

FACT SHEET – Also available on the website

About Rest Ministries

FOUNDING INFO: Rest Ministries was established in 1997 and incorporated in 1998, as a 501(c)(3); founded by Lisa Copen who has lived with rheumatoid arthritis since the age of 24 (diagnosed in 1993). Lisa was diagnosed with fibromyalgia in 1998.

FAITH: Rest Ministries is a nonprofit, non-denominational Christian organization.

LOCATION: Rest Ministries moved into their current office at 12639 Poway Rd., Poway, CA 92064 (at Christian Professional Suites) on April 15, 2001.

HOW WE SERVE: Rest Ministries currently serves individual through 130 support groups called HopeKeepers, based within churches and communities in 30 states and 3 countries (U.S., Africa and Australia). Approximately 2000 people receive the Rest Ministries devotional via email every morning from Rest Ministries. Additional programs/outreach include The Prayer Team, The Encouragement Club, online communities such as Share & Prayer (men and women with chronic illness), Just Men (Christian men with chronic illness) Splashes of Joy (women with chronic illness & depression), message boards, Bible study chats and a Christian Doctor Database.

SOURCE OF SUPPORT: Rest Ministries does not charge for any services. Resources, such as books and tapes are reasonably priced for those on a limited income. Rest Ministries is supported by donations and revenue from resource sales. They are currently seeking grant funding and church support.

VOLUNTEERS: Rest Ministries volunteers, nearly all of whom have at least one chronic illness, donate over 2000 hours per month. To volunteer, call 888-751-7378.

ABOUT OUR NAME: Rest Ministries is based on the verse Matthew 11:28, "Come to me all who are weary and burdened and I will give you rest."

About Chronic Illness

- Nearly one in every two Americans has a chronic condition.ⁱ
- Despite what we may assume, 60% of those who live with daily illness or pain are between the ages of 18 and 64.ⁱⁱ
- The divorce rate among the chronically ill is over 75 percent.ⁱⁱⁱ
- Depression is 15-20% higher for the chronically ill than for the average person.^{iv} However, the significance of one's faith has shown to lower one's risk of depressive symptoms and aid one in better handling a stressful medical event.^v
- Various studies have reported that physical illness or uncontrollable physical pain are major factors in up to 70% of suicides;^{vi} and more than 50% of these suicidal patients were under 35 years of age.^{vii}

Those who use their religious faith to cope are significantly less depressed, even when taking into account the severity of their physical illness. In fact, the clinical effects of religious coping showed the strongest benefit among those with severe physical disability. Some 87 patients hospitalized with serious illness who also then suffered depression were followed over time in another study. The patients with a deep, internalized faith recovered faster from the depression, even when their physical condition wasn't improving.^{viii}

ⁱ (Chronic Care in America: A 21st Century Challenge, a study of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.)

ⁱⁱ *ibid.*

ⁱⁱⁱ National Health Interview Survey

^{iv} Rifkin, A. "Depression in Physically Ill Patients," *Postgraduate Medicine* (9-92) 147-154.

^v Pressman P., Lyons J.S., Larson D.B., Strain, J.J. "Religious belief, depression, and ambulation status in elderly women with broken hips." *American Journal of Psychiatry* 1990; 147(6): 758-760.

^{vi} Mackenzie TB, Popkin MK: "Suicide in the medical patient." *Intl J Psych in Med* 17:3-22, 1987

^{vii} Michalon M: La psychiatrie de consultation-liaison: une etude prospective en milieu hospitalier general. *Can J Psychiatry (In French)* 38:168-174,1993

^{viii} References: Kendler, K.S., Gardner, C. O., and Prescott, C.A. "Religion, Psychopathology, and Substance Use and Abuse: A Multimeasure, Genetic-Epidemiologic Study," *American Journal of Psychiatry* 1997; 154: 322-329. Koenig, Harold G., Larson, David B., and Weaver, Andrew J. "Research on Religion and Serious Mental Illness," in *Spirituality and Religion in Recovery from Mental Illness*, ed., Roger Fallott. New Directions for Mental Health Services 1998; (80).