

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

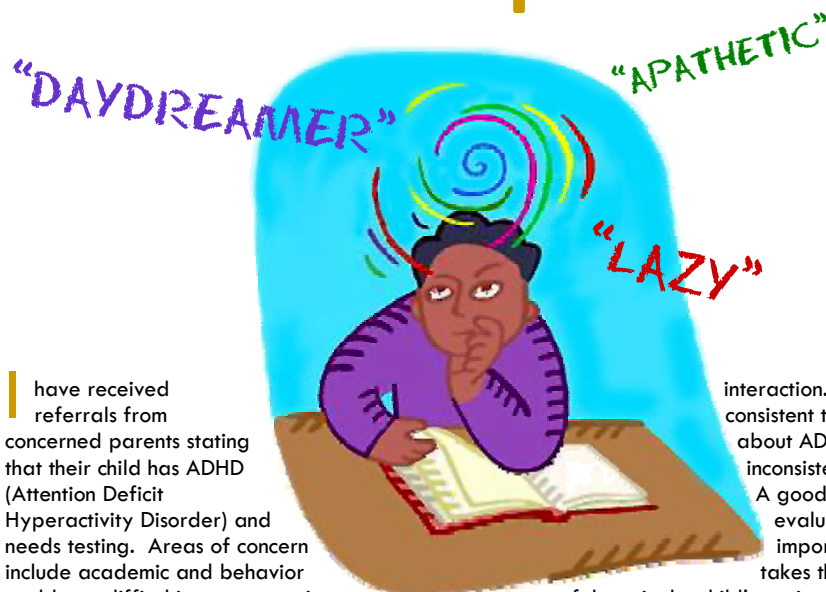


A Publication of Chicago Christian Counseling Center

Jan | Feb 2013

ADHD | Part I: Some Myth Busters

by Dr. Janet Irvine, Clinical Psychologist



I have received referrals from concerned parents stating that their child has ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder) and needs testing. Areas of concern include academic and behavior problems, difficulties concentrating, fidgetiness, and homework battles. The child may have difficulty, finishing work, or being organized. Some are focused on their social life while others are loners. The child may be considered lazy, a daydreamer or just apathetic. Some are creative, smart, driven and on-the-go.

Puzzled parents share that the child can play or read for uninterrupted hours. Some do very well in school, and yet come home and explode. How can the child have attention problems when they can sometimes be so focused?

ADHD is a misnomer. It is actually a biological and neurochemical inability to filter out unimportant information. ADHD children lack "blinders." They feel bombarded and either withdraw or explode. They can't focus on details in schoolwork and subtle cues of social

interaction. The only consistent thing about ADHD is its inconsistency! A good evaluation is important. It takes the efforts of those in the child's environment to be a part of the assessment. A developmental and family history, input from parents and teachers, and meeting the child are included. During the course of the assessment, we may find that some children do not, in fact, have ADHD, but suffer from one of many other disorders. A good evaluation is important to help sort out what is really going on.

Some types of ADHD are more difficult to diagnose than others. Even spacey day-dreamers may have "inattentive ADHD." It is an internal form of "hyperactivity", impairing the ability to concentrate, focus and comprehend.

Treatment for ADHD includes developing structure and predictability to manage the frustration. Adding exercise, fun after-school activities and other ways to channel energy can be helpful.

Building a STRONG Marriage—Premarital Program
March 2, 2013 9:00am—4:00pm
Call 800.361.6880
:: Register by February 25 ::

Mental Illness in the Family
To TEENS about TEENS - An Honest Conversation
Page 2

UNITY - Marriage Tips Series
Page 3

Since ADHD is a biological, neurological disorder it often requires medication to help. Its biggest side effect is a reduction in appetite, which gives rise to the myth that it stunts growth. Reports insinuate that taking the meds creates a "zoned out", listlessness and so it is discontinued. Instead, parents should consult with a professional and determine more appropriate medication.

School is a tough time for these children, but with compassion and understanding they can challenge us with their inner drive and ability to create and persevere. Hopefully, the negative myths surrounding ADHD can be resolved as we strive to provide the care and support those with many gifts have to offer! ■



Janet Irvine enjoys working with children and families in our Orland Park location.

Coping with Mental Illness in the Family

■ by Beth Elgersma, MSW, LCSW



time with them, listening to them, encouraging them, and discussing with them the possibility of getting some professional help. A call to our office may be a first step. Our front office can check which therapist may work out best for you. This may be based on the therapist's experience with the counseling concern, the geographical office that will work out best for the potential client, and the client's insurance. Note: We also have reduced-fee options for those without insurance.

Talking with potential clients' family members about a loved one's mental health issues has given me some ideas that may be helpful to you as you think about how to help your loved one who is facing mental health concerns. Often people struggle for a long time before seeking professional help. As a therapist, I am concerned about continuing to spread the word that being proactive in seeking mental health treatment is usually a wise decision. What can you do if you suspect your loved one has some mental health needs? First of all, love and accept them in their present situation. That may include spending

After an appointment has been made, you may consider driving your loved one to their first appointment, or even attending the appointment with them if they are hesitant to come. Obviously, this must be acceptable to both the client and the therapist. Once they have a diagnosis, you may find it helpful to read some information on the diagnosis. Information is very helpful with diagnoses such as Major Depressive Disorder, Bipolar Disorders, Generalized Anxiety Disorder, Panic Disorder, Phobias, Posttraumatic Stress Disorder, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, Obsessive Compulsive Disorder, and

“Often people struggle for a long time before seeking professional help. As a therapist, I am concerned about continuing to spread the word that being proactive in seeking mental health treatment is usually a wise decision.”

others. When you have information about the diagnosis, you will have an idea whether it is the correct diagnosis, whether medication is usually recommended for that diagnosis, and whether there is improvement being made. There are many good books available. Some cover treatment methods for a particular diagnosis, and others cover several diagnoses. You can ask the therapist, or check our website for ideas. If the therapist recommends a medication evaluation, you may consider assisting your loved one in making an appointment with a psychiatrist, or perhaps starting with their primary care physician. If medication is recommended, it usually gives the

Continued on Page 4 “in the Family”

An Honest Conversation to TEENS about TEENS

■ by Gregory Rodriguez, MA, LCPC



As a therapist who works with many teenagers and their families, there's one thing I can say about teenagers; it's that you know how to push your parents' buttons. Instinctively, it seems, you come with an arsenal of tools to get what you want, avoid getting into trouble, or cause your parents to blow a fuse out of frustration. And for what, a short-term gain perhaps? Think again.

Throw on top of that raising one's voice, slamming the door and throwing a tantrum make matters only worse. Even if you wear your parents down and get your way, you still lose. You lose their respect and demonstrate immaturity—two factors that will likely undermine your chances at a later date. So let's consider for a moment a more effective approach!

Think about what it is your parents need from you. I know you know, I've worked with enough of you to know that you know! It's trust; and if you want to be trusted, show that you are trustworthy. The question then is how does one show trustworthiness?

First, you need to learn to make good or at least better decisions. Teens often push the limits, causing stress and tension for everyone involved. This often makes a challenge out of the normal concerns that parents already have trusting their teen. A phone call and checking in goes a long way toward demonstrating your maturity and respect for them.

Continued on Page 4 “To TEENS about TEENS”

UNITY

■ by Marilyn Ciaramitaro, MSW, MA, LCSW



Marriage
Tips
Series

What comes to mind foremost in giving marriage tips is the establishment and maintenance of Unity in our marriages. Unity being the feeling and behaviors of togetherness, being at peace with each other and working toward mutual, real and tangible goals -- for example, raising children, following a budget, paying bills, finding the right home, car, etc.

The founder of the Focolare Movement¹, Chiara Lubik, often spoke of marital and family Unity. **She gave a formula for achieving and maintaining Unity, calling this the Six Loves:**

- Love #1** Love of Jesus/God in the other - believing that we are all God's children, find Him somehow/somewhere in the other regardless of their difficult behavior or words
- Love #2** Being the first to love - when there is a stalemate, be the first to forgive, hug, begin again, etc
- Love #3** Love one another continually
- Love #4** Share the other's hurt or joy - be empathic upon other's downfalls and happy for their accomplishments
- Love #5** Love your enemies - this can be most difficult especially regarding those who are hurtful
- Love #6** Love everyone - not just those of your race, creed or socioeconomic bracket



Marriage Tip: Establish and Maintain UNITY

This is, Chiara says, living "the ideal" and is very difficult at times. However, continually striving for the ideal and teaching it by word and action can establish a very peaceful atmosphere in our marriage, family, work and community. Many who practice these Six Loves have very interesting faith stories about how difficult people came around and specific problems were solved because of their persistence in loving. See Living City Magazine² for real examples of how people have been successful in very trying situations due to their implementation of these Six Loves.

Rev. Cynthia Geisen, in *A Checklist to Strengthen Your Marriage*³, draws on the works of John Gottman and Nan Silver (*The Seven Principles for Making Marriage Work*), Harville Hendrix (*Getting the Love You Want: A Guide for Couples*), and Andrew and Judith Lester (*It Takes Two: The Joy of Intimate Marriage*). Rev. Geisen's checklist includes:

- Showing love and respect for each other (especially related to our partner being different in nature, celebrating each others positive qualities that attracted us initially)
- Fighting fair, then repair (communicating well: avoiding accusations, using "I" statements, limiting the conversation to one topic/situation, choosing your words carefully and listening well, giving time outs and time to think, deciding together when the argument is over, apologizing as needed - perhaps have a repair ritual, doing something simple together to show continued care)
- Setting a date (carve out time for each other, even an hour per week)
- Supporting each others passions and dreams, giving each other room to grow
- Remembering that marriage is a spiritual journey (love being at the heart of our relationship with God and one another, which leads us back to the Six Loves or the art of loving per Chiara Lubik to maintain Unity)



Marilyn enjoys working with children, couples, and families in our Lombard location.

¹ <http://www.focolare.org>

² <http://www.livingcitymagazine.com>

³ Care Note, Abbey Press http://pathoflifebooks.com/product.asp_Q_pn_E_23062



Toll Free: 800.361.6880

Email: info@chicagochristiancounseling.org

Illinois Offices:

- Chicago (2 locations)
- Crete
- Frankfort
- Lombard
- New Lenox
- Orland Park
- Plainfield (2 locations)
- Shorewood
- South Holland
- Tinley Park

Indiana Offices:

- DeMotte
- Schererville

Visit us or donate online at
www.chicagochristiancounseling.org

Don't miss helpful info & recommendations about YOUR mental health on our Facebook Page!



Find us on Facebook

facebook.com/ChicagoChristianCounseling



Text CCCC to 22828 to join our email list or
Send your email address to info@chicagochristiancounseling.org.

Our Mission Statement

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

Continued from Page 2 "to TEENS about TEENS"



Second, have a plan! If you can work out the transportation, if you can get home by your curfew, if you can promise me that adults are present, if you can get your homework and chores done, "Yes, you can" comes a whole lot easier, if you can answer parental concerns!

Third, be proactive if you want to go places and earn perks from your parents. Don't wait to be nagged before doing chores around the house. The little things add up. Making your bed and keeping your room tidy goes a long way, and you may be surprised how your actions improve your parents' attitude toward you.

Fourth, learn to take a "no" every once in a while ("no's" are a part of real life by the way) and communicate often with your parents about what is going on in your life. Most times it's rather painless.

I believe that there are many more ways of getting to "no" than there are for getting to "yes". These few simple steps can make a world of difference in your ability to getting to "yes" - a yes for both you and your parents.

Remember Ephesians 6:1-3
"Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. Honor your father and mother, which is the first commandment with promise."
You might be surprised how many times you will hear: "Yes. Have a good time and be safe." ■



Greg enjoys working with teens and their families in 4 of our locations: Frankfort, Orland Park, Plainfield, and Shorewood.

Continued from Page 2 "in the Family"

client the possibility of a faster recovery. Generally, ongoing counseling is recommended to make some long-term changes in how the person thinks about their problems and/or their diagnosis, which results in a better prognosis, and more lasting changes in their coping abilities.

In summary, your support can make a difference in whether your loved one receives the appropriate help early in the process. I have seen many people go through needless suffering when professional help is available, and earlier intervention can make a big difference in their recovery. ■



Beth enjoys working with individuals, couples, and families in our South Holland location.