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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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Healthy Stress Busters:

- Go for a walk
- Call a good friend
- Write in your journal
- Light scented candles
- Play with a pet
- Get a massage
- Listen to music
- Spend time in nature
- Sweat out tension with a good workout
- Take a long bath
- Savor a warm cup of coffee or tea
- Work in your garden
- Curl up with a good book
- Watch a comedy



What are your healthy stress busters?

Additional Resources on stress management
http://www.mindtools.com/pages/main/newMN_TCS.htm#coping
http://www.helpguide.org/mental/stress_management_relief_coping.htm

¹ http://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newTCS_00.htm



Karen Chia is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker and sees clients in our Chicago 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



A Publication of Chicago Christian Counseling Center

Jul | Aug 2012

Mindfulness

by Melinda Hammond, MA, LCPC



Are you fully in the present?

*Have you ever tried to pray and your mind starts wandering . . .
 It tells you about an embarrassing moment,
 It tells you about your fears for the future.*



in this moment to be present with God.

Being in the present moment, and accepting it without judgment is called Mindfulness. Mindfulness, a form of meditation, is a technique that many therapists use to help pull their clients out of the past and the future, so that they may start living in the present.

If Mindfulness is a type of meditation, how does it fit into a Christian Counseling perspective? Meditation is, in fact, a facet of Buddhist philosophy. However, a close reading of the Bible shows that Christ was quite mindful in His life and teachings. He said: "I tell you do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear, but seek first his kingdom and his righteousness and

all these things will be given to you as well. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself." (Matthew 6:25) We cannot grow spiritually if our minds are in the past or future. We can only grow in the present moment. When we are fully in the present moment, we are also able to be fully present with God.

God designed our bodies to respond positively when we are fully in the present moment. Studies have shown that Mindfulness can lower blood pressure, increase relaxation, and even increase the amount of oxygen our cells carry. Learning to be mindful can decrease anxiety and depression, slow down our thoughts when they are out of control, and help us focus on daily tasks.

During family dinner, your drive home, and prayer, notice how your mind can wander. When it does, return your attention to the present moment, and the presence of God. Imagine that those thoughts that pop up

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(the grocery list, the project you're working on) are like clouds. There is no need to engage with them or try to push them away. They will simply dissipate in time. ■



Melinda Hammond is a Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor and sees clients in our New Lenox and Orland Park locations.

Resources:
<http://www.emptybell.org/articles/christian-mindfulness.html>
 Christian Insight Meditation: Following in the Footsteps of John of the Cross by Kevin Culligan and Daniel Chowning
 Faith Postures: Cultivating Christian Mindfulness by Holly Sprink

The Family Ship

■ by Kimberly Kooyenga, MSW, Licensed Social Worker



Each parent has his or her own story about how they were blessed with becoming parents. Regardless how you got here, God has a purpose for this course on which your life had begun.

Embarking on the parenting journey, you may feel you are in the position of Captain of your family ship. You are declaring orders, making decisions, and keeping things afloat. You work hard to maintain order with appropriate discipline and provide food and shelter for your crew. You seem to have everything under control. But, one night a terrible storm comes. You try to maintain order, but you become

flustered, and you lose your sense of direction. Your compass is nowhere to be found. In a panic, the crew stops listening to your orders and carry out their own agendas. Your ship begins to sink.

This may provide an accurate description of how many families feel with the growing number of stresses in our daily lives—work, extracurricular activities, bills, and the list goes on. It can be difficult to maintain a sense of balance and peace in our lives. Like the Captain of the ship, it can be easy to believe that we are in charge and try to maintain control of everything at once. And, like the Captain, when we lose focus, we can lead our ship and all those aboard into chaos.

As parents, God has actually placed you in the position of First Mate. God is the Captain and head of the ship. You look to the Captain for guidance and direction, and the crew looks to you to lead them. **The Lord states in Deuteronomy 6:6-7,**

“And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise.” Without being in touch with the Captain, you cannot give the appropriate directions. He has also blessed us with the Bible for our compass and training manual, but we must be intentional about using it.

Parents are to be leaders in their home, assisting in the spiritual growth of their children under God's direction. With God as Captain, we can navigate any waters. However, that also means that we need to humbly let Him give the orders. ■



Kimberly Kooyenga sees clients in our Evergreen Park & South Holland locations.



Who's the Captain of your ship?

STRESS Busters

■ by Karen Chia, MSW, Licensed Clinical Social Worker

Stress, positive or negative, is unavoidable in our lives. It is important to learn how to manage our stress. Stress management begins with identifying stressors (people, tasks, situations) and recognizing how stress affects our body, emotions and behaviors.

Here are some ways to manage stress taken from http://www.helpguide.org/mental/stress_management_relief_coping.htm

- Set aside time to unwind and recharge your energy level.
- Connect with others and seek support.
- Do something that gives you joy and pleasure every day.
- Laugh! Keep your sense of humor.

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*Stress is a condition or feeling experienced when one perceives that "demands exceed the personal and social resources the individual is able to mobilize."*¹

“YOU first.”



“No, I insist. YOU first!”

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

Marriage Tips Series

MARRIAGE TIP | Follow God's Example: BE FIRST!

One of the great mysteries of life is the awareness that there is no human undertaking started with such tremendous hope and expectation - or that often leads

Hint...it is what you and I did enthusiastically when dating and trying to get our new found love to like us even more!

a new clear teaching or a Christian professional therapist. It is our willing desire that God works with; our willingness to allow God to change me **FIRST**...if just a speck... so that my spouse cannot help but respond back in a more excellent way. That, of course, is why God loved us **FIRST**: he knows how we are made!

“WE LOVE BECAUSE HE FIRST LOVED US.”

1 JOHN 4:19 NIV

to such disappointment - as love. Down through the ages, however, astute writers have shouted out the reason for such disappointment. It's because we want the other person to change **FIRST** and then we will change! That is, of course, backwards!

There is, therefore, always the question - Do I have the desire to learn what to change in me **FIRST**? If I prayerfully accept my part in being more loving, then the conscious Spirit of God can guide me down a new and healthier path. He may lead me to additional reading, to hearing

If we do not have the willingness to go **FIRST**, most likely there will never be enough books, sermons, marriage tips or counseling sessions available to get us to have a more healthy marriage. It will always be a standoff; each individual waiting for the other one to go **FIRST**. ■



Duane Kapp, MA, LMFT Chief Operating Officer

In order to change the ways my spouse loves me, I will have to change how I love my spouse **FIRST**! Of course that is a goal for both, not just one; both willing to change **FIRST**! The strength of a healthy marriage is to be willing to consider how I might improve my relationship and then go for it **FIRST**! This is the point of Jesus' command to concentrate on the log in your own eye and not the speck in the other person's eye. Even if he had said “speck” in each person's eye the point is still clear - Don't concentrate on changing the other person. Concentrate on your own personal change for the better and that will lead to the other person changing for the better as well.

Of course we all know individuals that appear to never change for the better! But often the flaw is in how we push each other for change. We need to show love as we push and that is done by **FIRST** seeing and then openly working on our own real flaws.

New staff...



Yaneisha Lozano

Yaneisha Graham Lozano, MS

Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor
Licensed Mental Health Counselor

Office hours in Chicago & South Holland, IL locations

Yaneisha is a Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor for the State of Illinois and Licensed Mental Health Counselor in the State of Indiana. Her experience includes working with children, adolescents, families, adults, victims of domestic violence, substance abusers, and clinical management. During these experiences she treated patients with Depression, ADHD, Anxiety, Bipolar, Schizophrenia, Asperger's, Reactive Attachment, Low Self-Esteem, Problems with Adjustment, Anger, Grief, Relationship Issues, Sexual Abuse, Stress, Behavioral Problems, and Personality Disorders. She enjoys providing counseling to individuals, families, couples, children, adolescents, military personnel, domestic violence victims, couples dealing with grief following a miscarriage, infertility, and women's issues. Yaneisha's goal in counseling is to assist her clients in finding hope, their individuality, and developing healthy coping skills.

Yaneisha received a Master of Science degree in Mental Health Counseling from Purdue University, Hammond, IN and a Bachelor of Arts degree from DePaul University, Chicago, IL. Yaneisha is also a National Certified Counselor (NCC) and National Clinical Certified Mental Health Counselor (NCCMHC) through the National Board for Certified Counselors. She is a professional member of The American Counseling Association and a member of Chi Sigma Iota.