



# **Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Christians with Depression: A Practical Tool-Based Primer (Spirituality and Mental Health)**

*Michelle Pearce PhD*

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*Does religion belong in psychotherapy?*

For anyone in the helping profession, whether as mental health professionals or religious leaders, this question is bound to arise. Many mental health professionals feel uncomfortable discussing religion, while many religious leaders feel uncomfortable referring their congregants to professionals who have no knowledge of their faith, nor intent to engage with it.

And yet Michelle Pearce, PhD, assistant professor and clinical psychologist at the Center for Integrative Medicine at the University of Maryland, argues that if religion is important to a client, then religion will be a part of psychotherapy, whether it is discussed or not. Clients cannot check their values at the door any more than the professionals who treat them.

To Pearce, the question isn't really "does religion belong?" but rather "how can mental health professionals help their religious clients engage with and use their faith as a healing resource in psychotherapy?"

*Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Christian Clients with Depression* is the answer to that question, as the book's purpose is to educate mental health professionals and pastoral counselors about religion's role in therapy, as well as equip them to discuss religious issues and use evidence-based, religiously-integrated tools with Christian clients experiencing depression.

In this book, readers will find the following resources in an easy-to-use format:

- An **overview** of the scientific benefits of integrating clients' religious beliefs and practices in psychotherapy
- An **organizing therapeutic approach** for doing Christian CBT
- **Seven tools**, specific to Christian CBT, to treat depression
- **Suggested dialogue** for therapists to introduce concepts and tools
- **Skill-building activity worksheets** for clients
- **Clinical examples** of Christian CBT and the seven tools in action

Practitioners will learn the helpful (and sometimes not so helpful) role a person's Christian faith can play in psychotherapy, and will be equipped to discuss religious issues and use religiously-integrated tools in their work. At the same time, clergy will learn how Christianity can be integrated into an evidence-based secular mental health treatment for depression, which is sure to increase their comfort level for making referrals to mental health practitioners who provide this form of treatment.

*Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Christian Clients with Depression* is a *practical* guide for mental health professionals and pastoral counselors who want to learn how to use Christian-specific CBT tools to treat depression in their Christian clients.

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