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**Our Mission Statement**

Promoting health and wholeness through professional counseling, consultation and education from a Christian perspective.

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- Enjoying outdoor activities
- Planning an unusual dinner
- Inviting a friend over
- Developing a fun family night
- Being involved in church activities
- Participating in sports
- Planning for Three Kings Day in January, Ground Hog day and Valentine's Day in February
- Inventing a holiday - there are lots of ideas on the internet!
- Laugh together!



Creating a gentle sense of anticipation for other less extravagant experiences can be a helpful way not only for children, but the entire family to recover from the post-holiday blues and survive the long cold winter months. ■

**New staff...**



**Karen Chia, MSW**  
 Licensed Clinical Social Worker

**Office hours:**  
 Chicago, IL location



**Carol Counts, BA, RN**  
 Clinical Intern

**Office hours:**  
 Orland Park, IL &  
 Schererville, IN locations



**Brian S. McCallum, MS**  
 Licensed Professional Counselor

**Office hours:**  
 Crystal Lake, IL location

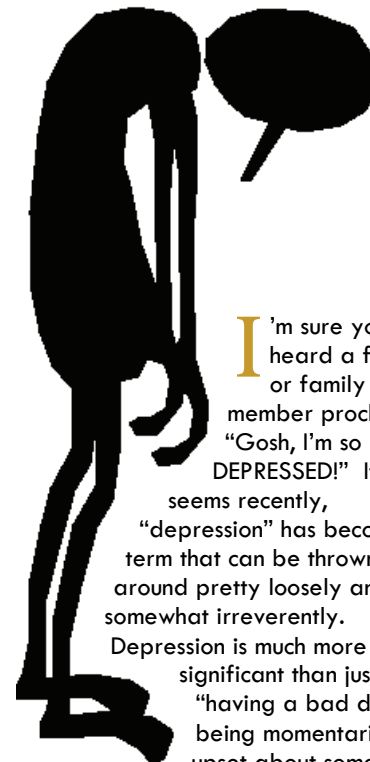
# PRESSING ON...

"I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus." Philippians 3:14



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Jan | Feb 2012



I'm sure you've heard a friend or family member proclaim, "Gosh, I'm so DEPRESSED!" It seems recently, "depression" has become a term that can be thrown around pretty loosely and somewhat irreverently. Depression is much more significant than just "having a bad day" or being momentarily upset about something that's outside of our control.

Major Depressive Disorder, the official term for clinical depression, is a mood disorder that makes one feel exhausted, worthless, helpless, and hopeless, and it can last for weeks, months, or even longer if left untreated. Other significant symptoms of depression include a lack of energy, sleep problems, taking little or no pleasure in things that one used to enjoy, and when most severe, suicidal thoughts and ideations.

## DEPRESSION

■ by Michael Geraci, MA, Licensed Professional Counselor

In men, depression can be masked by perpetual irritability and anger. In children, depression can come across as a constant bad attitude or self-critical thinking (i.e. "I'm not good at anything.") Adults who are severely depressed describe it as "being in a fog" where they feel completely unmotivated. Getting out of bed is a chore, getting dressed seems overwhelming, and even eating can seem like an obstacle.

While such symptoms can be arduous, there is hope. Depression is treatable. If you are depressed, do NOT wait to get help or think it will go away on its own. Getting a medical checkup is recommended, as a doctor can check for any health conditions, such as hypothyroidism or mono which can cause similar symptoms. Next, finding a counselor who can support and help you through such a difficult time is key.

A therapist can help you:

- Understand your emotions and put feelings into words.
- Identify and overcome negative thinking patterns that contribute to depression.

Register by Feb 27!

Are You Able to Read Minds? | Marriage Tip Series  
 Building a Strong Marriage—  
 Premarital Program

S.A.D. - Seasonal Affective Disorder  
 Blue Kids | Mental Health & Children Series

- Develop a broader outlook on life, increase self-esteem, and become more accepting of yourself and others.

In addition to talk therapy, medication may be necessary depending on the severity and longevity of the depression, and behavioral interventions such as exercising more regularly, incorporating relaxation techniques to help with sleep, and addressing diet and nutrition may all be in order. ■



Michael Geraci MA LPC  
 sees clients in our  
 Orland Park and  
 South Holland locations.

Clinical depression is a very real condition that can have debilitating emotional and physical effects.



# Are You Able to Read Minds ? | Marriage Tip Series

■ by Duane Kapp, MA, Marriage & Family Therapist, Chief Operating Officer

There is a unique skill that many believe they possess; it is, believe it or not, the ability to read minds! Oh, I know what you are thinking (smile); you do not believe that this could be true. Yet, if we are honest, many of us believe that we often do know what certain others are thinking. And this may be somewhat true in business relationships, but it is a destructive "skill" when it comes to dating or marriage. In fact it is such a common problem with couples that it is written about in text books, studied in experiments and observed by therapists right during a counseling session. The sad thing about this "skill" is that it often

destroys a love relationship or at least weakens it.

"Mind reading" is held by many therapists to be one of the main reasons marriages are so difficult to put back together. It does not seem to make any difference what one person in the relationship says if the other person in the relationship KNOWS what that person "really" means! In fact, research using electrical brain response graphs will show that if one spouse says something that the other person does not believe to be true, the listening spouse will not appear to have heard anything at all.



## MARRIAGE TIP | Do NOT Read Your Spouse's Mind!



Duane Kapp is COO and has been involved in the development and management of professional counseling services for over 30 years. During that time he was also a full-time faculty member in the Department of Psychology at Azusa Pacific University in Southern California. He was also, part of that time, the Director of the Marriage and Family Therapy graduate program.

The only way to stop this destructive behavior is to trust (or forgive) the other person in the relationship. Believe that the other person (the one that is a gift from God) is truly trying to make clear what he or she is saying. You, as the listener can ask lots of questions, but ask to understand what is being said --- not to prove that the other person is really thinking something different from what he or she is saying.

We can only grow in our ever-changing love relationship if we listen to each other and do our best to respond to what is being said, versus what we think he or she is "really" saying. It is better to have a healthy relationship than to continually "guard" against the chance of being fooled by the one you love.

And let me warn you — this is a very difficult relationship habit to break (in case you were thinking otherwise). ■

Register by Feb 27!  
**Building a Strong Marriage Pre-marital Program**

- includes
- :: online relationship assessment
  - :: all-day group program Sat, March 3
  - :: one-hour couple session



program offered spring and fall each year held at Elmhurst Christian Reformed Church facilitated by Joy Bocanegra, MA, LCPC

Register online or call 708.845.5500 x 104

Don't miss our therapist recommendations on Facebook!



Check our Facebook Page each week for mental health resources — articles, books, scripture, encouragement, online links, and more. This newsletter too!

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Go to our website for a complete staff listing and speaker bureau  
[www.chicagochristiancounseling.org](http://www.chicagochristiancounseling.org)

# S. A. D. | Seasonal Affective Disorder

■ by Joy Bocanegra, MA, Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor

As the dark, gray days of fall and winter replace the sunnier days of spring and summer, many individuals find themselves experiencing SAD Seasonal Affective Disorder. SAD, is a type of depression that occurs at the same time of year, usually in autumn and continuing through winter. According to the American Academy of Family Physicians, six out of every 100 people in the United States are affected by SAD. Symptoms may be mild at first and become more severe as the season progresses.

- Difficulty concentrating
- Loss of interest in activities once enjoyed
- Appetite change, craving starchy foods or sweets
- Weight change
- Irritability



Seasonal Affective Disorder is best treated with a combination of psychotherapy, light treatment and medication. Since a lack of bright light contributes to the cause of SAD, brightening up your environment is an important part of treatment. Make the most of sunlight by opening blinds and adding lighting where possible.

Light therapy, or phototherapy, has been used for 20 years and is linked

to improving mood by creating a change in brain chemicals as one sits a few feet from a light therapy box. Time needed may vary from 30 minutes to 2 hours a day.

Get outside to walk, ski or ice skate. During exercise endorphins are released elevating our mood. Even on cloudy days outdoor light is helpful and spending time in nature can be soothing to the soul. Allow yourself to tune in to your senses, experiencing the sights, sounds and smells.

Seeking treatment early can prevent symptoms from becoming serious, making the winter months more manageable. ■



Joy Bocanegra sees clients in Orland Park.

# BLUE KIDS | Mental Health & Children Series

After the holidays, most people feel a bit of a let-down after all the festivities are over and life goes back to its normal routine. The same is true for children, who spent much of December in choirs, pageants,



Dr. Janet Irvine sees clients in Orland Park.

family visits, and anticipating surprises, planning for special events and getting gifts. The holidays are an exciting time for children, and while they are exhilarating, they can leave a child exhausted due to

"good stress." The post-holiday blues are the body's way of coping with little nervous systems that were on sensory overload for an extended period of time.

Common indicators of children experiencing post-holiday blues include:

- Irritability
- Reluctance to resume school
- Tearfulness

- Poor concentration
- Fatigue
- Withdrawal
- Non-compliance
- Tantrums

While most post-holiday blues only last a few weeks, parents and caregivers can try these ideas to reduce the symptoms and help children recover more quickly.

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