



Protecting Our Mental Health: Coping with Unemployment

Understand that no two people's situations are the same.

Fight the temptation of the common path. Take the road less travelled.

Remember our identity is not tied to our work (it's only one aspect of who we are).

If unjustly fired or laid off, we may need to confront our feelings about this.

It requires and develops humility to wonder about our own part in our situation.

Do something productive for the community: take a fill-in job, teach, volunteer... anything.

Consider if God is calling you to a new line of work = discernment.

Never lose hope: believe in yourself, believe in God.

Watch out for symptoms of mental illness creeping in or reoccurring: depression, anxiety, paranoia, etc... (and get help sooner than later).

Beware of unhealthy coping mechanisms sneaking up or reoccurring: alcohol, drugs, sex, food, etc... (and get help sooner than later).

Self-care is critical during difficult times:

- Physically (eating, sleeping, exercising)
- Spiritually (asking for God's assistance, finding God's consolation, discernment)
- Mentally (releasing anger and stress, taking action, changing our definition of progress, avoiding/correcting bad thinking)

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Watch Out for and Correct Any Stinking Thinking (practice practice practice the antidotes!!!)

All or nothing: “I’ll probably never work again.” Or “If I don’t get a job quickly, then it’s likely I won’t be able to find one.” Or “There aren’t any college grads getting jobs these days.”

Awfulizing and Catastrophizing: “I lost my job and so I’m sure I’ll end up homeless.” Or “My boss criticized me this morning so I’m sure I’ll get fired soon.”

Mind Reading: “I know this interviewer doesn’t like me.”

Fortune Telling: “The job market is so bad, there’s no way I’ll get a job this year.”

Personalization: “I know I am out of work because of my _____.” Instead, find the truth: “I am not the only one going through this” and “I am not being singled out for punishment.”

Musturbation: “I just have to get this job at the _____ company.” Or “I should apply to 15 places every day.” Or “I cannot allow myself to be frustrated.”

Negativity: “That last job I had was a complete waste of my time.” Or “I have no strengths, who am I kidding.”

Low Frustration Tolerance: “I can’t stand being out of work another day.” Or “I am not going to apply for any jobs this week because I can’t take any more rejection.”

Comparisons: “The people I was laid off with all got jobs the next month but I didn’t, so I must be a loser.” Or “that guy had a new suit for his interview so I’m never going to be able to compete with that.”

Cult of Self-Reliance: “I have to or will survive this experience by myself.” Or “If I have enough will power I know I can make it.”

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