



WHOLE HEARTED
FACILITATOR
GUIDE

The Goal of *Whole Hearted*

Whole Hearted is meant to provide basic and helpful mental health awareness for life's painful experiences. It is not clinical or professional therapy. It informs participants of the impact painful experiences have on mental health and how one might begin to move forward mentally and spiritually. The first two sessions focus on recognizing and responding to life's hard experiences. The last two sessions focus on the dynamics of renewal and restoration.

Whole Hearted introduces an ongoing process of:

- Recognition: Seeing and assessing your responses to life's painful experiences.
- Renewal: Prayer and other spiritual exercises as sources for strength and newness.
- Restoration: The ongoing and intentional work needed to move forward in a healthy way.

These three dynamics of *Recognition*, *Renewal*, and *Restoration* do not have to be followed in a sequence. They are more like three rooms in a dwelling, each with its own unique purpose. Those dealing with the impact of painful experiences can spend as much time in each of these different spaces as they wish. And each of us can go from one room to another as needed. *Whole Hearted* is just an introduction to this ongoing process of inner work. However, persons who feel overwhelmed are also recommended to seek professional treatment. *Whole Hearted* can be an excellent adjunct or addition to a therapeutic process.

Parishes and organizations can offer *Whole Hearted* as a day of reflection or four weekly sessions. Sessions take no more than 60 minutes and can be conducted onsite or remotely. If necessary, individuals can work through *Whole Hearted* on their own.

Each session plays on a different "word inside the word" within "whole" and features:

- Brief content
- Private reflection
- Suggested practice
- Discussion
- Scriptural reflection

In the end, this faith-based experience is focused on:

- Recognition of the assets and blessings God has provided, as well as the painful experiences that have impacted us.

- Prayer for new energy, hope, openness, and/or motivation to move forward.
- Assessment of personal interests, assumptions, expectations, behaviors, and responses that should now be re-evaluated.
- Identifying new or abiding interests, opportunities, and/or relationships worth pursuing.
- Acceptance of our lives as a whole with spiritual openness to what is to come.
- Awareness of spiritual practices and dynamics related to the process of restoration.

Facilitating this Program

Life's painful moments can sometimes exceed one's ability to cope or integrate the emotions involved with that experience. Being overwhelmed by painful experiences (both "big" or "little" ones) is referred to as trauma.

The impact of painful experiences does not have to be life-long, and there are many ways to seek healing.

Feeling overwhelmed may result from a single distressing experience or recurring events of being overwhelmed.

People will react differently to the same painful experiences. Not all people who experience a painful event will actually become traumatized.

As a group facilitator, your role is to establish and maintain a safe, trustworthy place where people can do the difficult and intimate work of examination.

You are to establish and maintain what is sometimes referred to as "a holding environment" that holds participants' thoughts, feelings, comments, and experiences in a respectful and authentic way.

Your role can also be described by what you are NOT to do:

- You are not to be a counselor.
- You are not to be a problem solver.
- You are not to pray over participants.
- You are not to be a teacher.
- You are not to minimize, evaluate, or re-state what someone says.

How do you establish and maintain this safe and trustworthy place where people can do this difficult and intimate work?

- Support all the voices in the group.
- Inform the group of *double* confidentiality: nothing said in the group can be shared outside of the group AND nothing said in the group can ever be brought up again except by the person who actually said it. Point out, however, that there is a moral obligation to share with proper authorities any comment made about hurting oneself or another.
- Gently, faithfully redirect/remind anyone who does what they are NOT to do (see above).
- Ask the group for feedback as to how things are going and ask, "Does anyone else have something they want to say?"
- Step aside during "For Reflection" and let participants do their own inner work.
- Give participants permission to "Pass or Play" during each discussion instead of expecting that everyone "take a turn."
- Occasionally invite participants to clarify, e. g. "Can you say more about that?"
- Check to see if participants understand the content being offered in the session.
- Remind participants of the value of "talking to" a professional about anything that seems to be overwhelming them. Have specific information on hand as to how participants can contact local professionals or access services such as Catholic Charities, etc.
- Point everyone to the note above the credits on the inside cover of the Participant Journal before starting.

"We need to practice the art of listening, which is more than simply hearing. Listening, in communication, is an openness of heart which makes possible that closeness without which genuine spiritual encounter cannot occur."

Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*

In his talks and writings, Catholic theologian and storyteller John Shea often reminds us that the Spirit “illuminates the mind, activates the will, and gladdens the heart.”

Whole Hearted is designed to help participants:

- See the impact of a painful time and evaluate their current response to it.
- Pray for renewal.
- Invest in practices that encourage healthy spiritual lives.

The program closes with a reminder to participants that these three dynamics of Recognition, Renewal, and Restoration are ongoing and lifelong ways of sustaining the Spirit’s presence.

Session Overview

Each session focuses on a different “word inside the word.”

Session 1: Whole Hearted

(We come with a whole heart full of experiences)

Participants reflect on:

- The value of the commitments they have made and are willing to keep.
- The resources and assets they have to live whole hearted lives.
- The moments of grace and dis-grace they have experienced.

This session can be summed up as the process of *Recognition*.

Dynamics include personal sharing around gratitude, the practice of “Collecting Moments of Grace” as a spiritual resource, and identification of their sources of support (assets), as well as a drawing exercise that reflects a painful experience.

Session 2: wHOLE hearted

(A painful experience has probably left a hole in our heart.)

Participants:

- Gain basic information regarding the cognitive, social, emotional, and spiritual impact of life's painful experiences.
- Gain basic information regarding healthy responses we can make to the impact of trauma.
- Assess the "hole" in their heart caused by painful experiences.
- Discuss the ways they have responded to these experiences.

This session sheds light on the impact of trauma and points to the negative and positive ways of *Responding*. The principal dynamic is participant discussion around their responses to life's painful moments.

Session 3: whOLE hearted

(It can be helpful to change something about our old heart.)

Participants:

- Reassess past ambitions, interests, desires, directions, perspectives, etc., with an eye for what might be best to let go of.
- Prayerfully ask God for "a new heart" – one that is free from the pain and/or limitations of the past and better suited for moving forward.
- Identify the life-giving commitments, relationships, and/or interests still to be pursued.

Through a Psalm, this session points to the role reassessment and prayer plays in the process of *Renewal*.

Principal dynamics include a Guided Imagery experience during which participants and Jesus discuss their experiences of being wounded, as well as a breathing experience of Praying a Psalm. A private prayer experience that participants can do on their own is also offered.

Session 4: Wholehearted

(It is best to move forward in a wholehearted way.)

“Wholehearted” is defined by Webster as “completely and sincerely devoted, determined, or enthusiastic.

Marked by complete and earnest commitment.”

Participants:

- Consider accepting the whole of what their life has been.
- Personalize the spirituality of the Paschal Mystery’s experience of pain, loss, and new life.
- Select spiritual practices that can help them move wholeheartedly toward the “more” God has in store for them.
- Emphasize the continuous process of Recognition, Renewal, and Restoration as a means of responding to the impact of life’s painful experiences.

This session points to the process of *Restoration*.

The principal dynamic engages participants in the exploration of their personal experience of the Paschal Mystery and the Catholic understanding of suffering, loss, and new beginnings. They are also asked to make note of listed spiritual practices that they may find helpful.

A Mental Health-Aware Parish

Whole Hearted can serve as a resource for individual use or as a core component of a bigger effort: becoming a mental health-aware parish.

Painful experiences impair many more of our parishioners than we might think. Pain related to disease, divorce, death, displacement, drugs, loss of jobs, loss of dreams, lack of income, family conflicts, betrayal, and a host of other experiences has physical, emotional, cognitive, social, and spiritual impact.

It is the impact of these experiences that can be overwhelming, affecting our brains, our social interactions, our ability to get tasks done, our ability to communicate clearly, our sleeping and eating habits, our health, our spirituality, and our overall state of mind.

“The Church will have to initiate everyone - priests, religious and laity - into this ‘art of accompaniment’ which teaches us to remove our sandals before the sacred ground of the other.”

Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*

Being a mental health-aware parish or organization is a pastoral response that:

- Demonstrates awareness of, and sensitivity to, the impact on life’s painful experiences on its members and their loved ones.
- Helps parishioners recognize their experience and response to painful situations.
- Provides restorative spiritual and professional resources in a variety of ways.

A mental health-aware parish integrates spirituality and religious practices with sound and basic mental health information and practices.

Even more importantly, mental health-aware parishes should not try to do what mental professionals are far better equipped to do.

Being a mental health-aware parish includes showing parishioners how to quickly access professional help, as well as informing them of the services that support organizations, such as Catholic Charities, may provide.

Being a mental health-aware parish means maintaining a sharp and simplified focus on the impact and responses to life’s painful times, not simply improving the parish’s welcoming climate.

A mental health-aware parish takes seriously the impact of Adverse Child Experiences (ACEs) while still making mental health awareness initiatives an adult-centered effort and not another child-centered program.

Becoming a mental health-aware parish cannot become “another thing” parish leaders are asked to do.

Suggested Script and Facilitation Notes

All times are approximate. Allow at least 45 minutes of running time for each session. Wording is offered for facilitators who prefer to read a “script” introducing each activity.

Important: Assembling a List of Local Mental Health Resources

As indicated in these notes, it is important that a list of locally accessible mental health resources and providers be made available to *Whole Hearted* participants who wish to seek professional help.

Catholic Charities USA does not provide such a list; it is the responsibility of the local organization (parish, diocese, Catholic Charities organization, etc.) hosting *Whole Hearted* to assemble one.

To begin assembling a list, the organization hosting *Whole Hearted* might contact their local Catholic Charities agency, local Catholic hospital systems and the local diocese. A list might encourage *Whole Hearted* participants to consider their primary care provider, their employer’s Employee Assistance Program, the “Helpful Organizations” feature on the website of the Association of Catholic Mental Health Ministers or the “Find a *Therapist*” feature on the Psychology Today website.

All lists must include the following disclaimer at the top of the page listing local resources:

Below is a list of local mental health resources. It is provided for informational purposes only. Neither the *Whole Hearted* facilitator nor Catholic Charities USA endorses or recommends any of the persons, practices, or organizations on this list, and there may be other options more suited to your particular needs. You are solely responsible for selecting a mental health services provider and ensuring that the qualifications of that provider are suitable for your needs and circumstances.

Session 1 (45 minutes)

Introduction (6 minutes)

Welcome to *Whole Hearted*, a parish-based mental health seminar focused on mental health in response to life's painful experiences. This is an educational seminar, not a clinical program or a support group. It is designed to help all of us:

1. Gain information about trauma,
2. Reflect on the responses we and/or loved ones have made to trauma,
3. Tap into our spirituality for renewal and
4. Become familiar with practices that can help us and loved ones move forward.

Explanation of Dynamics

Journaling Exercises: *Whole Hearted* is a "quiet program" more than a discussion program. The booklets are called journals because most of the time participants will be making private notes based on the material and reflective exercises throughout each session.

Discussions: Each session will include a short discussion or two, during which:

1. Participants can choose to share their thoughts or not. This is not a "let's go around the group" program where everyone is asked to take a turn sharing. Not at all.
2. The authors of the program ask that participants refrain from giving advice or recommendations. We are asked to simply listen and allow people to share their own thoughts and feelings.
3. If at any time participants want to take a break, for any reason at all, they should please do so.

Opening Prayer

Offer a short prayer or pray the Lord's Prayer together. Begin by inviting everyone to take a minute to silently read the opening material on page 4.

For Reflection (7 to 10 minutes)

Our first reflection exercise consists of five questions. Please take your time, relax and go wherever the questions take you. We will set aside seven to 10 minutes for this first exercise.

Use of Music: Feel free to play soft instrumental background music during this and all the other reflective exercises. It can help participants relax and it also serves as a signal for journaling. However, to avoid distractions, make sure it is soft instrumental music without lyrics.

Managing Time: With all reflective exercises, offer the allotted time, but move forward sooner if you notice that everyone has completed the exercise. Conversely, consider extending the allotted time if you see that participants need another minute or two to complete the journaling.

Collecting Moments of Grace

Move on by explaining that most of the sessions offer a practice for consideration. This session offers us the practice of “Collecting Moments of Grace” on page 5. As facilitator, you should read this section aloud.

For Discussion (10 minutes)

Set up by dividing the large group into small groups of three or four, if possible.

Introduce the first “For Discussion” on page 6 by reminding everyone that they are free to “pass or play.” The group will have 10 minutes for discussion. For now, they should focus only on the first question. As the facilitator, you will let them know when to move to the second question.

Allow five minutes for the first question (unless you see that the participants need more time). At the three-minute mark, remind everyone to please try to make sure others who want to share have time to do so.

Note: Offer this reminder in all future discussions, as well.

It is better to refrain from playing background music during discussions, which can make it too difficult for participants to hear each other.

When ready, introduce the second question. Now that participants have spent time remembering Moments of Grace, they’ll flip to the other side of the coin and look at moments of “Un-Grace,” or “Dis-grace,” if you will. Remember that participants can pass or play and should hold each other’s sharing reverently, gently and without advice.

Allow five minutes for this discussion. At the three-minute mark, remind everyone to make sure others who want to share have time to do so.

Personal Drawing Exercise (5 minutes)

Explain that this is an optional exercise that they may or may not be inclined to do.

Besides the instructions on page 6, you may want to tell participants that they can sketch out something they discussed or anything else that comes to mind. Play background music if you wish.

Optional Sharing (3 to 5 minutes): Allow a few minutes for anyone who wants to explain their sketch to the others in their small group.

Read aloud the four sentences at the top of page 7.

Optional Reflection (3 minutes): Follow this material by asking aloud what participants want to say about their whole heart. Allow a few moments for quiet reflection and then invite anyone who wishes to share their answer aloud with the large group. Thank each one who shares.

Closing (4 minutes)

A Time for Everything: Explain that throughout the program, participants will be given a chance to engage with scripture. Invite a volunteer to read aloud the passage from Ecclesiastes 3. Then ask everyone to make a private note or two in response to the two questions following the reading. Remind everyone these will not be for discussion.

Before leaving, distribute the list of professional services to everyone explaining that it is a list of local professionals and resources available in the area. Please feel free to use this list or share it with friends and family.

Dismiss by thanking everyone for their participation. Share the date and time of the next session or announce a short break before continuing with Session 2.

Session 2 (45 minutes)

Introduction (4 minutes)

This is the trauma session. This session provides us with:

1. Clear and sound information about the impact of life's painful experiences.
2. Recognized mental health principles for working through trauma.
3. A chance to take stock of the response we or loved ones have made to trauma.

Give everyone a few minutes to quietly read the 12 different experiences at the top of page 8.

Hard Times Exercise (8 minutes)

Ask everyone to form small groups of three or four, if possible.

Read aloud the instructions for the Hard Times Exercise. Explain that anyone who volunteers to share what they imagine it's like to go through one of the hard times described in the exercise should answer all three questions as they share with their small group. Check for understanding. Then ask them to begin.

Be sure to announce when half the time is expired.

The Impact of Hard Times (8 to 10 minutes)

Thank everyone for their participation in the Hard Times exercise and then point out that the word HOLE is now highlighted in wHOLE Hearted, the title of this session, for a reason.

Point everyone to the impact of hard times and read aloud the first three paragraphs, ending with: "It's as if your whole heart has a wHOLE in it."

Then give everyone two or three minutes to silently read the rest of that page on the signs of trauma from the National Institute of Mental Health.

When everyone is finished, ask participants what struck them or stood out the most in what they just read. Invite volunteers to respond from within the large group.

Note: Spend time with this important information regarding trauma and its impact. Affirm responses that point out the different signs and impacts of trauma and repeat responses aloud to the group after someone points it out.

Make sure to emphasize this line from the second paragraph: "Trauma can come from events of different sizes and weights." Refer back to the 12 experiences depicted on the previous page in the journal as examples of rather "ordinary" events in life as well as "extraordinary," catastrophic or criminal ones.

Be sure to emphasize for everyone the final paragraph at the bottom of page 9 and encourage self-care.

'The Wire Fence' and For Reflection (6 minutes)

Read this portion aloud, after practicing beforehand, giving each sentence its proper timing and pace. Pause between the first and second stanzas. Allow a moment of silence after reciting it.

Then invite everyone to complete the For Reflection questions, including any notes to self at the bottom of the page. Use instrumental background music if you wish.

Afterwards, ask if anyone wants to share with the large group any part of "The Wire Fence" that stood out for them.

Working Through Hard Times (8 to 10 minutes)

Have everyone quietly read this material. When they are finished, emphasize at least three points from the first two paragraphs:

1. The different dynamics listed in the first sentence, "grieving, blaming ..."
2. The process of working through a painful experience is not all at once or once and for all.
3. Each of us has to be intentional about how we want to respond to our whole heart.

Note: If you have additional online links or resources that provide information about working through pain and you want to share them, now would be the time to do so.

Pope Francis quote: Point out this quote at the top of page 12 and ask for a volunteer to read it aloud as everyone follows along.

For Discussion (7 to 10 minutes)

Carefully and clearly introduce the discussion by noting that we began this session by “walking in someone else’s shoes” – the shoes of someone who may have experienced hard times.

Then we explored the impact of painful experiences and ways of working through it.

Now tell participants that we want to close this session by giving ourselves seven to 10 minutes to talk about our own experiences. The previous page mentioned that this is one of the helpful things we can do. If participants would like to describe a little bit about what it has been like in “your own shoes,” there are three questions to respond to in this discussion.

As always, participants should remember to feel free to pass or play. And remember that we are asked to hold each other’s sharing reverently, gently and without advice. Remind everyone that they are also free to step aside or take a break any time they want to.

We’ll have about 10 minutes to do this. Let everyone know when there are five minutes left.

Note: As with all discussions, you may notice that participants have finished up sooner than the allotted time. If so, move on.

Closing (3 minutes)

Thank everyone for taking part in the discussion and explain that the session will close with a prayerful engagement with Scripture.

Pause for a few moments of silence. Then read aloud Hebrews 12:12–13 at the bottom of page 12 and give everyone a moment or two to complete the corresponding question.

Once again, thank everyone for their participation. Express your hope that this session was helpful.

Announce the date and time of the next session or announce a short break before starting the next session.

Session 3 (45 to 50 minutes)

Introduction (4 minutes)

Call attention to the title of the session, “the word within the word.” Ask what, based on the title, they think the focus of the session will be. Field all responses. Refrain from acknowledging the correct response.

Then ask everyone to take a few minutes to quietly read the eight situations found on page 14.

Psalm 51 (7 minutes)

Read aloud the two verses from Psalm 51 at the top of page 15. Then make the key point that most of life’s painful experiences almost always involves some sort of loss that calls us to adjust. It is often very helpful and necessary that we let go of something our hearts were hoping for, counting on, believing in, expecting and holding on to. Hear “clean heart” as “fresh start.”

Read aloud the material on page 15, beginning with, “The Psalmist who wrote the words above,” and cover the potential value in making the bulleted changes listed below it.

Then invite everyone to go back to each of the eight situations on the previous page. Ask them to select a few situations to see if they can identify a helpful change or an important letting-go that a person or group might make given what he/she/they have gone through? Allow a few minutes for everyone to do so and invite responses from volunteers.

Forgiveness (2 minutes)

Have everyone turn to the top of page 16 and note that forgiveness is both helpful and complex. It is important to give some thought as to what forgiveness is and isn’t. And we need to use great care in the way we promote it.

Ask everyone to quietly read the five statements. Afterwards, point out that the first and last statements speak of what forgiveness is, while the middle three statements describe what it isn’t. Give everyone a minute to review the statements again in that light.

For Discussion (8 minutes)

Form small groups. Read aloud the descriptions on page 16 as well as the instructions for the discussion at the bottom of the page. As always, let everyone know when they have reached the halfway mark of the allotted time. If the discussions seem to end early, move on.

Praying a Goodbye ('Hitting Refresh' in the *Young Adult* version)

(3 to 5 minutes)

Note: We are now making an important transition in the seminar. Announce that up to this point, the seminar has been about recognizing life's painful experiences and our responses to it. Now we want to move from recognition to renewal. Specifically, we want to consider how some aspects of our spirituality bring inspiration. How might our spirituality help us have the new heart – the "clean heart" – mentioned by the Psalmist? The rest of this session is our prayer session.

Then take everyone through the practice on page 17 and afterwards ask if anyone would care to share any experience they may have had with this sort of practice.

Field a few responses and thank them.

Guided Imagery Prayer Exercise (7 minutes)

Ask for a simple show of hands from anyone familiar with Guided Imagery Prayer. Explain that you are going to ask everyone to close their eyes, take a few deep breaths, relax and try to follow along by imagining what you are describing. You might say, "Let my voice lead you. Try to stay with it if you can. It's okay if you can't."

When you think everyone is ready, take them through the Guided Imagery Prayer exercise by reading the script exactly as it is written on pages 18 to 19.

Note: You should practice this beforehand. Find a calm tone and a deliberately comfortable pace. Practice the opening instructions and reading aloud Jn 20:19–29. Be sure to pause after every sentence. You will read it twice. The first reading depicts the Gospel account. The second reading places each person in an imaginary encounter with Christ, who offers each participant the same words he offered the disciples. Take time to stress the same words, as well as the new ones he offers the participants.

When you are finished, pause for a few seconds and quietly tell participants that when they are ready, they can open their eyes and come back. Then invite everyone to make some notes on page 19.

Afterwards, ask for a show of hands of whether participants were able to stay with the exercise. Then note that they can repeat this exercise any time they wish by following along in their journal.

Praying a Psalm (3 to 5 minutes)

Explain that the group has one more prayer exercise. It is called Praying a Psalm, and it is a form of breathing prayer in which participants say one part of the psalm with each breath they exhale. It's simple once participants get the pace down. Today, the group will be breathing Psalm 51, which we have been using to frame this session. You will show the group how it works and then they can quietly give it a try. It's only four lines, or four breaths.

You are to demonstrate it as it is outlined on page 20, gently inhaling a breath and then softly saying the words with each exhale. Once you demonstrate it twice, invite everyone to try it themselves. There is no need to close their eyes, since they may need to read the verse they are to exhale.

Afterwards, thank everyone for giving it a try and remind them that they can use these and other forms of spiritual practices as a source of renewal. Point out the PEACE BY PIECE prayer experience they can do at home on page 22.

For Discussion (5 to 7 minutes)

Point out that this session has been about embracing renewal which, like embracing anything, requires both hands. One hand is for letting go of a former hope, dream, goal, relationship or expectation your heart held dear. But renewal also requires the other hand of re-investment and recommitting to someone, something or someplace that brings us joy, fulfillment, purpose, peace or love. We want to close this session on embracing renewal by giving ourselves some time to think about this other hand of re-committing. Recommitting to something your heart holds dear.

Point to the For Discussion on page 20 and announce that they will have about six minutes for this discussion. Remind them it's pass or play. Tell them when there are only a few minutes left.

Closing for Reflection (2 minutes)

Invite everyone to make a few notes on page 21 about the process of renewal. Once finished, thank everyone for their participation in the session. Express your hope that it was helpful and announce the date and time of the final session. Or announce a short break before continuing with the final session.

Session 4 With additional Final Reflection (50 minutes)

Introduction (4 minutes)

Ask everyone to notice the title of the session. Point out how the two words “Whole” and “Hearted” are now one. Point out that unlike the three previous sessions, the two words are now connected. That’s because this session is focused on connecting all the previous material together and moving forward in what we call “restoration.”

Repeat aloud Psalm 51:12, 14 (found on page 15). But this time emphasize the word “restore.” Then ask everyone to silently read about restoration on page 24.

For Reflection (5 minutes)

Encourage participants to take their time with the first question on page 24 before moving to the second one. Feel free to once again play instrumental background music.

Wholehearted (8 minutes)

Read aloud the material defining “wholehearted,” including the four bulletin descriptors. Then ask which of the four descriptors stands out for participants and field voluntary responses from the large group.

Invite a volunteer to read aloud Jeremiah 29:11-13. Ask if anyone wants to share a word or phrase from this scripture that stands out for them.

Note: With both of these large group questions, feel free to gently and calmly invite responders to explain the reason for their selection(s).

Point everyone to the material that follows the Jeremiah verse and ask them to go back to the first For Reflection exercise on page 5 in their journals to see how they answered item #5. Then have them return to page 25 and complete the same checklist again.

Explain that identifying what mental health professionals call your “assets” is a way to identify who or what you can interact with as you make small or large steps toward restoration.

The Paschal Mystery (3 minutes)

Begin by explaining that the concept of the Paschal Mystery is one of the central themes of Catholic spirituality. It can provide us with a source of grace, strength, patience and faith. Have participants quietly read the Paschal Mystery section on page 26.

Then check for understanding about the three different aspects of the Paschal Mystery and ask if anyone wants to say something before the group moves on.

For Discussion (7 minutes)

Form small groups of three or four. You should read aloud the question(s) and let participants begin. Offer a gentle reminder to pass or play and to “reverently listen” to each other. Let them know when there are two or three minutes left.

Closing for Reflection (2 minutes)

Invite everyone to make a few notes on page 21 about the process of renewal. Once finished, thank everyone for their participation in the session. Express your hope that it was helpful.

Spiritual Practices (8 minutes)

Note: The purpose of this section is to provide information regarding restorative spiritual “assets” that are part of our Catholic spirituality and the Christian life. Spending time on this before closing the seminar offers interested participants some concrete ways to further support their small and large efforts at restoration. Consider bringing in and sharing additional information (or links) regarding some of the spiritual practices listed in this section. Begin by emphasizing the definition of spiritual practices and highlighting the four elements found in the second line at the bottom of page 26.

Point everyone to Dorothy Day’s thoughts on spiritual practice at the top of page 27.

Read silently or aloud all the material on page 27. Feel free to add any additional comments, explanations or links afterwards. For example:

- Singing is an ancient spiritual practice. When Moses and the Israelites crossed the Red Sea and escaped Egyptian slavery, the first thing they did was break out in song, led by Miriam and her tambourine. And what did Jesus and the Apostles do to end their Last Supper? Sang hymns.

- The restorative practice of Sabbath comes from one of the Ten Commandments. God's idea!
- Jesus endorsed the practice of meditation in the story of Martha and Mary. He said Mary had chosen the better way: getting quiet, drawing close and listening to the Voice.
- Ask aloud whether anyone employs one of these spiritual practices and wants to briefly tell the group about it.

Wrap up by emphasizing that the point we want to make before we end this seminar and go our separate ways is that spiritual practices are legitimate "assets" participants can employ as part of restoration. Mental health professionals agree on the value found in the routine, orderly, nonverbal, safe and prayerful nature of spiritual practices, devotions and liturgies.

For Discussion (6 minutes)

Announce that on the top of page 28, there are three different discussion questions related to restoration. Each participant can choose whichever one they want to share about. They don't all have to discuss the same question. As always, they may pass or play.

In Conclusion and Final Reflection (8 minutes)

Please take time with this material on recognition, renewal and restoration. These dynamics are the takeaways from *Whole Hearted*.

Explain that the process of dealing with painful experiences comes up all through life's journey, and each of us may be required to attend to it in the future (if not the present). This seminar modeled three dynamics within mental health awareness that participants and others can use down the road.

Have everyone read the In Conclusion material, then unpack it by asking what they think is the point of comparing these three dynamics of recognition, renewal and restoration to "three rooms in a dwelling"? Field responses from volunteers within the large group.

When ready, explain that there is one final For Reflection, and that it is not in the journal. Ask which of the three dynamics listed in Sessions 1 to 4 meant the most to them and why? Or which of the three might they need to spend time with these days?

Participants should let their thoughts take them wherever they need to go. This is not for discussion. It is just for them. They should use the Notes section on page 29 to write down their thoughts. Give them five minutes to do this.

Repeat the For Reflection question(s) aloud one more time as participants begin, since it is not written in their journals. Feel free to play instrumental background music again.

When time is up, express your hope that *Whole Hearted* was helpful and make sure to distribute the list of professional counselors and mental health services to everyone if you did not do so in the first session. Offer a prayer of thanksgiving in dismissal.

Observations and Things to Remember Next Time

As you review how the sessions went, some things to keep in mind are parish promotion (e.g., Was the program sufficiently advertised? Was it made clear that all were welcome?), the environment (e.g., welcoming? non-threatening?), seating (e.g., sufficient? comfortable?), sound (e.g., audible, including for those with hearing impairment?), general logistics (e.g., time, location, accessibility to those with disabilities?) and the schedule (e.g., How was the pacing of each session? Were the times convenient for most participants?).

Session 1:

Session 2:

Session 3:

Session 4:

Whole Hearted Bulletin Announcement

Whole Hearted Mental Health Seminar

Whole Hearted is a free parish-based seminar that provides basic and helpful mental health awareness for life's painful experiences.

It will enable you to:

- Better understand and recognize the impact of painful experiences on your mental health,
- Privately assess how you or loved ones have responded,
- Use prayer and other spiritual practices as a source of strength and renewal, and
- Identify the intentional work needed to move forward.

It is designed to be a personal and reflective mental health seminar for everyone.

It is not a support group nor a substitute for professional care.



The mission of Catholic Charities is to provide service to people in need, to advocate for justice in social structures, and to call the entire church and other people of good will to do the same.