

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 2018

Where You End and I Begin

An Invitation to Intimacy Through Healthy Boundaries

■ By Kathy Krentkowski, MA, LCPC, LMHC

My Personal Area



Personal boundaries aren't easy to establish in relationships. There is no litmus test that tells you when or what sort of boundary is needed at any given time. There are no concrete measurements that reveal when a personal boundary is too rigid or too loose, or when it needs to be adjusted. Navigating boundaries in your relationships requires that you know yourself, and that is an individual journey. Although challenging, it is well worth the effort and can deliver rewards such as intimacy and closeness in a relationship.

What Makes You, "You"

Your most fundamental personal boundary is one that tells you who you are and what makes you, "you". Without a boundary that tells you who you are, there is no "you" to be in relationship with. You need to know where you end and where the other begins in order to relate to another person in a healthy way.

The boundary around who you are includes identifiers such as your name, gender, height, etc. It also includes preferences such as your favorite color, movie, or song. The boundary around who you are likewise includes your feelings and thoughts. It is this personal boundary that once established and maintained can bring deeper knowing and intimacy. Simply stated, your feelings belong and happen to you. You do not *feel* my feelings; I do. Similarly, your thoughts are *your* thoughts. They come to *your* mind. Your thoughts are not my thoughts, no matter how in sync we may be. The Bible tells us to have the mind of Christ, and this involves the persistent effort to take each thought captive (see 1 Corinthians 2:16; 2 Corinthians 10:5). Doing this first requires you to take *the thoughts that belong to you* captive. Once captive, you bring them to Jesus in order

that they may be challenged and renewed to reflect truth. You don't take *my* thoughts captive. That's a job only I can do.

Freedom from Other People's Thoughts and Feelings

Think about the implications of this. If your feelings and thoughts belong to you, then you are responsible for them. You may not be able to prevent feelings and thoughts from happening to you, but you are accountable for what you do or say in response to them. Here's the freedom piece: You are not responsible for what does not belong to you. And so, you are not responsible for the

Cont'd on p 4 - Healthy Boundaries

In This Issue

Page 2

New Staff & 2018-2019 Clinical Interns

Marriage 101 Workshop—
Facilitator: Doug Hinderer, MA, LAMFT

Page 3

Reflection: 4 Days

Welcome | New Staff & Clinical Interns



Jeannine Harris, MSW, LCSW
Licensed Clinical Social Worker

South Holland, IL location



Kelsee E. Kirk, MS
Staff Therapist

Chicago (So Loop) & River Forest, IL locations



Richard Daly, MDiv
MA in Pastoral Counseling Student
Loyola University, Chicago, IL

Chicago (So Loop) & River Forest, IL locations



Gillian Haygood, BA
MA in Counseling Psychology Student
North Park University, Chicago, IL

Orland Park, IL & Schererville, IN locations



Colleen Jackson, BFA
MA in Clinical Mental Health Counseling Student
Adler University, Chicago, IL

Schererville, IN & South Holland, IL locations



Lisa Kuban, BA
MA in Clinical Mental Health Counseling Student
Trinity Christian College, Palos Heights, IL

South Holland & Tinley Park, IL locations



Micere Oden, MS
PhD in Clinical Psychology Student
Walden University, Minneapolis, MN *beginning 2nd year of Internship

Orland Park, IL & Schererville, IN locations



Jeannie Sytsma, BA
MA in Couple and Family Therapy Student
Adler University, Chicago, IL

Chicago (So Loop) & Orland Park, IL locations

Marriage 101: How to do Marriage Well



Marriage and Family Therapist Doug Hinderer, MA, LAMFT, will facilitate a one-day workshop for couples that are either engaged or discussing marriage to learn what makes a marriage terrific or horrific and the skills that all happy couples possess.

Saturday, August 4, 2018
8:30am - 4:00pm

Location:

The Brief Lab
1311 Butterfield Rd, Ste 300, Downers Grove, IL 60515

Cost: \$100 per couple ~ Includes 6-hour workshop, online assessment & materials, continental breakfast & lunch!
Note there is a \$25 non-refundable registration fee.

Workshop limited to 10 couples!

Registration deadline is July 27!

To register, call or email today!

708-845-5500 | info@chicagochristiancounseling.org





An invitation to reflect...

4 Days



■ by Erin Davis, MSW, LCSW

I am lost—abandoned in what feels like a nightmare; only I'm not waking up. My brother died 4 days ago. Before we could figure out what was wrong, we lost him. I can't accept that he's gone. It doesn't feel real. Wails of grief echo through my house, but I am silent and inconsolable. My only brother whom I dearly love is alive no more.

I long for the face of my friend, and yet I'm angry with him. How could he not be here? How could he not come? We sent for him days ago. His absence is now my greatest sorrow. My mind wanders and I begin to wonder if I was wrong about him. Does he really care for me? Does he care about any of us? This doesn't seem like what a friend would do. It feels empty and callous.

My sister says that there must be a reason he hasn't come and that there is still hope. I want to believe her, but it has been 4 days—not 3—4 days. He must be beyond recovery at this point. I thought I had so much faith—like I was special. However, my pain has absorbed every bit of faith I thought I had. I even see my sister wavering. She won't say it out loud, but I see it in her eyes. They are more distant and lost since this morning.

I've decided to join all of the people that have come to mourn with us. I don't see my sister amongst the group. Maybe, she needs some time alone to wrestle as I have. Before I can finish my thought, my sister bursts in the door breathless and pulls me aside. She tells me he's here and that he wants to see me. I don't wait for my mind to catch up; I race out of the door. My heart drums loud and hard—consuming all other sounds—vibrating through my body and taking a hold of my every movement. Nervous excitement ripples through me like tiny bolts of lightening—fueling me with the adrenaline I need to keep going. I don't know what I'll say to him. What can he do now?

Finally, I see him walking toward me with his usual entourage. I want to get him alone, but it seems impossible because the crowd is pressing in on him like cattle at feeding time. Before I can prevent it, the sobs begin to erupt out of me and I can walk no further. I collapse at his feet. I don't want to look into his eyes. I don't want to accept this. However, I can't stop myself from crying out to him and telling him the obvious—"If you were here, he would still be alive."

After what feels like a lifetime, I muster the courage to look up from the ground that shelters me, I realize he is trembling. He's looking at me with the gentleness I have come to know so well over the past years, and tears pour from his eyes. He loses his composure in front of the crowd and weeps like a baby. This unlocks me and I embrace the grief I have stifled over the last 4 days.

His unraveling brings me an assurance beyond the answers I am seeking. I'm not alone... this pain I carry is not only mine...he is here to bear the unbearable weight with me. I still feel the sting of death...the loss in my life, but something tells me that this story is not yet finished. Maybe, my sister was right after all...maybe there is still hope... even on the 4th day. ■



Erin Davis is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker and sees clients in our River Forest, IL location.

This reflection is based on the following Bible passage: John 11:1-44



An invitation to reflect...

This reflection came about from a desire to understand the humanity of the stories in the Bible. Often, I would read scripture looking for a promise of certainty to stand on, instead of as an invitation to reflect. When I see the humanity of the experiences of Mary, Martha or even of Jesus, the words take on new life and meaning. I begin to explore, question and discover more in myself and my experience with God. When I read these with clients, I use them as tools of exploration...to notice what God is eliciting in them. What do they feel in their bodies, or what word or phrase jumped out at them? - Erin Davis MSW LCSW



Toll Free: 800.361.6880

Email: info@chicagochristiancounseling.org

Illinois Offices:

Chicago (2 neighborhood locations)
Edgewater
South Loop
Evergreen Park
Lombard
Melrose Park
New Lenox (2 locations)
Orland Park
Plainfield
River Forest
Shorewood
South Holland
Tinley Park

Indiana Office:

Schererville

Visit us or donate online at
www.chicagochristiancounseling.org

Don't miss helpful info & therapist recommendations on mental health topics on our Facebook Page!
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.

Our Mission Statement

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

Cont'd from p 1 - Healthy Boundaries

feelings and thoughts of others. Let me say that again. You are not responsible for the feelings and thoughts of another person. And yet, we put a lot of effort into trying to create or prevent someone from feeling or thinking a certain way. With best intentions we try to stop someone from having a particular emotional or thoughtful experience. The effort may be valid: you likely don't want someone you love to have the feelings of pain or disappointment; you don't want them to think something that is not true. Although understandable, the effort remains unproductive, and may even be counterproductive. Truly ask yourself, "what's wrong with feeling pain or disappointment?"

It's OKAY to Feel!

NEWS FLASH: it's ok to feel! In fact, it's empowering to feel. Feelings can be our greatest teacher. We may experience things we might not have otherwise learned had we not felt the feelings. Trying to control the feelings and thoughts of others, albeit impossible, may actually prevent them from learning a needed lesson. Instead, when we accept that how someone feels and what they think is first and foremost a reflection of their internal experience, we free ourselves to manage and take responsibility for what **IS** ours (i.e. our feelings and thoughts).

As I busy myself with managing my own thoughts and feelings, I free you up to manage your own thoughts and feelings. Once we see that we are each responsible for our individual thoughts and feelings, we can get busy relating to one another in a more authentic, and intimate way.

May you seek first to know the One who makes intimacy possible, and in knowing Him, may you come to find yourself and the courage to be vulnerable and share who you are with others. ■



For a deeper look at boundaries and responsibility, consider the following titles:

- *Boundaries* by H. Cloud & J. Townsend
- *Boundaries for Your Soul: How to Turn Overwhelming Thoughts and Feelings into Your Greatest Allies* by A. Cook & K. Miller

Kathy Krentkowski is a Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor and Licensed Mental Health Counselor and sees clients in our Evergreen Park, IL & Schererville, IN locations.