles. That's how we get started. That's how we start with anxiety management as well. You don't do you think the most terrifying thing you can think of and just go do it for six hours. And sam getting this over with once and for all as probably going to be too much probably gonna be overwhelming for us. The example of a store if it freaks you out even think about going to the store then maybe the first step is just go. Sit in your car for five minutes and think about going to the store. But you don't go and then you said your car for ten minutes and then the and then a couple of weeks later you drive your car to the store and you stay far back in the parking lot. You don't go but you stay in your car and then you we later you do that and you park closer to the store and then the you stand in the entrance and then maybe just go in and go out at you. Give you get the picture. You do things little by little until eventually you're able to tolerate the anxiety and what happens is time engage in something that you believe is going to cause you anxiety you find out that it

would probably wasn't as bad as you thought and you become more tolerant of it and the becomes less overtime alma. Tatas son helium by small and simple things. Great things are brought to pass. It's exactly what we're doing here. Small and simple little things. Each day. I tell my clients to do something every day. That scares you just a little bit issues and it almost becomes like an inoculation against anxiety and becomes very very helpful in the long run. So that's number four is too is that Anxiety management means. You're going to have to do something about it. You're going to have to confront your anxiety at some point. Principle number five is to recognize anxiety as a means of building. Faith the scriptures talk about the exercise of our faith and i think that is a totally apt description of that involves effort on our part when we exercise if we don't do something strenuous at doesn't really help us years ago. I was taught indoor cycling our local gym. I my wife Turned me onto it spin class. If you're familiar with that you get on these stationary bikes. And it's a very can be very intense workout and i really loved it and so i thought hey maybe i could teach this and so for a couple years. I i did that. I got certified and talk that one of the things that i would tell my students as we were in class is that i said look. You've already come to the gym. You already came to the classroom. You're on the bike. So why not work hard. Because i could tell when people weren't working very hard that wasn't my business as said your business whether you want to work hard or not majority here. Why not do something about it. On each of those bikes there was a little red knob. That increase the resistance. And so as you turn that knob to the right it would make the by carter to pedal now you could keep that knob all the way off to the left. And it's very easy to peddle in that situation and you could ride the whole forty five to fifty minute class and probably not even break a sweat. You could do that. What's the point. What's the point if we do that. If it doesn't help us get stronger. You're already there at the gym. Let's do something that's going to help you. And so when we are exercising our faith. It's the same sort of thing if you don't have something. That challenges your faith. How are you going to exercise it. If there's nothing that turns that red knob to the right that increases the weight on that wheel then how are you going to build your faith if every principle that comes to you makes perfect sense and you don't have any questions then that's not a trial of your faith but every single one of us is going to have something that comes where we're gonna go. I wonder about that and it is that right. And we're gonna have to seek for additional knowledge seek for additional understanding from heavenly father added from confirmation from the spirit that it's true as we go through that process as we go through that exercise of asking and seeking more information that becomes that generate strength. And that's how we get stronger. One of the things that we need to remember is that we are here to become like heavenly father. It we're not here to get through life and be the exact same as when we as when we left. Heaven reheard become very very different. It's like in the parable of the talents. In your remember how that goes the lord represents our heavenly father he comes to those three individuals and says i'm gonna give you some money which were towns and you're going to be the steward of so two one person who gives five another. He gives to another gives one on the people that got five and two they went and they risked and worked they probably maybe they bought some raw materials and made some things and sold them at a profit. Maybe they went to the stock exchange and and did something like that and increased the amount of money and that was the intention and when the lord came back one that had five had increased talents to ten and he received a great reward in the one that had to had increased his talents to four. He received the exact same reward as the person who had given ten. Even though he had

given much less in comparison he had done the work. You've done the work and made the effort and doubled his as well now. The person received one talent simply went and buried it.

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He was afraid he said what. If i lose it. What if i buy something. And it doesn't work out of my business venture fails and i'm not able to to have that to give my lord what he has so you gave him just that. Here's the talent that i that you gave me. And you didn't lose anything. And i bet he was probably shocked at the reaction because lord was not happy with him because he was supposed to take that talent and make something of it and increase it so when we have when we have anxiety to me it just seems like an opportunity to increase our faith. Faith and fear are the opposite and the two really don't are really unable talk by the same space those things that you are frayed of our things. You typically don't have a lot of faith in them and vice versa listings. You have a lot of faith then. You're not really afraid of so that gift of anxiety like talked about the first principle. Where i heavenly father has given us weakness that we might be humble though we might turn to him and become strong as you have that anxiety. If you view that as a way as resistance on your spend bike so that you can become stronger than i think that kind of changes the way we feel about it and instead of it being this this horrible thing that we just want to get rid of we say. Hey this is my opportunity to become stronger. This provides that that weight in the back of my truck in order to give me traction move forward and anxiety is actually a great way to build faith because the less anxiety betray able to develop. You're always going to replace that. With faith and that trade off can be great so so just looking at that recognizing anxiety as a means of building a just is a different kind of a different slant on that and kind of turns it more into a or a potential a potential good thing as opposed to a perpetual bad thing all right and number six. Be careful about what you feed your brain. This is important. Our brains are probably the most amazing organ in the human body at least as far as what it can do close competition with the heart. I would say. I just. I think heart is awesome. How it pumps for like a hundred years never gets tired. That that's amazing. The brain is so adaptable and it is going to adapt to anything that you put in it. The brain truly is neutral men. That's my opinion. Some people may think otherwise but the brain response to the information that you put in it and the more you feed. It was certain things the more it is going to adapt to that so so we have to be very very careful about the stimulus that we put in president packer packer. Many years ago said that our minds were like stages and that we were the stage managers and so whatever comes on the stage. We need to be able to control that. Nothing's come on the stage that we don't want to be on there that we need to pull him off the stage and so that doesn't you know affect us. It's a great analogy. The problem is the more things that we let on stage. Sometimes without even being aware the more it's going to influence us and sometimes we're pretty crummy stage managers. We just kind of leave that backstage door open and where often the back on our phones while kinds of things for crowding onto our stage and all of that is going to have an influence. What happens with our brains is that they become very very efficient at the things that they do over and over and over again. If you've ever learned a second language you know that. I serve my mission in mexico. And when i was there at first specialist very very difficult and i stumbled over my words and i was kind of thinking in my mind in english and

having to translate spanish but in time spanish became very very easy in fact towards the end of my mission. I could barely speak english. I was thinking in spanish. Dreaming in spanish and spanish became the thing that i was doing all the time i had actually practice by. Last companion was from the united states. And so. I practiced in the evening speaking english to him so that i could communicate with my family when i got home. The reason that that happened was because the brain. As i was feeding spanish over and over and over again it became efficient at that and learned it very well and so if you are constantly feeding your brain anxiety if you dire predictions of the future you know that things are never gonna work out those sort of things guaranteed that your brain is going to develop a pattern of anxiety. That's going to kind of run automatically at some point. Some people say. I can't control my anxious thoughts and i believe you because if you've had patterns of anxiety that have lasted for years and i absolutely believe that those thoughts are running very automatically. I guess when. I when you say you can't control them. I don't necessarily believe that. Because i do believe that we can control them but they do happen very automatically no question about it so what we need to do is we need to make sure that we are putting an adequate balance of what we want and our brain just like feeding our bodies so if you are if all you do every day is look at things that are making you nervous. I had a friend once who all he did was. Listen to the police scanners all day. Long care about all these terrible things going on. And he was an anxious and stop doing that. There's a lot of good things out there as well and we need to fill our brains with that as well now.

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I'm not suggesting that you just put your head in the sand and not look at anything that is real or or happening in the world. I'm just saying let's get a balance that if the scriptures are a great example of that they're always words of peace and comfort in the scriptures. In fact i don't think and ever scripts quite a bit. I can't find anything. In the scriptures that kind of promotes the thinking that is going to lead to chronic anxiety. In fact it's the opposite. Sometimes the lord is a little terse with people and and there are consequences for behavior but it's always followed by and i love you and if you repent and come unto me then it's gonna be okay that there's there's nothing in there that suggests you know run a collision course for disaster. Things are never going to get better. Those things just aren't true and the scriptures barrett out so when we are taking time to study the scriptures and the words of of modern church leaders. I think as we fill our brains with those sorts of things that's going combat some of that anxiety as well so find that balance that what do you wanna put your brain and how much of what do you want and you have control over that and then nurture those things that you want to stay on there and neglect those things that you don't want to stay in there and over time then just like learning spanish learning a foreign language. You're gonna become very efficient at those things that bring you peace. You might know people like that people. That just seem un. What's the word there unrattled. There's nothing seems to set him off and you're like how do you get that way. What's going on well. It's probably because they are constantly studying things that are going to help them. Be calm and react calmly to things and we can do the same thing. Your brain will change if you feed it enough of a certain thing just takes time and john fourteen twenty seven the savior said peace. I leave with you. My peace i give unto you not as the world giveth give to you. Let

not your heart be troubled. Neither let it be afraid. The savior's piece is different than the world's peace the savior's piece. Lets him sleep on a boat during a tempest. That's the sabers pace. The world peace says to become sees in order to fill knowing zaidi savior says. I can sleep while the wind blows when he says. Let not your heart be troubled. I think what he's saying is that there needs to be action on our part. He saying literally. Don't let your heart be troubled at what you need to do to find the peace so that your heart will not be troubled. The gospel jesus christ is rarely a gospel of inaction. It's the gospel of action. We have to do things every day in order to experience the peace that the savior wants us to have so. Be careful about what you feed. Your brain aren't real. Quick will just review the six things here number one. Don't worry about having anxiety number two to understand diagnosis diagnostic labels three realized the power of your thoughts for anxiety. Management involves confronting anxiety. Five recognizing zaidi's means of building faith and six. Be careful about what you feed your brain if you want a copy of these slides. I'm happy to give them to along with my notes. That's where you can find me instagram. The psychologist or on my website at l. d. a psychologists dot com. Just let me bear my testimony that these things. We've talked about her true. The savior's piece is available to all of us. That one hundred percent anxiety can be a means of us to to improve and to become stronger and oftentimes. It's a blessing from heavenly father. Sometimes it can be chronic and sometimes it may be last your whole life and that'll just give you something gives you a load your whole life to be able to get traction a promise that in a coming day either in this life or in the next you will be very very grateful for the challenges that you face even challenges that are related to exile. Because they'll be the means of you becoming like your father in heaven becoming like your savior and developing that faith that they intend to have and Say that name christ. Amen thank you david. That was fantastic sitting here popping popcorn and learnings too much so i ready for some questions. I have some ready in now. Let's see what else we can learn here. So i love the the approach of your message. As far as i forget the verbatim but like a gospel centered approach. Tang's id sometimes there's this feeling in our culture of like narrow like don't go to your bishop with anxiety don't churches great but don't take your anxiety. They're like those c- of mental professional and get it handled and medicated and be good like but obviously the gospel can provide a lot there. So how do you respond to. Sometimes that and maybe you don't maybe i'm blowing it out of proportion but no i think it it actually. It kind of goes both ways so on. Sometimes you get people who don't wanna go see a mental health professional and so they just go to their church leader and that's You know that'd be okay if your church leader has some expertise that way but sometimes it's just way out of their wheelhouse and the only tools they can give.

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You are the spiritual tools which are wonderful. But there's many other tools as well. And so i think it just needs to be a blend getting mental health. Assistance is critical. I kind of feel like generally speaking. We're being attacked on multiple fronts. Were being attacked. You know physically and mentally and spiritually and emotionally and so if we're not using spiritual techniques to fight that battle then i think we're losing on one front so in many cases it's important to actually to go see a counselor and times. It's important to get medication as well

and to talk to your church leaders about it us all those approaches. Why not use everything so that you can get as many tools as you can be able to become to manage this as effectively as possible. Yeah that's really helpful. And and again. I would imagine a professional mental health specialist going to draw on those religious experiences and religious resources spiritual resources to help them cope and and handle their anxiety. Great absolutely oftentimes. I'll work with people. Native american Individuals and they talk about their tribe. And i'm like let's get the tribe involved you know because that's their group. That's the the people that they depend upon. Let's get as many people involved in this process as we can to help you. There's no shame in that. We feel like we need to do everything on our own. But we can't and i think the lord purposely overloads us sometimes will finally give into that idea that we need some help because then things really open up so whatever help you can get is fantastic. And i appreciate this perspective of just recognizing that we all experiencing zayed he to some extent right. I mean it's a human experience right and it's you know it's in our nature to protect us and to keep us aware of our surroundings and keep safe at the same time like if somebody was to ask me formally do you struggle with anxiety as on. I don't know. I know others do. But i don't but to actually sit back. Well actually i do. And there's moments where things ides's overbearing. And i'm just i feel like there's this feeling of like life the anxiety must take your life out of control in order for you to get help to some extent right but to see like no. We're all dealing with anxiety but sometimes yeah does take people to a place where life is just out of control right so i think you could view it as the same way that you've you physical health issues right so there's sometimes you know there's just things that you know so a little bit of anxiety is just like common cold riots. Okay well good self care. And and commonsense medicine is going to help other times. You're gonna say no. It's not like that. This is completely overwhelming a ineffective on my family responsibilities by church responsibilities. That's when we need extra help and it really is. It's kind of a moving target. And i wouldn't. There's not really one answer to that to say. Here's when you need to go get help. I think help always helps right. I mean what's the big deal and you can talk to someone about up but it it very much mirrors kind of the physical health dimension where there's some things that we simply cannot manage on our own and we need when he'd helped with that and i think that being humble is critical on that and also being close to the spirit president nelson is talked so much about increasing our capacity to receive revelation. And i think it's because there's so many confusing messages out there that we don't have the spirit as kind of the the gatekeeper of truth. Then we're not gonna know what to do and the spirit will tell you the spare it'll say go talk to a counselor. Go talk to your bishop. Go talk to your release site prisoners scoring president. Mother wife husband whatever we can follow this advice. Yeah and i think the trick there and correct me. If i'm wrong but just like just the action starting to talk about it with trusted people whether they're professional or not and that sort of i sort of cringe. Sometimes when people say like a bishop's therapist don't don't involve them at him are whatever it's like well the bishops the gateway to the therapist like they just need somewhere that they're comfortable talking Or could be a parent or a friend or release citing president right where they begin to talk about it and then it's like wow you know. Why don't we look at some resources here. Tell you get more help or remember a lotta time. As bishop person came in they just sort of needed someone to vent to talk through some things and they left sort of feeling a lot better and it wasn't that i replaced the therapists in that moment. But i was listening ear that that's what they needed in the moment on the other thing we're starting to see

and especially in new iterations of the of the handbook is that the bishop's role in counseling is being minimized and he's actually encouraged to reach out to elders president. Some releases buddy presidents and other may be people in the ward and unless it has to do with issues of were repentance. Common judges needed. They're like saying. Let's not give this to the bishop.

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Fantastic i i'm. The eldest corn president are ward. And i tell bishop. I'm like we will take everything that you don't want to do. You know if you feel like you wanna do it. That's fine there. There's like there's a few things that you have to do. You know just by your calling but everything else like building cleaning their scheduling building cleaning. I'm bishopric meaning like are you kidding. The ice give that through the elders quorum. We can handle the building. There's you guys have much more important things to worry about. And the of the lord's storehouse as well this idea that all of the all of the resources of the ward are available toward members and so if my neighbor is a plumber. And i got a problem toilet then i call him and he comes over and helps. If i'm a psychologist. My bishop has reached out to me. And i've helped provide some services to people in the ward not necessarily officially. But you know to be a listening ear and stuff like that so yeah yeah absolutely we just. We don't need to get picky with resources and say this would be this is contrary indicated. Just get hell. Yeah yeah yeah. And i appreciate that you know you. Focus on the changes in the handbook. That are happening is an because i remember i sort of felt. Like as bishop of sort of my. That was my role. Like as the counselor. I had to meet with his people over and over again. Even though they were meeting with therapy no professional therapists or whatever but to then turn to the elders corners. Eight will actually. There's some community there they could provide and if we're intentional about it can really make a difference. And i do think in the context of repented sometimes. The person is making deep regrettable trend transgressions because of some mental health dynamic happening in their life and so we think well because this repentance is happening we can't talk about this with anybody or invite the individual to talk with others about winning rallies like we'll handle the repentance thing you know as far as ordinances and things but how can we get you a sense of community in our elders corley society or who do you know in the war like like who can you talk to not only on the professional context but in a community context as well and that could go a long way to help people well and there's even been situations where bishops even if they're dealing with an issue transgression or sin that they can still have that person work with a member of the war to talk about that and the bishop works with them periodically. The bishop says hey come and see me once a month. But i want you to talk to bro once a week. You know just about how you're doing how you're coping know. The three of them can meet together and kind of get a game plan and stuff like that. I love that idea of like sharing the load elder idea of lifting. Where you stand you know. We all get around the piano thing out of the room. It'll be interesting to see how this how long this takes to change. Because i'm not scoring president. Nobody calls me the call. The bishop you know because we're we're still stuck in that and it may take generation for bishops to get less busy but round the right track. Yeah that's fascinating in. This is and i wanna really talk through this a little bit just because this kind of maybe seem foreign to some people of like wait a minute. You know like why. Why would i involve other

people in my transgression experience. But the reality is it's similar to like. When i was bishop and dealing with welfare matters i would tell my welfare specialists and things like my only draw like the only thing in this process that i can only do is to say. Sign the check or don't sign the check. Everything else. Other people can be evolved as far as assessing their budget. Their you know their income their job. Whatever like you can assess all those things. The food needs then at the end of the day. You just come to me with recommendation. I can say yes. Cut the check. Don't cut the right in guinness may be kind of a A crude example relating it to the repentance process but again the pens process requires a sense of community of of people experiencing grace from all around them rather than this transactional like often. It's easy for the bishop slip into the parole officer mode like all right like when was the last slip up and how many days it's like. Let's figure out how we involve people and again we all we don't push people into well. You gotta go talk to the elders about this or that like you get their permission and make sure they're comfortable you know but the in this is good go so far with transgressions especially related to mental health as we figure out how to really use these resources around us like the corn president really Well and that's why the bishop has priesthood keys. And is young. What the discretion and determined to be to make those decisions and there might be some situations where he decides that he needs to handle himself in other situations where he decides needs to be minimally involved. And that's a blessing of the holy ghost and the virtual priests accuses that they will be able to make those decisions and there's a lot of shame associated with our behavior as well but i i wish i wish we could just have a giant meeting as members of the church and all on account of three. We just dropped pretenses and we got to see how we were. And i think it would be the most amazing meeting we ever had because we look around and we go. Wow i feel so comfortable. You know because sister. So and so has this issue. And i have this issue and i always thought she was perfect or brothers zones.

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Has this issue on either. I always thought he was perfect We a lot of shame on ourselves thinking that we are alone in this and i just don't think that we are. I think everyone's struggling with something and that's difficult for them. And the sooner we realized that there were just all kind of in this together the become so much easier to deal with those things because then then we just have. We don't have the added weight of shame. We just have issued deal with. Yeah awesome and appreciated this point you made. As far as communicating people that experiencing anxiety is okay. Because i would imagine especially maybe the context of bishops officer in church where someone's really struggling with anxiety and life kind of fills out of control or their like coping through poor decisions and whatnot in in sort of feels like i'm broken like i have the sayings there. There's something wrong with me. And so i just love these little tactics or phrases may be a leader can use of saying this is okay that you feel anxiety like anxiety is actually a very normal human experience. We just need to figure out maybe how to how to understand it and get you to place where you don't. You're not overwhelmed by it but it's okay that you feel this right. I think that's just a group practical approach to to beginning to help people and even take it a step further. Not only is it okay. This could be a blessing. The lord has given you in order to become stronger and to develop greater faith in him and stuff. Just

changes are just kinda the perspective on it and then at that point you go. Oh well if this is a blessing than that's an opportunity for me to grow. I think it helps alleviate some of the distress because kinda like in the first principle we worry about having anxiety you know like i have a panic attack and then i freak out about the fact that i'm having a panic attack. It's okay you know. We don't need anxiety on top of anxiety so k. To feel that way. And i think if we can if we can just modify the perspective and the perception of it a little bit then i think that helps and just kind of strips away the unnecessary part of it and then just leaves the thing that we need to deal with which is probably less burdensome an f we pile on all the additional stress and worry of. I'm broken. i shouldn't be feeling this way. Our feelings are were the way they are we. We just have them and we can learn to manage them but we don't need to feel guilty about the way that we feel because then that's one more emotion that we have to sort out. Yeah i love that. Putting in the context of an opportunity of faith. You know just like peter walking on the water. It's like you're filling a lot of anxiety right now but look at me you know. Look at christ like that is where we focus. And it's an opportunity for Let me see. What did we say as far as like Like medications as it relates to anxiety. I would imagine at times. Medications necessary is typically like a long term plan like. Is someone get medication. Think you're sorta gonna be on this medication for the rest of your life or is temporarily just a temporary solution. Any thoughts on that. Yeah well obviously it's going to vary from case to case Right there's there's kind of to kind of general types of anxiety medication. There's one that works really really well. A certain type. And it's highly addictive That's why it works so well i mean you take it and you feel better in about two minutes. You're feeling no pain at all the call by cab benzodiazepines and then there are others which are in the category of what are called s. Our is and they're often used for depression as well. And you're not gonna feel anything when you take that back. Take it for three or four weeks before you start to feel any sort of improvement. Those don't seem to work as well just in my experience in talking with people they'll say that a depression medications seem. We seem to have found some decent ones anxiety medications. We haven't seemed to find any that work really good in the long term and doctors usually won't prescribe those really effective ones for very long. Because then you end up getting hooked on them and you develop tolerance and stuff like that. And then you start to get into the kind of like the opioid epidemic. The that we're experiencing a similar situation to that so that's kind of the bad news. Is that there really. Isn't a lot of great medication that that i've noticed that helps anxiety and the long term. It really has to be tackled through our thoughts and through counseling for that matter depression even though there's good depression medications out there if you don't get in and do some counselling and start change the way you think. Those medications are gonna stop working at some point as well. The brain is just too powerful. And if you feed the brain whatever you feed the brain. It's going to react to so people take depression medication. They start to feel better a couple months later but if they're ongoing thoughts are i'm worthless. I'm no good. I'm a burden on society that repeated phrasing throughout your mind over the course of months and months easily going to overwhelm any sort of medication. You throw at it in time and so usually what happens is medication can help with the initial portion of it but we have to get in and start to change the way we think about it and then in time.

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Medication may be unnecessary. Because we've changed our thoughts significantly so that we don't have you know i. It's not fueling those negative emotions and so then we can kind of be taken off the medications but obviously that's something to discuss with a health professional right and follow their recommendations yet. I guess i asked. I just depend on the like sometimes remember as the leader like you know they they would say something like oh life stopped taking my medication. And maybe they were dealing with anxiety and that will sort of be a red flag. We'll wait a minute like yeah. Did your doctor tell you that. Why did you do that like all. I feel fine now. And so i guess it's more obviously that's not the bishops jobber. Any leader's job to determine whether they should take medication. Not but just make sure that if they are there and they seem a little off like maybe just they're still engaged with that professional and getting the rather than making decisions on medications on their own. Absolutely yeah we should never be making medication decisions on our own unless you're a physician have that training but No should always follow. And so i and if you're feeling better and feel like you don't need the medication. Then go tell your professional about that and say hey we do about this and then maybe you know. Show recommend lowering the dose or something like that or just going off an altogether. He i really helpful at this. Concept of diagnoses is interesting because Like you said sometime. We live in this world. What is it web. Md and things type. Your morrow is in so it's easy to sort of imply a A diagnosis and Into but sometimes there's this dynamic of when somebody's like labeled with the diagnosis even from professional it kind of i don't know. Sometimes they can get trapped in that it sounds like right and To the point where they could be passed it but still feel like they add that strep throat from nineteen ninety right right. So true yeah. Diagnoses are really designed to be temporary. And when i deal with people you know they'll come in and they'll say in all say what's going what's wrong. What's going on and they'll they'll give me the list of diagnoses. And i'll say you know quite frankly. I'm just interested in the diagnosis. Tell me what's going on today. That's getting in the way of you being effective in life while you're here now you know i said we can label whatever you want. I don't care what you call. We can make up a new name for it if you want. It doesn't matter eventually. We're going to have to address symptoms. We don't address diagnosis. We address symptoms and problems and relearn. How am i gonna improve. What do i need to do to face this particular issue. So yeah a lot of people. They get burdened with the fact that maybe they've been diagnosed and they think. Oh my gosh this is. This is permanent. This is forever. I promise you. It's not from a licensed psychologist. And i have every authority to say that it's not in fact it's the least of our won the professional work we do. It's just a label and it's really a very little consequence considered so hopefully anyone listening to this. You should feel the same way. Your diagnosis is of much less consequence than any current issues. You might be experiencing. That's what you need to focus on. How do i fix what's going on in my life. That's getting in my way of being happy. Yeah and i guess. I just think about some individuals. I'm sure many. Tim both in the church in just in everyday life where they sorta hold onto this. They make a diagnosis like a chronic diagnosis. And in there you'll see them like what you just have to like. Let this go and move on. And it's sometimes hard to do because they're using it sort of it's become an excuse maybe or from developing and. I don't even know what you would do in that that case because sometimes they just can't let go about right. Yeah it's difficult i. We're seeing that a little more just in society where it's becoming more difficult to take accountability for our behavior and we

always want someone else or something else to be to blame and mental health. Diagnoses can become that right. It's like well. I can't give a prayer in sacramento. Because i've been diagnosed with panic disorder. Well the truth is it will be very uncomfortable for you to give a prayer and soccer meeting if you've been diagnosed with pack disorder doesn't mean you can't do it very uncomfortable or it might have panic attack from the middle of the party. Which would be uncomfortable as well. One of the things that i focus on with people is. I say you need to do everything that you have within your power to improve and there's always something we can do. We are not impotent. I have a client. Or i've dealt with clients who have chronic schizophrenia. Which is a significant diagnosis. Which only changes through medication. And i can tell you examples of times when. I've helped them do something that helps them feel better even though it really doesn't affect their psychosis but they did something about it. I think it's a terrible situation when we just feel impotent.

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When i say there's nothing i can do. I don't think the gospel. That's not the gospel. The gospel clove action. Like i said it's what can you do to get better about this or to get better with this so we need to be careful with those diagnoses. Some people do use them to hide behind a little bit and to those people i say. Hey it's okay. Let's you can fix that. There's something you can do. Maybe you don't overcome it all tomorrow. You probably won't but there's something you can do today to be a little bit happier. And i think it's quite frankly empowering instead of just saying well there's nothing i can do about this and i just have to live my life forever like this. That's a pretty What's the word. Disheartening situation obviously. I don't want to create any absolutes here but typically speaking. I'm sure there are some outliers like a professional mental health. Person isn't going to say. Are you have anxiety and therefore you should never speak in public again. Or you should just got avoid grocery stores or reich. it's never this like diagnose. The treatment plan is like that's just how your life is going to be now but maybe for time. That's maybe like you said maybe you can only drive to grocery store but rarely the medical professional gonna say this. Is your life forever. I would sure hope. Not if they're out there than they need to stop because that's pretty crummy dioxide. Usually you get those types of suggested interventions from well meaning but poorly informed france. And they're the ones that say. Oh don't know don't do that. You don't want to do anything that's gonna make you uncomfortable. Parents do that at times with the children all the well no daughter. She cannot give a talk in soccer meeting because she has anxiety. And that would terrify her. I know from being a parent i think. Yeah you don't want your kids to go through distress but it's one of the worst things you can do because then you know what happens. Then because at some point they're going to be out of the nest and life is pretty unforgiving you know i mean. They're they're stuff that happens out there that we need to learn to deal with and so Shielding your children from any sort of discomfort is the worst thing you can do from them or for them. You just need to And it's not that you just get out of the way life bulldoze on his well. You intervene selectively standing that the trials in difficulty are unnecessary part of our growth. Yeah yet it again. I'm not encouraging that leaders. Need to like really push these people and get them out of their comfort zone and obviously each situation is different but maybe like if a leader observes like and they just don't seem like they're

progressing and they sort of her hiding behind the diagnosis. Maybe having a discussion like have you talked to your. You know your therapist about possibly seeing if you get to a point where you can speak in church or or give a prayer like i feel like that would really help you. We get you there. And i believe in you that you can get there and so maybe talk within the next your next appointment right absolutely. Yeah but remaining stock remaining static you know by definition doesn't get us anywhere you have people that just don't seem to be progressing then it's time to start talking about. What can they do to move forward. Yeah one thing. I want to ask you before we wrap up his the dynamic of anxiety up against the spirit right like this is a tricky thing because sometimes promptings of the spirit can feel a little anxious right like wow like. Maybe i don't need to go. You know make sure my evans off. Maybe i'm just feeling a little anxiety or but you can get the state of mind like oh that must be a prompting the spirit. I must act on it right and any advice on mitigating dynamic. Well i think learning to recognize the spirit is critical because oftentimes we were not very good at it and so we think things and we think. Oh that's clearly a spirit telling me to do that. Where really it's not. i mean. Knee fight with laban has just kind of the gold standard there because he gets this feeling this thought of something that he would never do. You know. I said. I gotta kill this guy. And he's gone. That's insane. I would never do that. But because he's developed a habit of understanding the voice of the lord he recognizes that as the spirit of to do that so is able to proceed and so learning to dull the difference between our own thoughts and the spirit. It's a very subtle art and it takes a lot of practice but it's time well spent for me. It's been a very long process. And i'm finally getting to the point where i can do that. We're all experience something and i'll go. That was the holy ghost that was different than just my own thoughts. No elder bednarz teaches doesn't matter fits if it's a good thought then do it anyway right but it gonna hurt to go down and check the check at thirty times a night. That's probably you know are given the some pathological stuff and oftentimes the spirit will encourage us to do something that does create anxiety like if the spirit says. Hey i want you to go and talk to this person and maybe you do not like talking to you. Know that's not your comfort zone just because it creates anxiety does not mean that it's not coming from the spirit and quite frankly if you struggle with anxiety you may often get promptings that are going to encourage you to do things that confront your anxiety because speech to help you grow. Yeah that's really helpful. And sometimes i play this mental game with myself with it.

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You don't want to have those random thought. That could be a prompting but seems more anxious. I just say god if that was the prompting. I'm gonna need more than that than an anxious feeling. So i'm gonna continue on until you pester me with some more guidance here. Because i feel like that was just an anxious thought and i don't want to be a prisoner to my anxious thoughts exactly developing ship with the spirit. Yeah for sure and it is like a. It's like the spiritual skillset right like you just have to win those moments were it was obviously the spirit and good things came front. Like sort of analyze. That what what what did i feel different. How is that not an anxious feeling and you know people learn that skillset recording this in april of twenty twenty one i guess for still technically in the covid nineteen pandemic. I'm just curious. Like anxiety has

sort of manifests itself in. I don't know if i'd say. Unique ways made me more prominent ways especially as or returning back to church. You know there's members in award and this is something that leaders. I've heard from many that struggle with their some members of the warriors thinking bishop. If you don't have everybody you know like completely locked down. Has matt suits if you can like. I'm not showing up and then there's other people that are saying bishop so tired of this mass like. Don't you dare make me wear those masks right. And on both sides there's some level of anxiety or things that as a leader you'll get anything. I think you're just being overly anxious and i don't know i can't just default to the highest level anxiety in the ward say. That's where we're going to set the standard right. So any advice on how to navigate this very anxious time in our in our history. Yeah that's that's going. Be tough especially for leaders up here in washington were were slowly kind of being able to like now. Our our whole word can meet together and begin group a little bit in there. There's some people who still want to keep the six feet distance restored to wear masks and we're still broadcasting the to anyone who wants to remote and i've talked with our bishop and i said you know the difficult time is going to be when we cut the broadcast because at some point we'll probably have to prior to return to normal. They're still going to be some people who say i'm still not going back or i mean i'll be honest. I loved church in my pajamas. You know that was that was at the that for about a year. And that was Now it's easier than getting dressed in a suit and tie and going to the building. So i think there might be some hold outs that way to who are going right anxiety on an all about that but i sure love church in my pajamas in front of the front of the big-screen tv. I don't know it's just going to be. It's tough because the on the one hand there's expectations and and the lord's you know his when he commands something that's the end of it and it's non-negotiable cheese have that same effect when when a leader who has accused makes a decision as the full force of that and if we are obedient to it. They will be blessed. Just why it's incumbent upon those that hold keys to make good decisions because if you make a crummy decision with keys. You're the only one that some trouble everyone else is going to be blessed in that if you don and so. Yeah it's i mean i don't think there's any way around. I think there there's going to be difficulty. I think we're gonna see people come back to church that we haven't seen for a long time. I think we're in a people not come back to church that were very faithful before. It's just gonna yeah. I wish i had some good advice. I i i really. Don't something that you know just to listen to the spirit and be very very careful about it really considering the one if we can you know minutes. That's one and trying to minister to people and and do what's best for them. Which is hard when you're dealing with a word of three or four hundred people get you know sometimes just from your presentations and other resources that some thoughts come to mind is you know maybe a protest to sort of draw the line you know too soon or for those that overly anxious and just say. Listen if you're not if you're not going to step into this like then no church for you or you know those types of things but to to draw that line in a in a tough way can may be inflaming anxiety and others and then push them away where the more options you can create the better right like i would imagine especially now where broadcasting is is still proved and will be for the foreseeable future to say. Hey listen you don't have to come like what we'll continue to broadcast the so if you are too anxious to be here great you can watch at home. I would invite you maybe to try it out of sunday right. There's a little invitation of to step in and they zaidi or the back of the culture hall fifty feet away from someone has matt suit right right or if there's some accommodations we can make for you to kind like you know. I'm happy.

Consider those but just know that we have some different views and opinions here that. We're trying to here amara on and make this the best experience possible but I've got option for and maybe just presenting as many options as you can still have some level of the spiritual engagement would. I don't know maybe that's the only option we have right now.

01:15:03 - 01:18:56

I think that's great council. Yeah just working with a person individually and that's what the savior would do you know. He still insists on our obedience. And like i said his. His commandments are not negotiable but he sure does work with us you know. He says ready to help you. What can i do to help you reach this point to get over that bar. That's the is just such a perfect blend of exactness and compassionate at the same time. Yeah awesome well. This has been so insightful. And it's gonna be a great resource for leaders to listen to. Is there any. I've got one more question for you but is there any. And you've mentioned were to send people if they want to connect with you but is there any point your concept that we haven't touched on wanna make sure we get before we wrap up or do we covered all. I think we got it. Yeah like like any questions. They have of my. It's a elliott. Psychologists dot com is my website and there's information on there and seriously if people want if you want a copy of my notes reach out to me i'll send them. There are specific questions. I'm happy to answer them. You know it's like i said lord store in a lift y stands so We talk perfect. the have david is just. What final encouragement have fear in front of a room full of leaders. Who are just. You know they're so desperate to just help those everybody in the have positive mental health experience as they engage in the gospel and in their ward church. What final encouragement would you give to them. It would be too for ourselves and for others to extend as much grace as possible. It's okay you know. We're all moving forward little by little. We're not in a race. There's no artificial deadlines or timelines or anything like that. It's okay hey to be where we're at would just need to try to move forward a little bit every day and as long as we have that grace for ourselves in that grace for other people. I think we're gonna be fine. I think a lot of that stress just kind of melts away at that point. We think okay. I'm doing all right. I can afford a little bit today. And i don't care how fast brother so and so or sister. So and so's going. It doesn't matter that. I think if we do that like i said for ourselves and for others than that will alleviate a burden that has all too prevalent church. They need to get rid of that. That concludes my interview and the presentation of dr david morgan. A big shout at him really appreciate him. Bringing his expertise is professional perspective to this conversation. I learned a ton. I hope you walk away as a leader filling like okay. I'm not an expert. I'm not going to say the right thing every time. But i have a better grasp of maybe can help other individuals or myself who struggles with anxiety right so they charged dr david morgan for letting me learn from him leading us learn from him and him being a part of the mentally healthy saints virtual son again. You go to leading saints dot org slash mental health sign up for free and listen to twenty plus other interviews and presentations around various mental health topics so good leading saints dot org slash mental health for all the details and don't forget to register for free for the mentally healthy saints virtual summit by texting the word lead to four seven four seven four seven or visiting leading saint dot org slash mental health came as a result of a position of leadership which was imposed upon us. Either god of

heaven who brought forth a restoration of the gospel of jesus christ when the declaration was made concerning the only true and living church upon the face of the earth we were immediately put in a position of loneliness loneliness of leadership from which we cannot shrink nor run away and a which we must face up with boldness and courage and ability.