



The Proper Anchor

Adapted from "Taking Your Family to the Next Level" series by Scott Erickson

We are a nation who is discontent and in despair. People want free. They want to be happy. Considering all the pressures we face, and the challenges that are before us, what should we as leaders of our home be teaching our family? What does the world tell us about the happiness challenge?

Antidepressant prescribing has risen nearly 400% since 1988, according to data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). More than 1 in 10 Americans over age 12 now takes an antidepressant, the study finds, and yet two-thirds of those with severe symptoms of depression do not take antidepressants at all.

The new research, led by CDC epidemiologist Laura Pratt, was based on responses from about 12,000 people who took part in a national annual health survey in 2005-08. The findings were released on Wednesday as a National Center for Health Statistics Data Brief.

The findings reflect the paradoxical reality of depression treatment in the U.S. While some observers complain that antidepressants are being handed out like candy, the data show that patterns of prescription generally adhere to what is known about depression prevalence in the U.S. In fact, the research suggests that depression is consistently undertreated.

First of all, depression is common: 9.1% of American adults will suffer from the illness at any given time, according to earlier CDC research. Although the current study finds that antidepressant prescriptions (11%) are more common than depression, earlier data show that about one-fifth of those prescriptions are written to treat conditions other than depression, such as anxiety disorders, pain and menopausal symptoms. That means the "excess" 2% of prescriptions aren't likely to represent overprescribing. Current rates may even reflect under prescribing: the CDC study finds that only one-third of people with symptoms are taking medication.

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Perhaps the most concerning finding in the CDC report is that people who take antidepressants are taking them long term. About 60% of people had taken the medications for two years or longer, and 14% had taken antidepressants for more than a decade. On its face, that sounds scary, but since depression can be a chronic disorder, and since research shows that maintenance on antidepressants cuts the risk of relapse in half, long-term use can be appropriate. However, as with the vast majority of medications, there is not much research on long-term effects of the drugs and, clearly, such study is needed here.¹

¹ Maia Szalavitz, “What Does a 400% Increase in Antidepressant Use Really Mean?” *Time*, October 20, 2011, <http://healthland.time.com/2011/10/20/what-does-a-400-increase-in-antidepressant-prescribing-really-mean/> (accessed July 6, 2017).

COURAGE

C1: What does being happy mean to you? Your family?

C2: What are some things you do to bring happiness to your life? Your family's life?

C3: *Time Magazine* reported in 2009 that anti-depressant prescriptions are now the most commonly prescribed class of medicine in the USA. Anti-depressant medicine use has more than doubled from 1996-2005.²

- What can you do to help ensure your family rises above this issue?

² Alex Altman, "Antidepressants in America," *Time*, August 5, 2009, <http://content.time.com/time/health/article/0,8599,1914604,00.html> (accessed July 6, 2017).

STRENGTH

S1: Scott Erickson in his sermon said, “USA has a higher per capita earning power than any other place in the world. We have more creature comforts and conveniences than any place. Yet as a nation we make decisions that keep us bound.” Read and answer the following.

Isaiah 61:1–3 (ESV)

Luke 4:18–19 (ESV)

- From these verses, what are the ten things Jesus wants for you and your family?

S2: You have a choice to make regarding the future of your life and your family. Read and answer the following.

Acts 3:16 (ESV)

2 Corinthians 10:3–6 (ESV)

- From these verses, what are three things you glean about what Jesus wants you to know?

S3: Jesus is your family’s destiny changer. Read and answer the following.

Isaiah 61:3–4 (ESV)

Matthew 20:28 (ESV)

- From these verses, what can you learn about why Jesus set you free from sin? Why Jesus healed and restored you? Why Jesus brings comfort to you in your pain and perplexity?

ENDURANCE

E1: Preparation is key to helping your family find true happiness. Read and answer the following.

Psalm 1:1–3 (ESV)

- From these verses, what four things are needed to ensure we are adequately prepared? What is the result of being prepared?
- On a scale of 1-4, with 1 being very prepared and 4 being not very prepared, rate yourself as to how prepared you are according to these verses. Write out a plan to improve.

E2: Most dads have high aspirations for their family and themselves. When trouble comes, many do not know how to handle it. Read and answer the following.

Isaiah 33:13–16 (ESV)

- From these verses, what are three things you now understand about God's power in the midst of storms?

E3: God has great things ahead for you and your family. Read and answer the following.

Isaiah 33:17 (ESV)

- With this verse in mind, write down what you see ahead for your life? Your family?