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PRACTICAL *family* LIVING NEWS

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Practical Family Living is a not-for-profit corporation dedicated to providing affordable healthy relationship principles to the public.

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March 2016

- Boundaries: Being Someone You're Not
- Boundaries: Murder by Mouth
- Kid's Misbehavior and the Brain
- Standing Up for Yourself While Honoring Others
- What Men Need to Hear from the Women They Love
- Selling Sex: Sarah's Story
- Friendship Across Generations
- God's Healing Touch Through the Holy Spirit and Professional Help
- Murky Beliefs
- When You Feel Anxious or Lost
- Honey, Are You Doing That to Bug Me?

April 2016

- Games People Play
- Your Behavior is NOT Acceptable – But You I Love
- Marriage at the Foot of the Cross
- You Are Not a Nobody
- Loving a Young Alcoholic
- Friendship Across Generations
- Stretched
- Repeating Hurtful Relationships
- Get Your Brain On
- Success and Family Loyalty

May 2016

- Dealing With Depression
- Claim Your Inheritance
- Comfort or Character
- Why Men Pull Away
- Standing Up for Yourself While Honoring Others



Forgiveness of Those Who Are “Different”

By Lynda Savage, M.S., LMFT, LPC
 Founder PFL/CFH

Forgiveness is vital to the Christian faith. It's hard under our own personal steam to forgive. Recently, I presented a little talk on core differences in people. These differences aren't good or bad. They most often stem from how people are “wired.” There are definite different ways individuals pursue calm for their central nervous system. The differences in how people are wired often causes stretching and growth in close relationships with friends, spouse, and family.

For example: Some people relax by being alone. Some people relax by being with and talking with others. Let's imagine these two different styles of seeking calm are sitting next to each other on an airplane. One continues to make bids for conversation in order to relax and the other seeks to block out any distractions in order to relax. It's easy to feel the clash of styles here.

Part of what happens to people when they are under duress is they blame another's style, and thus the person for keeping them from a calm state. After a hard day, these differing styles of being together can bring thoughts of, “You are such a selfish person because you need to be alone and I have been slaving all day” or “Why on earth are you going on and on about nothing and bothering me when I have worked so hard today?”

The problem here is not the small bumps in the road of life like this example, but a cumulative experience over time concluding that I'm right

and you are wrong. In seeking to be a Christ follower, we might well learn that these different “wirings” actually cause us to grow in mercy and compassion as we seek God's answers to our upsets with others.

Forgiveness is something we will do well to ask God to create in us. With His empowerment, we will see the following when we grow to be more like Him:

- Tolerance of personal styles unlike our own
- Respect in interactions when other's ways seem oddly different to you
- Respect in your inner thoughts and conclusions about those who are different
- Avoiding remarks or “making fun of” others who process life differently
- Check yourself and pray before you jump to conclusions about others
- Give others the benefit of the doubt as a matter of routine
- Overlook minor offenses
- Pray for yourself and others in your sphere who are puzzling to you
- Be willing to apologize



Lynda

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 Center for Family Healing

Shake the Dust Off!

By Brenda Spina, M.S., LMFT, LPC
Director/Clinical Family Therapist



Difficult people come in different sizes, shapes, and behaviors. Difficult people are men and women who, no matter what is said or done, always see you as "bad," "wrong," or insist on you proving otherwise. As a result, many believers struggle with the idea of turning the other cheek, tolerating words and behaviors that may be seen as becoming abusive.

So much has been written about boundaries, it seems superfluous to say more. However, there are particular times when a relational boundary becomes necessary. Refusing to continue with the present situation requires particular patterns to be present.

Here is what to consider:

- Is the individual consistently resisting sound, fair feedback?
- Do they seem blind to grace even when it is freely offered them?
- Has the person seemingly persisted in selfish thinking or behavior?
- Does the person appear to pridefully trust their intellect vs the truth of what is presented?

His Workmanship

By Christine Vander Wielen, MSW, LCSW
Clinical Therapist



In 1943, Abraham Maslow's paper "A Theory of Human Motivation" was first published in which he outlined what he considered to be the "hierarchy of needs". Maslow asserted human behavior is motivated by physiological, safety, love and sense of belonging, esteem, and finally by self actualization needs. Although Maslow never used the pyramid himself, his "hierarchy of needs" is most often depicted in the shape of a pyramid with physiological needs forming the base and self

actualization forming the top.

Later on, Maslow theorized there were two versions of esteem. The "lower version" of esteem focused on the need for respect

- Is there a pattern of treating other people as villains or railing against them?

If these questions are answered with a "yes," it may be time to "shake off the dust" so to speak, regarding words or behavior harmful to you or to those you love.

The Apostle Paul experienced this very situation when sharing the truth of who Jesus is with the Jews in Corinth. Acts 18:6 states, "But when they opposed Paul and became abusive, he shook out his clothes in protest and said to them, "Your blood be on your own heads! I am innocent of it. From now on I will go to the Gentiles."

In Paul's situation, the Jews persistently and consistently refused what Paul had to say. The Jews were not interested in knowing the truth to the point of railing against Paul. So, Paul literally shook his raiment and stated the choice is theirs and he no longer holds any responsibility for their salvation.

As harsh as this may seem, Paul's behavior gives us permission to stop persisting at any pattern of thinking or behavior that keeps us in a position of feeling like we have to prove ourselves, our goodness, or the goodness of God. The decisions people make are their responsibility. Their choices are not our burden to bear. Their future is in their hands.

Our choice to stop or "let go" does not mean we stop loving the person or praying for them. It simply means we quit bearing the burden of their choices and move on to what God has next for us. We can only move forward when we know we have made every effort at honesty with the Lord first about our own choices, claimed ownership of our choices, and made amends if or where needed. Lord bless you as you prayerfully "shake the dust off."

from others. It included need for recognition, status, and attention from others. Whereas, the "higher version" of esteem focused on the need for self respect. This hierarchy of needs has greatly influenced the educational system, the business community, and even parenting styles.

This theory leaves much to be desired. Working to obtain the approval by others is also called co-dependence and is clearly unhealthy. So what does a healthy esteem look like?

In Ephesians 2:10, God's Word says, "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."

The word for workmanship is the same word for poem, meaning His masterpiece or His handiwork.

According to Maslow, self actualization was the highest need in the hierarchy. In contrast to God's Word, self actualization focuses on what the individual does or accomplishes. As God's masterpiece, we were created for good works of love, compassion, mercy, service and help to one another. God's focus is on who we are in Christ versus what we do or accomplish.

When we internalize His truth that we are His masterpiece, created with a kingdom purpose a positive, healthy self esteem follows.

Guilt, Sadness, Pity, Etc. – Ok, But What Kind?

By Carrissa Pannuzzo, M.A., LMFT-T, LPC-T
Clinical Therapist



Guilt, sadness, pity, and other difficult emotions are part of life. We all feel them now and again. But, these emotions don't look the same on and aren't experienced the same by everyone. Some people seem to have a low afternoon, day, maybe week, and then seem to bounce back. Others, on the other hand, seem to have a low period and then stay in it. Maybe they even extend it, grow it, or dare we say, seem to enjoy it. If we're honest we've all likely done this, even if it was a just for a little while. Maybe there is something about the pity party or depression that feels good or powerful or...? It's a strange thought but not uncommon.

We all have a choice. In 2 Corinthians 7:10 it says, "Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death." Those of us who feel the guilt, sadness, and pity to the nth degree, who seem to extend the pain, as referred to above, may be choosing worldly

sorrow. Those people who bounce back are likely choosing godly sorrow.

This verse defines worldly sorrow as an emotion that leads to death. Wallowing in, rehearsing, feeding this type of sorrow has poor results. Guilt can result in self-harm - physical, psychological, relational, and more. Sadness, when not cared for properly, can grow into a depression that defines us and keeps us from living. Pity can make us unattractive and annoying to others, cutting us off from the things we need (accountability and encouragement). Godly sorrow, though, makes us strong and attractive. Grace under fire is a beautiful thing. As the verse says, it leads to repentance – a changed, new life – and leaves no regrets. Imagine a life with no regrets! Godly sorrow takes ownership for its part and does not take on what doesn't belong to it.

Use this verse for perspective. Next time a negative emotion comes along and takes up residence ask: is this godly or worldly? And then decide what consequences are desired: repentance and no regret, or death? The choice is ours.



Decisions: Who Is Controlling Your Life?

By Laura Demetrician, M.S., LMFT
Clinical Family Therapist

I regularly sit and talk with people who are facing difficult decisions. Perhaps they are deciding if they need to confront their cruel mother-in-law, or work on setting more limits and discipline with

their 13 year old, or maybe they are wondering if now is the time to discuss years of emotional neglect in their marriage.

We all face difficult decisions. Difficult decisions are unavoidable. There is one filter that many people run their decisions through that has the capacity to deter them from God's best. It is the question, "How will they react if I make that decision?" "What will my mother-in-law say about me if I confront her?" "But I can't tell my husband I am unhappy or he won't talk to me for weeks." "If I set limits on my 13 year old, she will make my life miserable."

Many people, unfortunately, make their decisions based on how others will respond to them. Character, honor, courage, and integrity are characteristics of a mature person who makes

decisions based on principles and God's direction in life. It is wise to anticipate outcomes of our decisions, but it is a huge mistake to make our decisions based on how others will respond.

If we base our decisions on the reactions and beliefs of others, we are controlled by others. If we are controlled by others, then the loudest, strongest person in the room will have control of our very decisions.

I recently witnessed a teenager make a very difficult decision in which his friends disagreed. He made a very brave decision based on what was right, mature, and what he knew to be true. I admired his bravery in the midst of ridicule.

Even in others' anger and disagreement, there can be much peace in pursuing the path that is led by the Lord. When we make decisions by listening to God and searching our hearts, we can go forward standing tall. God calls us to be wise, to obey his commands, to get the input of wise counsel, and to trust in Him.

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Open the Door

Are there rooms in your heart you want to keep closed? What if light from an open door would detox the contents?

Lynda Savage, M.S., LMFT, LPC
Founder PFL/CFH

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