

Top Voices in Texas on The Growing Pandemic of Mental Illness in America

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/EINPresswire.com/ -- With mental illness on the rise across America, ministry leader Jerry Lewis says the crisis reveals not only medical and social challenges but also deep spiritual wounds. "Crisis is the wound, mental injury is the infection, and untreated hurt too often becomes long-term illness," Lewis said. "For generations, friends, family, and the church provided a level of care and connection that people are now missing."

Lewis, a community advocate and ministry leader from Center, Texas, is calling for a renewed emphasis on real connection—through relationships, faith, and presence—as part of the solution to America's mental health epidemic.

A GROWING CRISIS

Rates of depression, anxiety, and suicide continue to rise nationwide. Lewis says the problem is compounded when people are left to struggle alone. "When life collapses in on itself, people often feel like there is nowhere to turn. Sometimes they are looking for answers, sometimes just for a safe place to ask questions. What they need most is presence, not polished words."

Lewis emphasizes that in moments of crisis, safety and timing are critical. "If someone is not safe, especially if there are suicidal thoughts, that cannot wait. If they are safe, I try to meet within 24 to 48 hours—because crisis does not wait for next week."

THE TURNING POINT

CRISIS COUNSELING

Jerry Lewis

Crisis has a way of shaking us to our core. It comes suddenly, often without warning, and leaves us searching for safety, answers, and hope

In *Sitting in the Darkness: Counseling in Times of Crisis* Interview, Jerry Lewis draws from ministry and lived experience in Center and Joaquin, Texas, to guide readers through the realities of stress, trauma, grief, and despair.

Lewis reminds us that effective crisis care is not about having all the answers, but about offering presence, listening with compassion, and pointing to the God who meets us in our deepest valleys

Crisis & Hope

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A crisis can turn someone toward God or away from Him. My role is not to give a quick answer but to create a safe space to wrestle with the questions.”

*Jerry Lewis, Ministry Leader,
Shelby County TX*

According to Lewis, a crisis can become a spiritual crossroads. “It can turn someone toward God or away from Him. My role is not to give a quick answer but to create a safe space to wrestle with the questions.”

That safe space, he explains, is rooted in listening and attunement. “People need to be heard more than they need a lecture. If we never address the underlying issue, we will just keep putting out fires instead of preventing them.”

FACING SUICIDE

Perhaps the heaviest burden Lewis carries is walking with those who are suicidal. He leans on tools like the SLAP model to assess risk, but always returns to one core truth: “Healing does not happen in isolation. No one should carry that weight alone.”

Lewis sees modern culture as both fast-paced and isolating. “Social media gives the illusion of closeness, but many still feel invisible. People don’t need more noise, they need presence. They need someone willing to sit with them in the valley.”

A WORD FOR THE BROKEN

For those who feel overwhelmed right now, Lewis’ message is simple:

“You are not alone, and this moment is not the end of your story. God does some of His deepest work in the darkest places. Do not give up. Reach out. Let someone walk with you.”

If you or someone you know is struggling, call or text the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline.

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