

MENTOR GUIDE

MODULE 3: EMOTIONAL HEALTH

INTRODUCTION

In this module, **Alison Groenendyk** teaches you how emotional health connects directly to ministry health, and gives helpful tips on growing more emotionally healthy in your life and ministry.



These two sessions will help you answer two central questions:

- How is my emotional health impacting my ministry?
- And how can I more healthily recognize and respond to my emotions?

SESSION 1: EMOTIONAL HEALTH PART 1

Video Notes

1. **“There are lots of ways to be a good leader, but they all start with the same idea: First, you must lead yourself.”** The kind of Holy Spirit-infused and transformed life is described in many places in the New Testament, not least of those in 1 Corinthians 13.
2. **You need to learn to lead from the inside out.** You can do all the right things for the wrong reasons, but true transformation has to do with changing your motivations and desires. Healthy relationships happen at the heart level - the place where our deepest emotions reside.
3. **We think we’re thinkers, but we’re actually far more automatic & emotional.** In fact, you have an emotional autopilot that acts as a button that gets pushed when the pressure in the system of your life rises high enough. Where did you learn this way to manage stress?
4. **When you hit a wall in ministry challenges, these first formation stories are going to surface.** In those moments, you need to stop and try to determine what meaning you are making. “What assumptions and expectations am I bringing to the table about what it means to be a competent leader, what it means to make mistakes, and to have my own needs when the demands all around me are so great?”
5. **The fruit of your life, the legacy of your leadership, is not your talents and abilities,** it’s not how much you know or how many people you can impress, but the character of Jesus being produced in you to be shared with those whom you pastor and lead.

SESSION 1: EMOTIONAL HEALTH PART 1

Participant Reflection Questions

After watching the video, participants will answer or journal the following questions for reflection. Feel free to utilize these questions for discussion at your next Coaching Session.

1. What negative emotions show up in your day-to-day life?
Consider using the feelings wheel to get as specific as you can, and write about the types of situations that most frequently bring these feelings up for you.
2. What does God feel about those emotions and situations? Ask Him to speak to you about these. Practice a few moments of silence to see what surfaces.
3. If you were to storyboard your life - one story for each year of your life/ what would make it onto this board? Spend some time writing about 3-4 significant memories from your childhood. What themes do you see emerging as you write?
4. What were the prominent values that your family of origin held? What stories about money, work/careers, friendships, etc were part of the liturgy of what it meant to be in your family? Consider asking a grandparent or aunt/uncle for their perspective on what was most important to their family growing up.

SESSION 2: EMOTIONAL HEALTH PART 2

Video Notes

1. **Differentiation is a life-long process of growing up, becoming more fully who you were meant to be in relationship with Jesus, and from there as you relate to all other people in your life.** When you are not differentiated, you often show up too big or too small. We want to live life human-sized.
2. **Staying both defined and connected starts with taking responsibility for yourself.** You are responsible FOR yourself and TO other people.
3. **How do you begin to break anxious patterns?** Pause. Check in with your body. Check-in with your motive. Check your energy output.

Pay attention to where the anxiety starts and where it spreads.

4. **Remember - People have the right to be wrong.** If Jesus calls us to love our enemies, we first have to learn to stay in the room with them, to be able to stay connected when we disagree, and to move toward each other in curiosity.

SESSION 2: EMOTIONAL HEALTH PART 2

Reflection Questions

1. How do you know when you're not well?
2. When is anxiety in the driver's seat of your decision-making? How do you show up when you're stressed or anxious?
3. Ask yourself, "How do other people experience me when I'm stressed?" If you're not sure, take a brave step to ask a trusted friend or mentor. Remember that receiving feedback can be challenging but it will help you grow!
4. What patterns of behavior or speech in other people irritate you? What might your irritation be trying to tell you about what you want or need?

ACTIVATION ASSIGNMENT

Put This Into Practice

Participants will answer the following questions on a digital form and will be asked to send their responses to you as well.

Before you begin, spend 2 minutes in silence, inviting the Holy Spirit to speak to you through this exercise. Then, answer the following:

When you think of your ministry in your church or another leadership role in your life, what makes you feel anxious? In what situations do you find yourself getting defensive or reactive?

In response to that stress/anxiety, Do you tend to get smaller? Bigger? A combination of both?

After you have written your thoughts above, explore a little deeper:

What is a specific story or memory from your life that you know shaped your ideas about yourself, or about how you should show up in ministry or leadership situations?

As best you can, describe the primary emotions of that event and any meaning you made about the world or relationships.

How would you like to see yourself show up differently in the future?

Close this time by writing out a prayer, bringing any thoughts or feelings that have come up for you in this exercise to God.

MENTOR SESSION GUIDE

This meeting is where the gold is at! Participants will gain loads of knowledge in the virtual classroom. But the real transformation and development of VLE: Foundations will happen in the context of the time you are spending with this group, collectively and individually. So press into the relational aspect more than anything. Use this time to observe:

- Who needs encouragement to step it up a notch?
- Who needs correction?
- Who is showing signs of increasing leadership capacity?
- Who needs to be encouraged to take their next step?
- Who needs prayer or ministry?
- As you observe these things, say something at your first opportunity. Have an “ICNU” conversation – “If you see it, say it!” These moments are catalytic in the lives of those you mentor.

One more tip: don’t do all of this yourself. Begin to enlist participants to serve or lead different aspects of the coaching session. This could be leading prayer time, welcoming people at the front door, or organizing snacks and coffee.

Connection time (10 minutes). The relationships formed among VLE participants are central to the process. Avoid rushing into content at the start of the session. Instead, take a couple of minutes for participants around the circle to popcorn how their week has been, initial thoughts on the material covered, etc. This is a great opportunity to connect with participants and get the conversation warmed up.

Celebration time (10 minutes). Ask the group if they have seen God do something in their lives or ministry in the past two weeks that they'd like to share. This is an opportunity for you, the facilitator, to affirm and reinforce the good growth happening in your group.

Coaching time (40 minutes). Share with the group some of your own journey in emotional health. Your vulnerability to show up authentically here is really important as participants will be testing the waters for a safe environment to share their own stories.

Walk through key discussion questions and activation questions from the module. Because the participants should have completed reflection questions and activation assignments in advance of this session, we encourage you to use this time to ask:

- What were some of your key takeaways from the video teaching this past week?
- What did you learn about leadership or discover about yourself from this module?
- What does that mean for your own life and work, or for your leadership of others?
- What would you do differently based on your new understanding of yourself or leadership?

Care & Prayer / Ministry Time (25 minutes). This is arguably the most important thing you can do in these sessions. In ministry time, we provide space for the work of the Holy Spirit among us. You can change this up according to the way the Spirit is moving. You could have a “Hot Seat” in the center and have the group pray for someone, you could have groups of 2 or 3 split up and pray for each other, or you can pray collectively for the group.

Communication time (5 minutes). This is the time to highlight important events, share church announcements, introduce the next module topic, and so forth.