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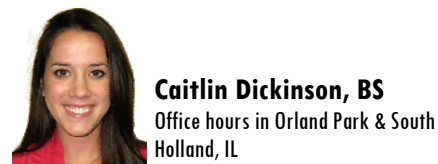


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### Our Mission Statement

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

## Meet our new clinical interns...



**Caitlin Dickinson, BS**  
 Office hours in Orland Park & South Holland, IL

MA in Marriage & Family Counseling student  
 Adler School of Professional Psychology, Chicago, IL



**Elizabeth Jongetjes, BA**  
 Office hours in Orland Park, IL & Schererville, IN

MA in Clinical Psychology student  
 Wheaton College, Wheaton, IL



**Lauren Mathelier, BS**  
 Office hours in Orland Park, IL & Schererville, IN

MA in Community Counseling student  
 Northeastern Illinois University, Chicago, IL



**Patricia Iwema, BA**  
 Office hours in Schererville, IN & South Holland, IL

MA in Counseling Psychology student  
 Lewis University, Romeoville, IL



**Emma Li, BS**  
 Office hours at 2 locations in Chicago, IL

MA in Clinical Psychology student  
 Wheaton College, Wheaton, IL

Know someone who cannot afford counseling?  
 Our interns can see clients at a greatly reduced fee  
 and are supervised by licensed professional staff.

Please call to make an appointment.  
 (800) 361-6880 | (708) 845-5500 | (219) 864-4363

# 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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Sep | Oct 2012



by Doug Van Til, MSW, Licensed Clinical Social Worker

Part I:  
 A Christian  
 Perspective

For good reason much is being written and talked about in regards to the problem of bullying. As we begin a new academic year, I'd like to say a few things about this pervasive, progressive, and insidious problem. Whether bullying occurs in the school setting, the home, or the "streets", I think we can agree the problem needs to be recognized and confronted as serious enough to require vigilant, corporate, and sustained effort on many fronts.

But first let me propose a Christian perspective and response to bullying attitude and behavior. The Christian shouldn't be shocked that their son or daughter might be guilty of the problem because they know that fallen man is by nature a sinner. We are all prone to commit injustices and omit mercy in both individual and relational contexts. People are capable of mistreating other people implicitly and explicitly at many different levels because we're all sinners prone to self-centeredness, abusiveness, and distortion of proper social behavior. It's important that we recognize these assumptions so we can more honestly identify bully tendencies and behavior in ourselves and others. As we look at our various roles relative to the problem of bullying, we need to realize and accept

the magnitude of responsibility that we all have to prevent, remediate, and repair the damage that comes from bullying. Parents, siblings, extended family, teachers, classmates, friends, and colleagues are a few of the relational groups that have both a role and responsibility that can be part of the problem however must be part of the solution.

Christians who seek to be motivated as well as motivate others to prevent and stop bully behavior should be reminded that the very character of God and therefore His expectations for His people is to "do justice, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God." Micah 6:8. "This is what the Lord Almighty says: administer true justice, show mercy, and compassion to one another. Do not oppress the widow or fatherless, the immigrant or the poor." Zechariah 7:9.

Schools and families can and must promote and model the type of culture taught and modeled by Jesus. They can teach, indoctrinate and inoculate against a culture of mistreatment and abuse of power or influence. Schools and parents need to be equally responsible for identifying and rectifying bully behavior in their students. Parents and the adults

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in school have to understand that bullying takes many forms on a continuum of subtlety and blatancy in both an individual context and a social context. ■

In Part II of this article, to be published in the Nov | Dec **PRESSING ON** issue, I will suggest some more specific guidelines and strategies toward preventing and changing behavior of bullies and victims.



Doug Van Til is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker with extensive experience in the school system. He enjoys working with children, adolescents, and adults in our Crete location.



# Handling Change

■ by Brian Smith McCallum, MS, Licensed Professional Counselor

**WHAT IS THE ONLY CONSTANT IN THE UNIVERSE? CHANGE.**

Change is inevitable and, ironically, its reality is immutable. Psychologists have remarked that humans are hard-wired to resist change; in fact, some individuals have such difficulty coping and functioning in the face of life's stressors that they develop a clinical condition known as Adjustment Disorder.

Change can be welcome: a marriage, the birth of a child, a job promotion; these positive changes, though, can be accompanied by additional demands, responsibilities, and stress. In short, eustress can morph into distress.

Change is at the core of counseling, too. Motivated individuals aspire to change their thoughts, feelings, and behaviors; skilled helpers facilitate this process of transformation in others.

Change can be unwelcome as well. Unwanted change manifests in the form of a job loss, a medical crisis, a financial emergency. The aging process, likewise, brings with it myriad changes: the loss of loved ones; the loss of physical and mental faculties, the loss of dreams, etc.

How, though, do we cope with and manage change, whether it's desired or undesired? Maladaptive coping techniques include overeating, imbibing excessive alcohol, abusing substances, etc. Here, in contrast, are tips to positively handle transitions.

➤**First**, absorb Scripture that deals with God's immutability or unchanging nature, which can serve as an anchor for the soul. The following verses (NIV) may provide comfort:

- Malachi 3:6: "I, the Lord, do not change."
- Hebrews 13:8: "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever."
- James 1:17: "Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows."

➤**Second**, acknowledge your fears, doubts, uncertainties, sadness, etc. Grieve losses to this end, and consult the Psalms...especially the Psalms of Lament (e.g., Psalms 13, 69, 142).

➤**Third**, resist isolation and pursue community; confide in family, friends, a small group, pastor, counselor. Hebrews 10:25 exhorts as follows: "Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another..."

➤**Fourth**, establish a ritual or routine, especially a physical one. As you are physically able, take a brisk walking or jog for thirty minutes - - three to four times a week; doing so not only strengthens the body, but also recalibrates the brain and floods it with endorphins, nature's antidepressant and anxiolytic.

➤**Fifth** and finally, reframe your thoughts. As challenging as it can be to do so, we are responsible for what flows through our minds. Noted psychiatrist Viktor Frankl, a Holocaust survivor and existential therapist noted the following in his work *Man's Search for Meaning*: "Everything can be taken from a man or a woman but one thing: the last of human freedoms to choose one's attitude in any given set of circumstances, to choose one's own way." ■



Brian Smith McCallum is a Licensed Professional Counselor and enjoys working with clients in our Crystal Lake & Lombard, IL locations.

## New staff...



Anna Czajkowski

Anna joined our office staff and will be assisting with billing and administrative duties in the Orland Park office.



Veronica Grijalva, MA

Veronica completed her clinical internship and will stay with us as a Staff Therapist. She sees clients in our Orland Park and New Lenox, IL locations.



# CONFLICT

Marriage Tips Series

## What Do Successful Couples Do?

■ by Steve Augustus, MA, Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor

➡ **MARRIAGE TIP** Soft Startup | Positive Emotions | Accept Influence | Low-intensity

Conflict is a reality in any relationship. We actually do conflict in specific ways, but may not recognize our partner's style. When our conflict styles mismatch, we don't just argue about an issue, we also argue about the way our mate is arguing about the issue.

**Conflict Avoider:** Doesn't like fighting or arguing. Anger may feel too unsafe. They prefer to just hear what the complaint is and drop the subject if it's brought up at all. "Let's just get along and be happy."

**Conflict Validator:** Wants to talk it all out. Needs to feel understood and to understand. Seeks security of a strong connection. "Please talk to me about this."

**Conflict Volatile:** Can be very confrontational and "in your face" when upset showing the full force of the emotion as well. Then after venting they can quickly calm down, move on and forget anything went wrong in the first place. "I got a BIG problem with you and I'm gonna get this off my chest!!"

Couples who share the same conflict style have marriages that tend to be stable and happy. Mismatches between couples' conflict styles are shown to predict marital discord and lead to a "Pursuer-Distancer" cycle between the couple, leading to a high rate of divorce in this group. The Volatile/Avoider couple has the worst of the "Pursuer-Distancer" dynamic.

Mismatches are not necessarily doomed but changes must take place for them to flourish.

**What do successful couples do?**

- They use soft startup when raising a complaint so as not to trigger defensiveness (women seem to play a stronger role here since 80% of the time women bring up relationship issues first according to research).
- They use much positive affect (emotions) during the conflict to keep things from escalating negatively.
- They accept influence from their partner rather than batting it back with a counter complaint (men play a stronger role here according to research).
- Not only do successful couples repair successfully after fights,

they preemptively repair to avoid fights from becoming high-intensity negativity. Low-intensity negativity is easier to turn around and according to the research men help when they lead in this effort.

According to research, successful happy couples only resolve 31% of their conflict issues. What they do with the other 69% is enter into dialog with each other. What mattered most in dialoging is that couples show lots of positive emotion and only low-intensity negativity. They develop a culture of acceptance of each other for their differences, even humor about the issues, and willingness to cope. ■



Steve Augustus, MA, LCPC enjoys working with couples in our Orland Park & South



## Building a Strong Marriage Pre-marital Program

Register by Sep 24!

- includes
- :: online relationship assessment
- :: all-day group program Sat, September 29, 2012
- :: 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