

# 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 2015

## Setting Boundaries with Adult Children



Boundaries can be hard to set with anyone; however, when we fail to set boundaries with others, we do not allow the other person to learn to live within their own space, and we, in turn, are prone to resentments, also known as a lack of serenity!

How does this work when the boundary you need to set is with your adult child? Signs that you may need to set boundaries with your adult child include doing their laundry, paying for their gasoline as they borrow your car, allowing them to live at home without a financial or service agreement (aka chores). Author Allison Bottke helps you find serenity as you regain your SANITY in her book *Setting Boundaries with Adult Children*. Doing the same thing over and over again, expecting different results is INSANE! If you want something different

in your relationship with your adult child, then something needs to change. The serenity prayer asks God for serenity to "accept the things we cannot change (name of your adult child), change the things we can (your name) and wisdom to know the difference".

If you are ready and willing to change, take a look at Allison's quick start guide to setting those boundaries:

### S. A. N. I. T. Y.

**S – Stop enabling and stop the flow of money!** Enabling may be useful when you are helping someone grow. Enabling that is harmful seeks to solve someone's problem or "help" (with the best intentions, and often without being asked), to the point of not allowing them to take

■ by Kathy Konrath, MA, LCPC, LMHC

responsibility for their life and the changes that are needed. Stopping the flow of money is simple - just STOP giving them money! If they make it, they spend it. If you make it, and they spend it, you have made a very comfortable bed no one wants to get up from.

**A – Assemble a support group.** Setting boundaries is not easy, especially when the person is someone you love dearly. Sometimes all we need is permission to do what we know in our

*Cont'd on p 2 "Adult Children"*

### In This Issue

Page 2

May 7 Event a Success!  
How to Start a Mental Health Support Group Continues

Page 3

Love & Marriage: how's your horse & carriage?

Page 4

New Staff  
September 19 - Building a Strong Marriage Workshop

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

Thanks to everyone who came out May 7 for our free seminar event, **Mental Illness...it's OK to TALK about it!!**, featuring Amy Simpson, speaker and author of the book *Troubled Minds: Mental Illness and the Church's Mission*.

Amy gave great insight into the struggles of individuals and families with her own family's story. She also gave a **good list of ways each of us can love and support:**

- ◆ Acknowledge your own problems. (We're all broken.)
- ◆ Wrestle with your theology of suffering (Didn't Jesus say we'd have trouble?)
- ◆ Talk about mental illness
- ◆ Be a friend
- ◆ Talk about your own problems
- ◆ Create alliances with professionals
- ◆ Use good boundaries
- ◆ Treat people like people. (Not a diagnosis)
- ◆ Do what you already do. (Do you bring a casserole when someone is in chemo?)
- ◆ Refer people to care
- ◆ Refuse to abandon!
- ◆ Start a ministry
- ◆ Consider training
- ◆ Be patient

After Amy Simpson's presentation, Amy and other panelists discussed mental illness and how to love and support individuals and families affected by it.



Panelists L to R: Amy Simpson; Duane Kapp COO, LMFT; Dr. Janet Irvine, Licensed Clinical Psychologist; Greg Rodriguez, MA, LCPC; Rev. Howard Hoekstra, Pastor of Downers Grove Community Church; and panel discussion facilitator Mel Jonkman MDiv, Executive Director.

## How to Start a Mental Health Support Group

2nd Thursday of each Month at 7:00 p.m.

July 9, August 13, September 10, 2015

New Participants: RSVP to [info@chicagochristiancounseling.org](mailto:info@chicagochristiancounseling.org)

As a follow-up to our May 7 event, CCCC offered monthly professional facilitator support free of charge for individuals and churches curious about starting a mental health support group. These information/support meetings are now ongoing and open to current participants and new individuals/churches. These meetings are held at our Orland Park office. Continuing dates after September will be determined by participant need.

### continued from p 1 Adult Children

hearts is best. Find people who will support you and not co-sign your enabling behavior. Look for someone who will challenge you, give you wisdom, guidance and offer you their strength and hope.

**N - Nip excuses in the bud.** An excuse is "a reason or explanation that defends or justifies a fault or offense". Reasons don't change behavior. Behavior changes behavior. Learn to identify an excuse when you hear it, and then call it out for what it is.

**I - Implement rules and boundaries.** Consider what your limits are, what you are comfortable with allowing and what is non-negotiable. Write it down. Get **specific**. Next, communicate clearly what the rule or

boundary is, as well as the consequence of not honoring the rule or boundary. This allows your child to make a choice. Having a choice is freedom. Once you have clearly established your limits, implement and maintain them.

**T - Trust your instincts.** Setting boundaries in relationships is not like solving a mathematical equation. You will need wisdom and guidance. Ask God to give you a right thought or action. Listen, and then move forward with what you believe is best. You know that voice inside that tells you something isn't right? That same voice can also tell you what is right. Take the risk and trust it. God's got your back.

**Y - Yield everything to God.** It is an act of surrender and acceptance to turn

your child over to God. God knows what your child needs in order to realize things need to change in his or her life. He knows how to help them change, if they are willing. Yielding your child to God allows them the opportunity to open themselves to real change. Get out of God's way and let him work. Pause, and surrender your child to him (over and over again). ■

For more information about setting boundaries with your adult child check out Allison's website at [www.settingboundariesbooks.com](http://www.settingboundariesbooks.com)



Kathy Konrath is a Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor (IL) and Licensed Mental Health Counselor(IN). She sees clients in our Evergreen Park, IL and Schererville, IN locations.



# Love and Marriage: how's your horse and carriage?

■ by Ashley Schehr, MA, Clinical Intern

An old song says love and marriage go together like a horse and carriage, but sometimes the horse gets stuck in a rut on the same old route and the carriage needs some attention for a smoother ride!

Sadly, in some marriages, either one or both spouses don't want to put in the time or effort to fix the bumpy ride of the carriage or pay attention to the needs of the horse. (Strike ONE!) As a therapist, one of the most frustrating things is when one spouse slumps down in their chair and doesn't want to work on the relationship while the other spouse is begging with their eyes for me to fix the mess between them. Or worse yet, when both parties have no desire to work on their relationship. (Strike TWO!) As I start to ask the couple questions about their marriage, it is quite easy for me to observe and understand that in some relationships there are years of unresolved hurt and pain, and in others they simply just need a tune up. I don't want to get to Strike THREE (and you're out!) because all too many marriages have ended and frankly I am sick and tired of it!



So...here are some tips that seem to be helpful for many different types of couples. Even if you've been together for many years and know the ins and outs of your spouse, I would like to encourage couples to get back to the basics of their marriage.

## Getting Back to the Basics

1. **Say what you mean and be sincere when saying it.** It's easy for husbands and wives to steer conversations into the same old pattern. I get it, you've lived together for 20 years and you know your significant other like the back of your hand. I ask couples, "When was the last time you told your spouse what you appreciate about them or said, 'I love you?'" I usually get blank stares, some sheepish shrugs, or an overly upset wife shooting arrows out of her eyes at her husband. I want to toss my imaginary clipboard and pen (because we don't all write on a clip board in sessions) and say, "well why haven't you?!"
2. **Talk it out and work together on getting over it!** While that may sound harsh, it's meant with sincerity. If something is bothering you, or has been for the past 5 years...TELL THE OTHER PERSON, and if you have talked it through, work on letting it stay in the past and forgive. Some of the small things can manifest into major hostility, regret, contempt or anger towards one another years later. Problems will vary from couple to couple, but don't hold all these feelings in and be mad at the other person because you didn't tell them and they truly didn't know! A key to having a happier marriage is if you talk with one another, remember those days? When you talked and didn't text everything to each other, yea...go back to that!
3. **Be spontaneous and have some fun!** I realize that you just rolled your eyes at me and said, 'Really Ashley, how can we possibly do that with 3 kids and our busy schedules?' Stepping out of the rut and doing something unexpected is an easy way for you and your spouse to be happier and reconnect. So then I ask, how often do you do something nice for your husband or wife just because? Be thoughtful and bring her flowers or cook him his favorite dinner with the kids at the grand-parents' house to have some adult alone time! Reconnect with your spouse and do something out of the ordinary mundane week! Take a day for the two of you to go hiking or do something together that you have wanted to do for years! (Psst...ladies this is when you can ask him to take dancing lessons together!)
4. **Set Rules for your marriage!** This can be a good tip for couples that have either been together for a long time or couples who have been together for a short amount of time! Setting rules for your marriage means figuring out together what should never be said or done in your marriage. For example, never call each other mean names when you argue, keep the fighting clean in a sense. Another can be don't throw around the "D" word (Divorce) in an argument or just to hurt the other person. This is a way for you to help build each other up and take a time out and think about what can make you stronger by eliminating some things that are not necessary!

There are many more ways to breathe new life back into your marriage but **you** have to be willing to give it a try. Even if the other person is hesitant or resistant just put forth some of your love and effort to make changes and hopefully they will start to think they need to change things as well. It won't smell like roses and look like sunshine right away, but you have to start somewhere and put in the work. ■

*Ashley Schehr recently earned an MA in Professional Counseling at Olivet Nazarene University and will be joining our staff after her internship. She currently sees clients in our Orland Park & South Holland, IL locations.*





**Toll Free: 800.361.6880**

Email: [info@chicagochristiancounseling.org](mailto:info@chicagochristiancounseling.org)

**Illinois Offices:**

- Chicago (4 neighborhood locations)
  - Edgewater
  - Galewood
  - North Park
  - South Loop
- Evergreen Park
- Lombard
- New Lenox (2 locations)
- Orland Park
- Plainfield
- Shorewood
- South Holland
- Tinley Park

**Indiana Office:**

- Schererville

Visit us or donate online at  
[www.chicagochristiancounseling.org](http://www.chicagochristiancounseling.org)

Don't miss helpful info & recommendations about YOUR mental health on our Facebook Page!  
[facebook.com/ChicagoChristianCounseling](https://facebook.com/ChicagoChristianCounseling)  Find us on Facebook

*All past newsletters/articles can be viewed on our website.  
<http://www.chicagochristiancounseling.org/newsletters.html>*



Text CCCC to 22828 to join our email list or  
Send your email address to [info@chicagochristiancounseling.org](mailto:info@chicagochristiancounseling.org).

**Our Mission Statement**

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

**Building a Strong Marriage**  
premarital program

Fall 2015 Program  
**September 19**  
9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.  
Held in our Orland Park office

**Program Fee: \$335** includes

- ♦ online relationship assessments
- ♦ one-day Saturday group session
- ♦ separately scheduled one-hour couple session

**Call to register (800) 361-6880**  
Registration deadline September 14, 2015

**New Staff**



**Eric Lester, PhD**  
Licensed Clinical Psychologist  
Schererville, IN location



**Shawna Sapp, MSW, LSW**  
Licensed Social Worker  
South Holland, IL & Schererville, IN location