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Week 47: Fall Mission Feeding

Wellness Wednesday

Randy Robison & Tammy Trent

Kenza Haddock

Studio Discussion:

RANDY: Welcome to *LIFE Today*. I'm Randy Robison. This is Tammy Trent. We care about you, all aspects of your life, as much as we can. But we're here to feed you spiritually, encourage spiritual growth, and help with something that is a major issue these days with a lot of people, and that is the idea of mental health.

Tammy, I know you've run into this. Have you heard much from people who are saying they're struggling with anxiety, worry, fear, those kinds of things? All the time?

TAMMY: Yes! And I think more now than ever before. I think people feel discouraged because they keep struggling with the same things over and over again and don't ever feel there is a path to true freedom.

RANDY: You know what? There is an enemy out there. But sometimes, you might wonder what is that enemy. Today we're going to help you identify three enemies of your mental health. That is the title of a book written by our guest, Kenza Haddock who is a licensed professional counselor. I've had the opportunity to interview her, as Tammy you've seen online a few times, and she is a joy to be around.

TAMMY: She is absolutely amazing.

RANDY: And she knows what she is talking about. So Kenza, welcome to *LIFE Today*! Great to have you here in the studio with me today.

KENZA: Thank you so much for having me.

RANDY: Let's jump right in this because this is a big topic. I think it would be good right off the top to tell people what the three enemies are and then we can talk through it.

KENZA: Absolutely! So we have three enemies of our mental health. The first one is Satan, and that's the adversary. That's our infernal enemy. The second one is our flesh, and that is our sinful nature. So you can remember that by remembering our internal enemy. We have an internal enemy, that is our sinful nature. The third one is the world, as in people trying to exert influence over us to lead us outside of God's will for our lives, and that is our external enemy.

RANDY: Now you've faced these personally. I know you tell your whole testimony in a different book but give people a brief idea of your background. It is fascinating but it ties into this.

KENZA: So I grew up in an Islamic household. So my understanding of God growing up, or who God was, is he didn't desire a relationship with me, he didn't care about me. He was more so like a spiritual Pharaoh; that's how I thought of him, a dictator. Islam is based on earning salvation based on works. And so up until my teenage years until 23 years old, I started struggling with so much anxiety and so much depression.

Let me tell you, from a mental health perspective, I didn't know this then but I know this now, anxiety and depression are like cousins; that's what we call them and they feed off each other. So I was just walking around with this cloud of shame because I knew I was sinful but I just couldn't earn salvation by my own willpower to the point where I struggled with suicidal ideations. Anxiety was my norm. It wasn't until I was 23 years old that I cried out to God. Thankfully, the Lord had been knocking on the door of my heart, looking back.

One night I was in bed and I had a dream that it was the end times. In this dream, I was looking out the window. As I looked out I saw the sky open and this man in a white robe descending

from the sky. And Tammy, Randy, for the first time in my life, I felt this peace I had never felt in my entire life. Anxiety was my norm and so I felt this peace. As he was coming down in authority with his hands wide open, I said there is something about him.

Now I wish I could tell you that I woke up, gave my life to Jesus and everything was great. But no, that's not how it went. Giving my life to Jesus meant I had to leave Islam, which came with its own type of anxiety. I had to leave my mother, father, brother, sisters, because I would in violation of apostasy law, which even in the United States they would see me as a traitor.

So I left the state for safety reasons. I just had to get to know who I was. The hardest part about that was I needed to know who the one true God is. Right? That in itself was a whole journey. I just pushed through it by God's grace, and the Holy Spirit was there. It was incredible but it took about eight to ten months for me to make the decision to leave and move to South Carolina.

TAMMY: Unbelievable! How did you get into the field that you're in right now? I think it is obviously a personal experience. But you dove all in because you also wanted to help so many other people. But what was it for you that this is it, this is my calling and I'm diving all in?

KENZA: Well, I'm glad you asked! So I never thought I could become a counselor. I felt the Holy Spirit for the first time after I became a believer. You know when God is knocking on the door of your heart to do something he won't let up. I fought back because I felt so unqualified being that I was raised in so much dysfunction. The more pull I felt toward counseling the more I'm like, Lord, that is not who I am. I'm so unqualified for this. So I went and asked my pastor at the time and he said, "Yeah. That's not how God works. [Laughing] He doesn't make sure you're qualified and then he calls you. No, it is the opposite."

So they prayed over me and I went back to school for counseling. Throughout my counseling journey, throughout going to grad school the Lord worked in me also to work out some of my anxiety, some of the things that brought me down, some oppression. So that helped a lot.

Now I graduate and I start my internship, and then I finish that and then I start my clinicals. I

started doing Christian and clinical counseling, so both, merging both, theology and therapy together, and I realized that so many brothers and sisters in the faith struggle with the same ideas and the same oppressive thoughts that I struggled with before I was a believer, and even after I was a believer.

So as I did my research, I realized over the years that we're fighting these three enemies simultaneously over and over. So we have to learn the weapons of our warfare.

RANDY: I had to deal with it holistically. And by the way, there are many things related to your mental health that are physical, and you need a doctor to deal with those. And so if that's the situation with you, we would encourage you to see your physician. We're not offering medical advice here.

But there is also a spiritual aspect to it. I find it interesting that you say Christians struggle with a lot of the same things. Because when you saw Jesus, whether you recognized him in your dream or not, you at least sensed the peace. And we refer to him as the Prince of Peace, the Bible says that. What do you think is going on with Christians who are struggling with their mental health, with the anxiety, with the worry, with the fear, the confusion sometimes, maybe on the more spiritual side of things? What do you see going on?

KENZA: So much of it is, from a spiritual perspective, we don't discern God's voice from the enemy's voice. That comes from -- sometimes, we hold the wrong idea of who God is. You would not believe how many people I see and treat from a trauma perspective, trauma clients who had this idea about God that he is a harsh judge, that he is a dictator, that he is just waiting for them to mess up. And that is not who he is.

The problem is I can tell that person until I'm blue in the face but it takes experience. That's how we develop that trust and develop that relationship. And so here's what happens. I'm glad you asked that question because here's what happens. If I walk -- and that's why I fell into the first enemy and that's the devil. If I don't believe that God loves me and if I don't believe that God is a loving, holy God, then I'm going to try to make up for it in other ways.

Let me tell you Satan, like it says in First Peter 5:8, is roaring like a lion, seeking those he wants to devour. And so what he does is he starts planting that -- God doesn't love you. God doesn't care about you. What are some of the thoughts that come to mind and do we discern if they are from the enemy or are they truly from God? Because if a thought is I'm a loser, or I look in the mirror and I say I'm ugly, I'm fat, I'm this, and I am that. There are so many thoughts that come to our minds and are we casting them down like the Bible says? Do we know how to discern between the two?

RANDY: It sounds like that one very important step towards mental health in a positive way is replacing lies with God's truth.

KENZA: Yes! And here's the thing. Some people may say, oh, that's just words of affirmation or that is just positive thinking. No, it is not! Hebrews 4:12 is very, very clear. It says the Word of God is alive and active. It is sharper than a two-edged sword. It pierces through bone and marrow, the division of soul and spirit. The Word of God is the only one that has the capacity to pierce through the enemy's lies because Jesus has defeated the powers of darkness. So we're able to -- we're able to understand and cling to God's word and understand that is truth. So we're able to cast down the lies.

Looking at myself and saying something just the opposite of what I believe about myself, that's not going to work. That's just like putting a Band-Aid on me. That's where I found so many people. But appropriating God's Word over my life, oh no, the enemy has to flee because then I am standing in obedience to God's will.

TAMMY: Do you think mental health is a spiritual war?

KENZA: I do to a certain degree. Here's why. I do believe that there are times when some people are dealing with hormonal imbalances. So I don't want to negate that because I dealt with postpartum anxiety and depression. I was told by well-meaning people, "You need to read your Bible more." Listen, I knew that it was not a matter of -- I'm not going to cry -- because I knew it

was not a matter of reading my Bible. I knew it was a matter of I'm dealing with a hormonal imbalance and I needed to get on medication, and it's okay. Don't shame someone because they're dealing with something that's physical.

Now, if someone is not walking with the Lord, someone isn't holding the right perspective of God, someone is not spending time with the Lord, then yes, they're not going to win the battle against their mental health.

TAMMY: How do we win the battle? How did you win the battle?

KENZA: By defeating the battle with each one of these three enemies. I like what you said the last time we talked, Randy. You said, "Listen, the war has already been won. We're basically cheating. We just need to understand the war has been won."

So I wanted, number one, I needed to be real with myself and with the Lord, come before the Lord. There is a list of things that open us up to the kingdom of darkness that we need to understand whether or not we have engaged in. Like for example, I had engaged in -- and I'm very open about it. I had engaged in astrology, Chinese horoscopes, and yoga. I mean I had engaged in so many activities that I needed to come before the Lord and humble myself and renounce them and ask for his forgiveness. And understand also that hey, if we ask for forgiveness, he is faithful to forgive us and just turn away from those things. So any astrological apps, delete them. I had to get rid of all that. That was number one, how to defeat the first enemy.

RANDY: Scripture is replete with that. As the Israelites moved into the Promised Land, they were told not to worship the other gods, not to even marry sometimes to unbelievers. That is definitely a biblical concept.

I think a lot of people, however, deal with, I would call it disobedience because when the Bible says, for example, a hard one, forgive and we don't want to because we know somebody has done something wrong. We need justice! We trust our sense of justice over God's sense of

justice sometimes, if we're honest. Do you find that those types of things become something that -- bitterness is another one, by the way, that scripture very distinctly talks about. Does that really impact our mental health in negative ways?

KENZA: It does. Because unforgiveness is rooted in unprocessed emotions as well. We allowed that situation that happened to go unprocessed. So it goes deep within our hearts and it starts to weigh us down, for sure. It results not only in depression but also in anxiety because it is inner turmoil. Think about someone who has hurt you and you haven't forgiven them. Listen, I've done it too. Thank God he is a good Father. He will let us sit in that inner turmoil. It is biblical; he says that he will. So then you start thinking about the situation over and over, and replaying, how should I have said this? How should I have said that?

There is a recipe to the right way to forgive also, and there is a recipe of the wrong way to forgive. And forgiveness is not the same as reconciliation. A lot of times people will shy away from forgiveness because they're like I don't want to reconcile with that person if they're abusive or if they're not good for them. So no, for sure.

TAMMY: Can I ask you a practical question? How would I know if I'm truly depressed? How would I know if I'm battling anxiety or am I just sad? How does a person know like do I have a mental illness? What are those disorders? How could I even identify that to know I need help beyond myself? Because I'm dealing with some stuff here and I don't even know the root of it. Am I depressed? Am I filled with anxiety? How does a person get there, answering that first question?

KENZA: There is definitely a difference between sadness and depression, clinical depression. So clinical depression, now it has to be diagnosed by a mental health professional. But I can give you the list of symptoms. The sadness has to occur more days than not during a week for at least two weeks. There has to be a sense of hopelessness, of helplessness.

When you look in a mirror, maybe you just look at yourself and there are self-deprecating thoughts, or oppressive thoughts that you are repeating to yourself over and over. A big one is

loss of pleasure in activities you used to enjoy. So for example, you used to like to play tennis and now you just want to stay home and isolate. By the way, the enemy loves to isolate people because there is power in community and he will isolate that person. That's depression.

Anxiety has symptoms that occur for at least six months. Because we go through stress in life and that doesn't mean it is clinical anxiety. If for the last six months, you've had worry or feelings of impending doom or something has been causing you insomnia or hypersomnia, where you just want to sleep, or restlessness, irritability. I've listed a lot of the symptoms; that is clinical anxiety.

There is no shame in getting help. I'm glad you asked that question, thank you, because there is no shame in getting help. It doesn't mean that you're going to have anxiety your whole life. But hey, it is a start. Take that step forward and seek counsel. The Lord says there is wisdom in multitudes of counsel.

RANDY: I think a lot of people need to know there is hope. There is hope. There is an answer and you don't have to live there but do seek help if you need to. What would you say to someone who is maybe listening to your list and going, oh, check that one, check that one, check that one. What would you say to that person who is struggling with their mental health today?

KENZA: You know, a verse that kept coming to mind just over the last week as I was thinking about today says, "If our hearts condemn us, we know that God is greater than our hearts." So if you're struggling with depression or anxiety or you feel like your moods are up and down, up and down throughout the day, understand that you have a God who loves you. A God who moved heaven and earth to call you by name. He loves you personally.

So if you find yourself overwhelmed today, if I could just pray with you and pray over you right now. Faithful Father God, thank you for each person who is listening right now. Lord, I don't know them but you do. Lord, whatever is overwhelming them, Lord, God, I pray that you infill, that you would infiltrate that space right now, in the mighty name of Jesus. God, I pray that they would feel that peace that surpasses understanding that I once felt, Lord when I came face to face

with you. Father, I pray that they learn to see you, God, as the loving, holy, righteous God, that you are the one who calls them by name specifically.

Father, I pray right now, in the mighty name of Jesus, that you would silence the enemy's voice from them. God, I pray that your voice would be louder, and that they would learn to see themselves through your eyes. I pray this in the mighty name of Jesus.

RANDY: Thank you! Thank you for that, Kenza. Good words. By the way, if you're watching and you want someone to pray with you, we actually have people ready to pray with you, to listen to you, and just agree with you for whatever you're going through. So call that number on the screen if you want just to talk to another person. We do care about you.

Also, if you want to get Kenza's book, you can get it wherever you get books. We are offering it today. Tammy, as you know, we have a wonderful opportunity because we love to help you. But we also want you to help others who are in difficult circumstances. If you'll support our outreach today and just request Kenza's book, *The Three Enemies of Your Mental Health*, we'll send it to you as a thank you.

But most of all, I want you to watch this. Just pause for a second and say Lord, would you have me do something today? If so, what would you have me do? As we reach out to others who are struggling mightily today, we can be the answer to their prayer. Watch this.

Transition roll-in:

ISAK: There's malnutrition clinics like this all over this area in Angola where mothers bring their children that are suffering from malnutrition. In these parts of Southern Africa, child mortality under the age of five is the worst anywhere in the world.

Many of these mothers bring their children and they watch and wait to see will we be able to save their lives? Mothers like Angelina here with little Jakim. Jakim is a child that is being ravaged by malnutrition. Literally, the silent killer that is stealing the life out of her. This child

represents so many in these areas. Her mother now can only watch, wait, and pray. Pray that we'll be able to save her child's life.

My prayer today is that it is not too late for Jakim. The therapeutic food that we're providing this child in this clinic will be able to save her life. But my other prayer is for the mothers in the villages all over these areas, mothers whose children aren't yet here, who if we don't reach with critically needed resources, with the food they need, their children will end up in these clinics fighting this battle of life and death.

You can help Jakim and Angelina, and you can help the mothers in these villages. Today, you can be the answer to that prayer if you'll open your hearts and if you'll help us to bring the resources that are so critically needed, if you'll bring life in the form of food to these mothers in their villages, and insure that their children never end up in these clinics, and never end up like little Jakim fighting the battle of life and death.

Studio Appeal:

RANDY: I know many of you join us in prayer for those children when you see pictures like that. I've been in one of the malnutrition clinics and prayed for a child. But I've seen that child die that very day. That tells me, yes, we pray but we also need to take action. That's what I'm asking you to do today to take action. Let's do the faith and the works because it is a beautiful work but it's a critically needed work right now.

And Tammy, I love the joy we see in the mission feeding outreach because I've seen the pain.

TAMMY: Yeah. When you talk about the fact that you've been in a malnutrition clinic and a little one has died, I've had, I call it a privilege to have been in a malnutrition clinic as well, and praying, weeping, my heart aches every time I go into these countries and I'm with these babies, especially dying. We can't just let it end there. We have to act now.

I know Isak said they're waiting but some of them don't even have the time to wait. I want to get

in there now before they even have to be in a clinic like that. I want to be able to bring food to these children right now and we can do that together, Randy if we come together.

RANDY: It's so easy. Let me tell you how easy. A gift today of \$30 will help feed three children for the next several months. A gift of \$50 will help feed five children. You can make a gift of \$100 and help feed ten children for the next three months. Some of you, and I pray you'll do it if you can, can give \$1,000, maybe even more, and feed so many children.

But that's the formula: Pray and act. I pray that you will act right now.

Cause spot:

ANNOUNCER: Right now across the continent of Africa, children are suffering, facing severe malnutrition and even death. Extreme drought and famine putting at risk thousands of lives means we must replenish food supplies immediately to keep feeding the 350,000 children and help reach more people in desperate need.

Through *LIFE's* Mission Feeding outreach, your gift of love can be an answer to prayer for a hurting and hungry child in their time of need. Call now with your life-saving gift of \$30, \$50, or \$100 to help feed and care for three, five, or ten children for three full months.

With your gift of any amount, we'll send the Daily LIFE devotional calendar. This perpetual calendar has 365 days' worth of scriptures and inspirational thoughts to remind you of the rest you can find in God's loving arms.

With your gift of \$100 or more, you may request the "The Light of Life" desk lamp. Find comfort and encouragement from Jesus' words in John 8:12 displayed on this stand-alone acrylic gas lamp, perfect for home or office décor as a reminder that Jesus is the light of the world.

Finally, with your gift of \$1,000 or more to help feed and care for 100 children, be sure to request our inspiring bronze sculpture, "A Cup of Water."

Please call, write, or make your gift online today.

End of video

Studio goodbye:

RANDY: I hope you're going online or going to the phone. Make the best gift you can. It is such a privilege to be able to feed so many children in need. We can only do it because of you.

And today, if you would like Kenza Haddock's book, *The Three Enemies of Your Mental Health*, request it with any gift toward Mission Feeding. We'd love to send it to you.

Kenza, you've been such a blessing. I've been blessed!

TAMMY: I've loved it. *Wellness Wednesdays* is one of my favorite times and you have been perfect today. What a great conversation. Your book is incredible. It will help you gain lasting, not temporary, but lasting victory over areas in your life where you may feel like you've been struggling. Praise God for victory. It is yours! It is mine today.

Thanks for watching. We'll see you next time on *Life Today*.