

UNDERSTANDING DEPRESSION

Distribute a pencil and two index cards to each group member. Explain:

- On one card, write down two or three things that can trigger depression in you.

Collect, shuffle and read aloud the items on the cards. Ask:

- Anyone here feel depressed after hearing this list?
- With which items do you most relate?
- What do you think triggers feeling of depression?

Then ask group members to list on their remaining cards two or three ways in which they typically cope with depression. Again, collect and shuffle the cards. Ask a volunteer to title **chalkboard or newsprint** *Coping with Depression*. Read the cards aloud as the volunteer lists the items on the chalkboard or newsprint. When the list is complete, ask:

- Which of these suggestions are new for you?
- Which might you try the next time you're feeling blue or down?

THE WORST DAY OF MY LIFE!

Invite volunteers to share stories about their most depressing days.

After all who wish to share have done so, discuss:

- With which of these stories do you most identify?
- What do these stories share in common?
- In what ways do we cope with these "worst days of our lives"?

HOLIDAY BLUES

Discuss:

- What do we expect to get from a holiday? What tangibles? What intangibles?
- How can expectations influence the holiday blues that many experience both before and after many holidays?
- How could Christians help themselves and others with holiday blues?

List answers to the final question on **chalkboard or newsprint**. Discuss:

- Which of these ideas might help you to deal with the holidays?
- Which of these ideas could help a friend? someone in your family?

Consider typing up these suggestions and distributing the list to the group.