

# 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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## Dad to Dad :: parenting series ::

### | Success at Home

■ by Gregory Rodriguez, MA, LCPC



father who leads embraces the entire range of fathering activities all the time! Examine what type of leader you are! Lead with love and respect and you will never go wrong!

#### Teamwork

The most important thing a man can do for his children is to clearly show them how much he loves their mother (1 Corinthians 13). Only second to husband and wife,

*continued on p 2 "Dad to Dad"*

In my work as a therapist, I see many men for a variety of reasons, but one comes up most frequently - parenting problems. Too many men are feeling powerless in dealing with their family issues. Many of these men are successful in their jobs. They are in high level positions of responsibility at work or owners of their own company. Many have put their work before their home life. However, no success in the workplace will ever take the place of success in the home! So then, what does it take for a father to have that same success at home!? I'd like to offer you (dad to dad) some key concepts that will have a big impact on just about any issues you may be having there at home.

First, let's be clear and make sure we are on the same page. Are we in agreement

when I state that as parents our key objective is to raise our kids into healthy, God-fearing, responsible adults, correct!? Great, then read on!

**Good parenting requires a process, which takes place within a system -- and you do have a system whether you realize it or not!** Ultimately, your child and their behaviors will greatly (not totally) reflect your parenting process and family system. **Your system requires key components which include:**

#### Leadership

Dad, your family needs you as the leader in your home! Managing your family is not enough. At work, a manager goes home at night. A leader's commitment is 24/7. A

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# mental illness... it's OK to TALK about it!!

Do you have a heart for changing the way people think about mental illness?

Do you wish people understood what you/your family are going through?

Do you know how to support a friend or family member dealing with mental illness?

If you want to change the way we respond to mental illness, gather your church & ministry leaders, Bible study or small group, friends & family to learn how we all can better respond to the struggles that affect 1 in 4 people.

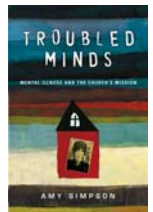


Amy Simpson

## Thursday, May 7, 2015

7:00 pm | Ozinga Chapel | Trinity Christian College, Palos Heights, IL

The event will feature **Amy Simpson**, speaker and author of the book *Troubled Minds: Mental Illness and the Church's Mission*. Drawing on her family's experience, Amy, a pastor's daughter, will share the social and physical realities of mental illness and explore new possibilities for ministry to this stigmatized group. The event is free of charge. All are welcome!



**RSVP Online** <http://bit.ly/CCCCMay2015> | 708.845.5500 x111

As a follow-up to our May 7 event, a general informational meeting will be held at our Orland Park office on May 14 for individuals or churches curious about how to start a mental health support group. **CCCC will provide monthly professional facilitator support free of charge to individuals or churches who start a mental health support group.**

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### **Dad to Dad / Success at Home**

father and mother make up the most important team in the world. A united, loving front is critical in tackling the challenges of parenting your children and leading your team to success!

### **Communication**

In many of the families I deal with (especially with teenagers), one complaint is common. "My parents don't listen to me!" For many dads, listening well is one of our most frustrating stumbling blocks. I know what you may be thinking right now. "They never have much to say when I do talk!" Many teens don't say much (at least not to their parents), but it's not for the reasons you may think! Dads - identify in yourself any behaviors or attitudes you need to work on

that may be getting in the way of your child being able to talk with you. Also, ask good questions. Use "How..." and "What..." rather than "Why...!" For example, "Please tell me how I can get you to be able to (fill in the blank) without having to ask you several times?" instead of "Why do I have to get to the point of yelling before you do what I ask?" Speak without shame or blame. This assures them that they can come to you with just about any topic without fear of judgment and/or repercussions.

### **Discipline**

Discipline means *to teach!* In manspeak, it means *training the team!* Your players need to know exactly what the coach (you) expect from them and what will happen if those expectations go unfulfilled! Your expectations (rules) for your kids need to be clear and reasonable. Discipline

(consequences) also needs to be clear, and appropriate to the situation, age of the child and severity of the offense. Discipline requires patience, persistence and keeping the end goal in mind. Dad, it also helps if you are disciplined in your own conduct. This is where tag teaming with mom comes in handy!

### **Relationship**

Lastly, don't merely love your kids, fall in love with them! Know them from the inside out. Allow them to know you in the same way. You should find that the better your relationship is with your children, the less you will need to rely on the rules and the consequences.



Greg enjoys working with dads and their families in 3 of our locations: New Lenox, Orland Park, and Shorewood.

# Teen Self-Injury

## | What Parents Need to Know

■ by Jessica Parks, MSW, LCSW

**Teen self-injury is alarmingly common.** Some recent studies report that one third to one half of teens have engaged in at least one episode of non-suicidal self-injury in their lifetime. Perhaps you've overheard your children talk about peers self-injuring; perhaps you have seen a story on the news or read an article; perhaps you are concerned that your child may be at risk. **Because it is an increasingly common adolescent struggle, all adults who have a teen in their lives can benefit from an increased understanding of self-injury.**

### What is self-injury?

Self-injury often takes the form of intentionally cutting or burning skin, but can include a wide variety of other behaviors, including self-punching, pinching, and interfering with healing of existing wounds. These behaviors are not suicidal actions, and are not intended to end life, although suicidal thoughts are common in those who self-injure. This begs the question:

### Why do some teens willfully hurt themselves?

The answer is complex, as self-harm can serve many functions for teens. Self-harming behavior was once thought to be exclusively associated with depression, eating disorders, mental retardation, and borderline personality disorders. We now know that many teens, even when they do not meet diagnostic criteria for any particular mental health disorder, are vulnerable to practicing self-harm. Non-suicidal self-injury is more common in kids who deal in emotional extremes: some are highly and intensely emotionally reactive; others are emotionally avoidant and not emotionally expressive.



It is developmentally typical for teens to struggle with emotion regulation; one of the “functions” of self-injury is as an attempt to distract from or reduce intensity of negative emotions and thoughts. Some teens that I've worked with report injuring themselves in order to “feel something” when experiencing emotional numbness, dissociation, or “emptiness.” Others harm themselves as “punishment” when they believe themselves deserving of pain. Self-injury is typically an act in response to emotional turmoil, and is not meant to manipulate or garner attention. Self-harm is an attempt to cope, although a potentially harmful and dangerous one.

Contrary to popular understanding, most teens that self-injure are not doing so to seek attention. Most self-injury is done in private, and kids often make significant effort to hide their behaviors from parents and peers. Many teens go to great lengths to hide their injuries. If you notice your child consistently wearing long sleeves or long pants when inappropriate for the weather or notice several unexplained cuts or bruises, it is important to ask your child directly if he or she has self-harmed.

### How should you respond if you discover a teen in your life is harming themselves?

Because self-harm is, at its core, an attempt at coping, the best response is one of support and grace. It's normal for parents to feel confused, scared, and even angry. Remain as calm as possible. Punishment and bargaining are not helpful for kids struggling with this issue. Assure your child of your care and love. Tell your child why self-injury concerns you. Your child likely expects that you would not know about or understand intentional self-injury. Speaking directly and frankly to your child about it could open an important door to healing. Discuss the need for additional support. If possible, allow your teen some input on from whom they will seek support. Pray with them. Then call a therapist. There is an addictive quality to self-harm, and many teens report difficulty stopping the behaviors once they become repetitive. It is essential to enlist the help of someone who can work with your child to learn new coping skills to manage emotional struggles.



*Jessica Parks is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker. She sees clients in our Lombard & Orland Park, IL locations.*

Your child may be resistant to intervention - self-harm has been helping him or her cope in some ways up to this point. Roll with the resistance; allow your child to express it and acknowledge your understanding of it. Let your child know that you believe there's hope, that things can and will get better. There is hope and healing for teens that self-injure and their families, and it begins with shining light into the darkness.





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### Our Mission Statement

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

## Ministries Blessing our Clients!



*The 5th & 6th grade children and leaders of the Crown Town children's ministry.*

Thanks to Jenn Prim, Children's Ministry Coordinator, and all the children and leaders in the **Crown Town** children's program at **First Christian Reformed Church of Crown Point, Indiana**. The children, 3 years through 6th grade, were challenged to sort through their gently used toys and donate them. Our therapists are excited to start using them with their young clients!

Thanks to Coordinator Sue Meilleur and the **Prayer Shawl Ministry of Christ Community Church in Plainfield**. Some of our clients have already been blessed by the prayer shawls this ministry has provided!

Each shawl includes a tag which reads "This shawl has been handmade for you by our Prayer Shawl ministry. With each stitch, we prayed that God will bless you with His loving touch. May this shawl always be a reminder of how much you are loved."



Office Manager, Nancy Buis, displays a Prayer Shawl donated to CCCC clients.

## Thank You!